

**Pedagogy of Human Rights Education in the Elementary Schools  
of Taipei and New Delhi: Probing the Role of Social Science  
Teachers**

**By**

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**(Abstract)**

Education is an important institution that shapes our society through continuous socialization of pupils. It prepares future generations to participate in social change and contributes to society's development. Moreover, it makes pupils aware of their rights. Human rights education can be introduced at all levels of education. The elementary level Social Science education is crucial for the development of the concept of human rights among adolescents. For the pupils of this age group, the guidance of teacher and the pedagogy of human rights education are critical for a clear understanding of the concept. The pedagogy of human rights education can be a useful and effective way of inculcating deliberative methods, humane and judicious values, and rational and critical thinking among pupils. The present study is an attempt to assess social science teachers and explore their pedagogy in the context of human rights education. The issues that the present research intends to raise are: (1) How the pedagogy of human rights education is perceived by Social Science teachers of the elementary school of Taipei and New Delhi in the context of their values, beliefs, attitudes, and ideals of human rights education? (2) How is the pedagogy of human rights education of Social Science teachers of Taipei and Delhi put into practice? (3) What is taught in human rights education in the social science classrooms of Taipei and New Delhi intentionally and unintentionally? (4) What are the

problems and obstacles faced by Social Science teachers during the process of teaching human rights? (5) Can there be a general pedagogy of human rights education, which can be applied across different educational settings? The issues are examined with two sets of three teachers of sixth grade and their classes in elementary schools of Taipei and New Delhi.

The findings of this study suggest that the agency of the teacher is crucial for successful implementation of HRE; that a teacher has to have passion and commitment for HR; that the rights of students as individuals must be respected by the teacher; that HRE must be context specific; that the Universal Declaration of Human Rights can be used as a universal standard to teach HR; and, finally, that the role of UN and national government is crucial. These two institutions provide with the framework and funding for HRE. Last, but not the least, the role of NGOs and INGOs is gaining importance by the day and that they need to expand their network, both vertically and horizontally.

# 小學人權教育教學之比較研究：探究台北與新德里社會科教師之角色

## （摘要）

教育，是透過學生持續社會化的過程而形塑社會的重要機制。教育，為未來世代參與社會變遷預作了準備，並有助於社會發展。尤有甚者，教育使學生們意識到他們的權利。我們可以在各個教育階段裡引入人權教育。但是，小學階段的社會科教育對青少年的人權概念發展是具有決定性意義的。對此階段的學生而言，教師的引導以及人權教育的教學對清楚理解人權概念是相當關鍵的。針對教導學生深思熟慮的方法、人道與明智的價值、理性與批判的思考，人權教育教學可以是有助益且有效途徑。因此，本研究目的是在人權教育的脈絡下，評估社會科教師並探究他們的教學法。而本研究之研究問題是：（1）台北與新德里小學社會科教師在他們人權教育的價值、信念、態度與觀念脈絡下，理解人權教育教學的方式為何？（2）台北與新德里小學社會科教師在人權教育的教學實踐為何？（3）在台北與新德里小學社會科教室中，有意與無意的教學內容為何？（4）在人權教學的過程中，台北與新德里小學社會科教師所面臨的難題與阻礙為何？（5）可能存在一種可以應用在不同教育背景的普遍性人權教育教學嗎？因此，本研究針對台北與新德里小學，分別進行兩組各三位六年級教師及其班級的探究。

本研究發現，教師是人權教育成功實行的重要關鍵。教師必須對人權有熱情與承諾；教師必須尊重學生做為個體的權利；人權教育必須有情境脈絡的特殊性；《世界人權宣言》可以做為人權教學的普遍標準；此外，聯合國與國家政府的角色

亦關係重大，因為他們提供人權教育結構與資金。最後，值得一提的是 NGOs 與 INGOs 的角色越來越重要，他們有必要在橫向與縱向上拓展他們的網絡。



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## List of Content

Abstract.....	I
Abstract (Mandarin).....	III
Acknowledgement.....	V
List of Content.....	VII
List of Abbreviation.....	XVIII
Chapter 1: Evolution of Human Rights, Human Rights Education and Teachers as an Agent of Change.....	1
1.1 Worldwide Status of Human Rights Education.....	2
1.2 Human Rights Education in Taiwan.....	14
1.3 Human Rights Education in India.....	15
1.4 Why Social Science Teachers.....	15
1.5 Research Questions.....	16
1.6 Purpose and Significance of Study.....	17
1.7 Scheme of Chapters.....	18
Chapter 2: Pedagogy of Human Rights Education: A Survey of Literature.....	20
Introduction.....	20
2.1 Universal Declaration of Human Rights.....	21
2.2 Definition of Human Rights.....	23
2.3 Human Rights Education and Fulfillment of Human Rights.....	24
2.3.1 What is Human Rights Education?.....	26
2.4 Three Agencies of HRE: UN and National Governments, NGOs &	

INGOs, and Academicians.....	27
2.5 On Pedagogy.....	37
2.6 A Word on Critical or Radical Pedagogy.....	39
2.7 Teacher and Pedagogy of Human Rights Education.....	40
2.8 Teaching Human Rights.....	50
2.8.1 Guidelines for Teaching Human Right Education-UNESCO.....	51
2.9 Goals, Objectives and Content of Human Rights Education.....	53
2.10 Approaches and Models of Human Rights Education.....	55
2.10.1 Holistic Values Approach.....	56
2.10.2 Historical Approach.....	57
2.10.3 An International Standards and Institutions Approach.....	59
2.10.4 Reconstructionist Approach.....	59
2.10.5 Service Learning Approach.....	60
2.10.6 Value Awareness Model.....	61
2.10.7 Accountability Model.....	62
2.10.8 Transformational Model.....	62
2.11 Human Rights Education: Part of Social Science or Independent Discipline or Integrated into School Curriculum.....	63
2.12 Human Rights Education and Adolescents.....	66
2.12.1 Human Rights Education and Prospective Teacher Education and In-Service Program.....	69
2.13 Challenges for Human Rights Education.....	72
 Chapter 3: Methodology and Research Design.....	 76
3.1 Personal Ideological Standing and Becoming a Researcher.....	76
3.2 Research Design.....	77

3.3 Critical Qualitative Research Method.....	79
3.3.1 Critical Epistemology.....	79
3.3.2 Research Questions.....	81
3.4 Stage I: Compiling Primary Record.....	82
3.4.1 The Procedure of Compilation of Primary and Secondary Data	83
3.5 Stage II: Preliminary Reconstructive Analysis.....	89
3.6 Stage III: Dialogical Data Generation.....	92
3.7 Stage IV: Describing System Relations.....	95
3.8 Stage V: System Relations as Explanation of Findings.....	96
3.9 A Note on Data Collection.....	97
3.10 Procedure of Selection of Schools in Taipei and New Delhi and Some Extraordinary Research Experiences.....	100
3.11 Micro Research Settings: Schools in Taipei and New Delhi.....	104
3.11.1 School in Taipei.....	104
3.11.2 School in New Delhi.....	106
3.12 Observation Schedule.....	110
3.13 Observation Procedure.....	111
3.14 A Note on the Procedure of Validity Check.....	112

#### Chapter 4: Pedagogy of Human Rights Education and Social Science

Teacher in the Elementary School of Taipei.....	115
4.1 Landscape and People.....	115
4.2 Literacy, Education and Knowledge in Taiwan: A Historical Overview.....	116
4.2.1 Dutch Rule (1624-1662).....	117
4.2.2 Japanese Colonial Rule and Education (1895-1945).....	118

4.2.3 Education under the ROC and Martial Law (1949-1987).....	120
4.2.3.1 National Spirit Education, Identity and Sinicization.....	123
4.2.3.1.1 Meilidao or Kaohsiung Incident.....	128
4.2.4 Lee Teng-Hui Period (1987-2000).....	131
4.2.5 Education in a New Phase of Taiwanese Democracy (2000 to Present).....	134
4.3 Educational Reform.....	134
4.3.1 Basic Education Law (1999).....	135
4.3.2 ROC: Republic of Creativity.....	136
4.4 Philosophical & Constitutional bases of Taiwanese Education.....	137
4.5 Confucianism and HRE.....	138
4.6 Education System.....	139
4.6.1 Pre-school Education or Kindergarten.....	139
4.6.2 Nine-Year Compulsory Education.....	139
4.6.3 Senior Secondary Education.....	140
4.6.4 Higher Education.....	141
4.7 HRE in Taiwan.....	141
4.7.1 Workshop on HRE.....	143
4.7.2 National and International Conferences on HRE.....	144
4.7.3 MOE and HRE.....	145
4.8 Organizational and Institutional Development in HRE.....	149
4.8.1 HRE Committee of MOE.....	149
4.8.2 Centre for Law Related Education, Judicial Reform Education.....	150

4.8.3 Taiwan Association of Human Rights (TAHR).....	151
4.8.4 Chang Fo-Chuan Centre for the Study of Human Rights.....	152
4.9 HRE in Taiwan: A Part of Social Science or an Independent Discipline or Integrated into School Curriculum? .....	153
4.10 Social Science Teachers and HRE in Taipei School.....	155
4.11 Zhang, Zhen-Zhen: An Introduction.....	156
4.11.1 Why Teaching? .....	156
4.11.2 Teaching: A Means not an End.....	158
4.11.3 Role of Familial Support .....	158
4.11.4 Role of Colleagues.....	160
4.11.5 Zhang's Perception of HR and HRE.....	161
4.11.6 Pedagogy of HRE: Zhang's Praxis.....	162
4.11.7 Zhang as a Learner, Facilitator, Observer, Mediator and Moderator.....	163
4.11.8 Zhang with Students .....	165
4.11.9 Zhang and Information Technology .....	166
4.11.10 Pedagogy of HRE: Problems and Challenges.....	168
4.12 Ma, Ai-Mei: An Introduction .....	171
4.12.1 Ma on Teaching.....	172
4.12.2 Ma's Perception of HR and HRE .....	173
4.12.3 Pedagogy of HRE: Ma's Praxis .....	176
4.12.4 Ma and her Students .....	181
4.12.5 Pedagogy of HRE: Problems and Challenges .....	183
4.12.6 Taiwanese Society .....	183
4.12.7 Taiwanese Education System .....	184
4.12.8 Knowledge base of HR.....	186

4.13 Xie, Mei-Zhen: An Introduction.....	187
4.13.1 Xie on Teaching Profession.....	188
4.13.2 Xie on HR and HRE .....	192
4.13.3 Xie’s Pedagogy of HRE .....	194
4.13.4 “Alien” Becoming Local.....	194
4.13.5 Multimedia: Concretization of HRE.....	196
4.13.6 Critical Thinking: A Vehicle of HR.....	198
4.13.7 Xie with her Students.....	200
4.13.8 HRE: Problems and Challenge.....	202
4.13.9 Overprotective Taiwanese Parents.....	202
4.13.10 Alien Nature of HR.....	204
 Chapter 5: Pedagogy of Human Rights Education and Social Science Teacher	
in the Elementary School of New Delhi.....	205
5.1 Landscape and People .....	205
5.2 Literacy, Education and Knowledge in India: A Historical Overview...	206
5.3 Education in Ancient India .....	206
5.4 Medieval Indian Education.....	211
5.5 Education in Colonial India.....	213
5.6 Nationalist Vision of Indian Education.....	216
5.7 Gokhale’s Bill .....	217
5.8 Gandhi and his Basic Education.....	218
5.9 Education in Independent India .....	220
5.10 Education & National Development:	

Education Commission 1964-1966.....	221
5.11 National Policy on Education (1986).....	222
5.12 Institutions, Organizations and Implementation of Education Policy...224	
5.13 Central Advisory Board of Education.....	225
5.14 National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT).....	225
5.15 State Council of Educational Research and Training (SCERT).....	225
5.16 Educational Structure.....	226
5.16.1 Pre-primary stage (3-5 years).....	226
5.16. 2 Elementary Stage (6-14 years).....	227
5.16.3 Minimum Levels of Learning (MLL).....	227
5.16.4 Right to Education Act (RTE).....	228
5.16.5 Secondary School.....	228
5.16.6 Senior Secondary School.....	229
5.16.7 National Open School (NOS).....	229
5.16.8 Higher Education.....	230
5.17 HRE in India: Organizational and Institutional Development.....	231
5.17. 1 MOE and HRE .....	231
5.17.2 National Human Rights Commission (NHRC).....	233
5.17.3 Justice and Peace Commission (JPC).....	234
5.17.4 NGOs and HRE.....	235
5.17.5 MelJol.....	236
5.17.6 Institute of Human Rights Education (IHRE).....	238

5.17.7 Indian Institute for Peace, Disarmament and Environmental Protection (IIPDEP).....	239
5.18 HRE in India: A part of Social Science or an Independent Discipline or Integrated into School Curriculum?.....	240
5.19 Delhi Teachers and Human Rights Education.....	244
5.20 Introducing Sara.....	247
5.20.1 Why Teaching? .....	247
5.20.2 Views on HR and HRE.....	250
5.20.3 Pedagogy of HRE: Sara's Praxis.....	252
5.20.4 Sara with Students.....	254
5.20.5 Pedagogy of HRE: Problems and Challenges.....	255
5.21 Introducing Sheela.....	256
5.21.1 Why Teaching? .....	257
5.21.2 Position on HR and HRE .....	258
5.21.3 Pedagogy of HRE: Sheela's Praxis.....	261
5.21.4 Sheela's Students.....	264
5.21.5 Pedagogy of HRE: Problems and Challenges .....	266
5.22 Introducing Maya.....	268
5.22.1 Teacher at Eleven.....	269
5.22.2 Perspective on HR and HRE.....	273
5.22.3 Pedagogy of HRE: Praxis.....	275
5.22.4 Teacher Student Relationship.....	278



5.22.5 Pedagogy of HRE: Problems and Challenges.....	281
5.22.6 HRE: Lack of Integrated Approach.....	281
5.22.7 Nil or Insufficient Training in HRE.....	282
5.22.8 Discouraging Collegial Environment.....	283

Chapter 6: Pedagogy of Human Rights Education in Taipei and New Delhi Schools:

A Comparative Analysis.....	286
6.1 Status of HRE.....	288
6.2 NGOs and HRE.....	289
6.3 HRE: A Part of Social Sciences or an Independent Discipline or Integrated into School Curriculum.....	290
6.4 Human Rights Educators.....	292
6.4.1 Teaching Profession as a Career.....	293
6.4.2 Role of Collaboration.....	293
6.4.3 Role of Information Technology (IT).....	295
6.4.4 Institutionalized Communication.....	296
6.4.5 HR and HRE: Teachers' Perception and Praxis.....	297
6.4.6 HR Educators and Educates.....	298
6.4.7 HRE: Problems and Challenges.....	302
6.5 Concluding Remarks.....	304

Chapter 7: Pedagogy of Human Rights Education and Educators: A Discussion.....307

7.1 How Human Rights are Perceived by Teachers?.....	308
7.2 Characteristics of Human Rights Educators.....	309

7.3 How the Pedagogy of HRE is Perceived by Human Rights Educator?...	310
7.4 How the Pedagogy of Human Rights Education put into Practice?.....	312
7.5 What is taught in the Human Rights Education Classrooms?.....	316
7.6 What are the Problems and Obstacles faced by HRE.....	
during the process of teaching Human Rights?.....	317
7.7 Can there be a General Pedagogy of HRE, which can	
be applied across different educational settings?.....	321
7.8 System Relations as Explanations of Findings.....	322
7.8.1 Governmental Support/Constrain.....	323
7.8.2 NGOs and INGOs Role.....	323
7.8.3 Teacher's Authority and Power Relations.....	324
Chapter 8: Conclusion and Recommendations.....	327
8.1 Preconceived Notions Erased.....	328
8.2 Teacher as an Agency of Human Rights Educations.....	329
8.3 Institutionalization of Human Rights Education.....	330
8.4 Importance of Training in Human Rights Education.....	332
Bibliography.....	334
Appendix A Universal Declaration of Human Rights.....	365
Appendix B Developmental Sequence for Core Concepts and Content.....	372
Appendix C Methodologies: Developmental and Conceptual Framework for HRE....	373

## **List of Abbreviation**

AI	Amnesty International
AIP	Amnesty International Pilipinas
BAMS	Bachelor of Ayurvedic Medicine and Surgery
BCE	Before Common Era
BJP	Bhartiya Janata Party
BUMS	Bachelor of Unani Medicine and Surgery
CAHR	Chinese Associate for Human Rights
CEQUIN	Center for Equity and Inclusion
CHR	Commission on Human Rights
CHRE	Civics and Human Rights Education
CHREF	Chung Hwa Rotary Education Foundation
CLREJRF	Center for Law Related Education Judicial Reform Foundation
CSHR	Center for the Study of Human Rights
CSR	Center for Society and Religion
DECS	Department of Education, Culture, and Sports
DPP	Democratic Progressive Party
ECCE	Early Childhood Care and Education
GSCASH	Gender Sensitization Committee Against Sexual Harassment
HHR	Home for Human Rights
HR	Human Rights
HRE	Human Rights Education
HREA	Human Rights Education Association

ICCPR	International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights
ICESCR	International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
IHR	Institute for Human Rights
IHRE	Institute of Human Rights Education
IIPDEP	Indian Institute for Peace, Disarmament & Environmental Protection
INGOs	International Non-Governmental Organizations
IT	Information Technology
JPC	Justice and Peace Commission
KMT	Kuomintang
KNCU	Korean National Commission for UNESCO
LGBT	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender
LHRD	Lawyers for Human Rights and Development
LTTE	Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam
MBBS	Bachelor of Medicine and Bachelor of Science
MDDR	Movement for the Defense of Democratic Rights
MIRJE	Movement for Inter-Racial Justice and Equality
MLL	Minimum Levels of Learning
MOE	Ministry of Education
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
NCERT	National Council of Educational Research and Training
NCF	National Curriculum Framework
ND	New Delhi

NGOs	Non-Governmental Organizations
NHRC	National Human Rights Commission
NICT	National Institute of Compilation and Translation
NIE	National Institute of Education
NOS	National Open School
NPE	National Policy on Education
PAHRA	Philippine Alliance of Human Rights Advocates
PASLRT	Planting Seeds of Law-Related Education in Taiwan
PETA	Philippine Educational Theater Association
PRC	People's Republic of China
RSS	Rashtriya Swayam Sevak Sangh
RTE	Right to Education
SCERT	State Council of Educational Research and Training
SLF	Sri Lanka Foundation
TAHR	Taiwan Association for Human Rights
UDHR	Universal Declaration of Human Rights
UHR	Universal Human Rights
UK	United Kingdom
UN	United Nations
UNDHRE	United Nations Declaration on Human Rights Education
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization
USA	United States of America
USSR	Union of Soviet Socialist Republic
VHP	Vishwa Hindu Parishad

## **Chapter One**

### **Evolution of Human Rights, Human Rights Education and Teachers as an**

#### **Agent of Change**

Education is an important institution that shapes our lives through continuous socialization of pupils. It prepares future generations to participate in social change and contributes to society's development. Moreover, education makes pupils aware of their rights as well as those of others, more so in the current century that has been termed as the age of rights (Baxi, 1997). HR are the rights an individual has by simply being human. There are eight principles that constitute HR, viz. human dignity, equality, non-discrimination, universality, interdependency, indivisibility, inalienability, and responsibility. These rights are fundamental to the dignified existence of an individual and cannot be denied in any circumstances. Irrespective of that there are a number of instances where HR are being violated or denied on various occasions and at various places. Sometimes, people are not aware that their HR are being denied and there are times when a violator intentionally or unintentionally encroaches upon other's HR. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights serves as a legal foundation of HR. In the near future, there would further be a pressing need for greater awareness of human rights (HR) as well as of their advocates and activists (Reardon, 1995).

HRE is an emerging field, and it is all encompassing in nature. It is more than educating students and people in HR, i.e. to know one's right and respect others'. HRE addresses the developmental aspects of an individual in totality. It builds on cognition, attitude towards and skills required for establishing the HR in a society. HRE contributes

in an individual's ability to think and act critically. The social and humane skills inculcated by HRE play a crucial role in assessing the circumstances of conflicts and possibilities of resolution. HRE helps establish harmony and unity in diversity. In a nutshell, HRE helps individuals to feel the importance of HR, internalize HR values, integrated them into their way of life, and gives a sense of responsibility for respecting and defending the rights of others. To serve this need, HRE has been included in the school curriculum of many Western countries. Now the Eastern countries are also taking keen interest in introducing HRE into their school education. The following section will throw light on the status of HRE worldwide. The countries that are selected in this section are those that have adhered to the decade of human right education, announced by the United Nations (UN) in 1994. The purpose of including these case studies is to have a better understanding of how HRE is being implemented in different contexts. Further, it would help us in assessing the nature of HRE in the case of Taipei and New Delhi (ND).

### **1.1 Worldwide Status of Human Rights Education**

This section includes case studies from Europe, America (North and South or Latin) and Asia. Europe aspires to be a continent of democratic states accepting [HR] as their basic principles (Osler and Starkey, 1994, p. 349). To serve this aspiration, the Council of Europe is actively promoting HRE in European countries since 1978. It is working on all aspects of HRE from framing curriculum to training teachers. The impetus HRE received in Europe is due to the efforts of the Council of Europe.

In 1998, the Human Rights Act was introduced into UK law. The establishment of a Scottish Parliament and Welsh Assembly and the development of a new political settlement in Northern Ireland have led to increased interest and debate on what it means to be British (Osler and Vincent (2002, p. 53). Apart from vibrant political issues, the social and cultural composition of the UK led to a heated debate on how to bring unity in an ethnically, racially, linguistically and culturally diverse society. This diversity was the result of immigration from former colonies of Britain specifically from the Caribbean and the Indian subcontinent. A solution was sought in citizenship education. Thus, citizenship education was included as a statutory subject in the National curriculum of England in the year 2002. The purpose of introduction of citizenship education was to instill a sense of patriotism, unity, and towards different communities. Interestingly, Britain passed the HR Act in 1998 but until now there was no effort of initiating HRE or infused citizenship education with HR principles. Osler (2008a) observed that with a long and unbroken history of democracy, does not acknowledge [HR] as the values base for citizenship education within the National Curriculum for England (p. 462).

What could be the explanation for this type of citizenship education? Though England is following the Council of Europe's guidelines on education for democratic citizenship it is minus HRE. It is clear that England adheres to a narrow definition of citizenship in which non-citizens, citizens by naturalization, and minorities are deliberately excluded and yet expected to be committed and loyal to the country. This bias is visible in the following quote from the Crick report:



Majorities must respect, understand and tolerate minorities and minorities must learn to respect the laws, codes and conventions as much as the majority—not because it is useful to do so, but because this process helps foster common citizenship (Bernard Crick quoted in Osler, 2008a, p. 463).

The quote shows that minorities are not trusted and seen as law breaking people. It is difficult to imagine how mistrust can foster the bond of common citizenship based on mutual trust and respect. Thus, until there are concrete and honest steps in the direction of adopting HR principles as foundation of citizenship education, the dream of development of a common citizenship in England or UK would not become a reality. The London bombing of 2005 led to a debate—on how successful is citizenship education—in media and among scholars. In 2006, the government formed a review committee under Sir Keith Ajebo to examine the ways in which the issue of diversity might be addressed within the citizenship curriculum and to consider the role of British history in teaching for citizenship (Osler, 2008a, p. 463). This attempt has again bypassed HR and its potential role in solving the problem it was dealing with. HR are dealt in informal curriculum under global issues where diversity, conflict resolution, social justice and sustainable development are also included. The education policy reflects that HR principles do not make up the core of citizenship education and therefore attempts to deal with social crises do not meet with success.

Denmark is an interesting case as far as HRE is concerned. The following discussion is not about policy or theoretical framework but practical aspects of HRE. This

will show how Danish education system promotes democracy by practicing HR principles in the context of school. Denmark has institutionalized democracy at the school level by not only recognizing the rights of students, teachers and parents but also give them an opportunity to practice. Denmark has a strong tradition of support for [HR] and democracy (Osler and Vincent, 2002, p. 35). Denmark has also experienced strong waves of immigration especially from Asia and Africa which has made it a somewhat pluralist society. Denmark has a decentralized education system that was started in 1989 with the introduction of Folkeskole Act. It implies greater autonomy to schools, administrators, teachers, parents and students too.

The school is required to model democracy and teachers are advised not to restrict student decision-making to a timetabled class meeting but to use every possible opportunity to promote student participation in decision-making (Hahn quoted in Osler and Vincent, 2002, p. 37).

The inclusion of students in decision making process at the school level is a sign of respect towards children's right to participate and have a say in their own development. By recognizing students as responsible individuals, Denmark has tried to ensure an adult crop of responsible citizens. For that the Ministry of Education passed the Act on Democracy in the Education System in 2000. With the implementation of the Act, students have got more autonomy. They have the right to set up student councils and confirm their right to have representatives on the school board as well as any other committee set up by the school that deals with issues of interest to students in elementary

and high schools (Osler and Vincent, 2002, p. 40). Kragh argues that the environment, where children are encouraged to develop their decision-making skills, also contributes to their psychological development, enabling them to become ‘active optimists’ (quoted in Osler and Vincent, 2002). This is evident from the recently held Copenhagen summit on Global Warming in December 2009. Though the outcome of the summit fell short of everybody’s expectation, active participation by the Danish people and their commitment to save the environment cannot be underestimated.

Canada’s commitment to the principles mentioned in the UDHR, ICESCR, and ICCPR is replicated in the mechanisms it has established to promote the principles of HR (Magsino, 1987, p. 155). Canada is a melting pot of different ethnicities, cultures, religions and languages. Canadian history is the history of immigration. By keeping this fact into consideration, the policy of multiculturalism was announced in 1971. Multiculturalism within the context of Canada is an aspect of [HR], and multicultural education can be seen as an aspect of [HRE] (McLeod, 1991, p. 164). Multicultural education in Canada is imbued with HR principles. McLeod (1991) argued that multicultural education has been involved in developing awareness, sensitivity, and the implementation of [HR] and [HRE] regarding ethnicity, race, religion, national origin, citizenship, and such associated rights as equality before the law (p. 164). Masemann and Iram (1987) summarize the implication of multicultural education:

The rights to multicultural development in Canada have great and varied implications for educational practice. The protection of group and individual rights to cultural

development has led to the enormous proliferation of heritage language and culture classes and programs. The need to educate the entire school population concerning the multicultural diversity of Canada and about the need to protect every student from persecution has led to multicultural content in many curriculum areas, and intercultural and values education courses as well. The implications of these developments for school officials, administrators, teachers and resource staff have been profound as they have struggled to grapple with the ideal of a multicultural school environment. However, one sees in all of these changes in education an increasing awareness of group and individual rights to cultural development (p. 115).

The Canadian example of multicultural education to a great extent is a success story. The process of multiculturalism was not smooth. There were challenges to face, especially on how to establish a truly multicultural environment. It is an interesting example of how multicultural education approach, instilled with HR principles, can attain the desired goal of unity in diversity, tolerance and respect towards others.

Latin America is a linguistic term used for the countries in Central and South America including Mexico where Spanish, Portuguese and French are spoken (The Hutchinson Encyclopedia, 1994, p. 605). The 1970s and 1980s were years of dictatorship in Latin America. This was the time when HRE started taking roots in Latin America. In many countries [HRE] started as an underground movement (Magendzo, 2005, p. 137). For autocratic governments, the talk or practice of HR or HRE in any form was considered to be a threat.

In the 1980s Chile was a military state. The goal of the military regime was to destroy the old democratic order, reduce resistance to the new institutional system and create the behavior and thinking appropriate to it (Vergara and Estevez, 1994, p. 273). It was unthinkable to raise the question of HR during this period. Dieter (1994) opined that a vast number of [HR] violations was possible because there was a high degree of social acceptance of such violations (p. 241). In such fearsome situation a group of people started discussing about HR. Magendzo was an ardent activist and scholar of HRE from Chile who started working with this group. He organized many workshops and invited people who were victims of HR violations to share their experiences. Magendzo claimed that it was an opportunity to deepen the subjective understanding of knowledge of [HR] (2005, p. 138). In Chile HRE is aimed to institutionalize democracy at the grassroots level. It is expected that dictatorship would never happen again (Never Again—Nunca más in Spanish) and HRE has been assigned with the responsibility to prevent the resurgence of authoritarianism.

There is an ongoing debate on Asian values and whether HR is a western concept. Some scholars believe that there is no contradiction between the two. But there are a number of people who place the two in a contradictory position. However, the effort towards promoting HRE in Asian schools did not stop even though it received a lot of criticism from a section of Asian society who perceived HR as an alien, redundant and useless concept. The following section will trace the trajectory of HRE in Asian schools.

Spanning the continents of Europe and Asia, Turkey forms a bridge between the two. Turkey is placed in Asia in the current study. The Turkish Constitution includes the principle of respect for HR. The Basic Law on Education stated specifically that the goal of the law is to bring up constructive, creative and efficient individuals who have the capacity to think freely and scientifically and who possess a broad vision and respect for [HR] (Kepenekci, 2005, p. 54). In Turkey, the Ministry of State is responsible for HR vigilance and implementation. In 1995 the Ministry of State and Ministry of National Education signed a protocol to work out the modalities of HR course framework. Under this protocol, the course on Civics was revised and HRE was included. The new course was named Civics and Human Rights Education (CHRE). It was introduced in primary schools in the academic year 1998-1999. In Kepenekci's case study of HRE in Turkey, the teachers on account of its content and for other reasons considered CHRE courses inadequate. She suggested that in order to make the courses more effective, the curriculum should be rewritten in a way that allows critical thinking, participation, collaboration, and cooperation skills to develop among students (p. 65). Hence, CHRE courses in Turkey can effectively promote HRE if relevant changes in the curriculum can be introduced.

The Japanese society is perceived to be a homogeneous society. Japan has always worked in the direction make its society a homogenous unit (Mushakoji, 1998). The reality however is different. There is a community of Burakumin who are deliberately

discriminated.<sup>1</sup> Apart from this, there are few more flagrant HR issues rampant in the Japanese society. For instance, indigenous people's right (Ainu), women's plight, discrimination against differently abled, child trafficking, etc. Among all these issues, Burakumin's issue has been addressed frequently and substantially. The intensity of discrimination against the Buraku community can be summarized in an African-American's comparative perspective:

“The discrimination you face in Japan is not based on differences. The discrimination we face here in the State is based on a difference in skin color. I get the impression that you can run away from your suffering and fit into the majority group hiding your Burakumin status. But you don't hide away. You declare your identity as a discriminated Burakumin and address [HR] issues (Quoted in Osaka Prefectural Kunijima High School, 1998, p. 32).”

The discrimination against Burakus is not based on difference. It is the discrimination that creates the difference. One cannot make out from outward appearance that one is from Buraku or non-Buraku community. It is because of the Buraku people are listed — private institutions sell the list to Japanese companies and schools—and there is a family register of every Japanese citizen. These two sources are used to reveal the Buraku status of a person. The disclosure of identity is used to keep Buraku people out of

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<sup>1</sup> Racially the Burakumin are Japanese but they are descendents of an outcaste population during the feudal period. They usually do menial jobs, especially leather work. They are compared with the Indian caste of “untouchables”. The practice of untouchability is unconstitutional and punishable offence in India but few instances are visible in remote areas.

employment, admission or entry into reputed Japanese companies, colleges, schools and other institutions. In 1965, DOWA education came into being to address the Buraku issue widely. DOWA education is a policy for:

- 1) improving the education facilities and services in Burakumin controlled schools;
- 2) assigning additional teachers to such schools to provide complementary teaching;
- 3) providing support for community activities of children, youth and adults;
- 4) giving special financial aid to Buraku students;
- 5) distributing special curricular materials to teach the Burakumin history and the corresponding government measures to address the problem (Minoru and Hirasawa, 1998, p. 11; Akashi, 1999, p. 103).

In Japan DOWA education is considered equivalent to HRE. There is no national policy on implementation of HRE in Japan. It is left to the local governments, schools and teachers to design and implement HRE programs in their jurisdiction. But due to their limited resources, very few programs of HRE have been materialized (Nabeshima, Akuzawa, Hayashi, and Park, 2000). In 1992, DOWA educators established an NGO called Human Rights Education Network. The introduction of HRE Network has contributed to the development of the concept of HRE (Hayashi, 2003, p. 74). The Osaka City Education Board has been distributing a textbook on HRE called *Ningen* (Human Being) to all students in Osaka City for free. There is an attempt to incorporate international HR issues to domestic situation to classroom situations. The vital aspect is whether every teacher is incorporating this textbook in her/his daily curriculum.



Heon (1999) noted that the HRE movement in Korea is different from that in Western states. In Korea HR issues are strongly tangled with efforts to develop democracy and overcome the division of North and South Korea (p. 72). The Korean War is a well-known phenomenon in the history of East Asia and the Cold War. The war divided Korea into the Democratic People's Republic (North Korea) and the Republic of Korea (South Korea). The current section will examine the status of HRE in the Republic of Korea where the National Human Rights Commission came into existence in as late as 2001. Teachers in Korea are hesitant to use the term HRE and feel rather comfortable using terms such as values, moral or democratic-civic education (Kang, 1999, p. 61). To instill the courage to break away from the past of military dictatorial regime and to implement the Human Rights Law Act (2000), the Ministry of Education (MOE) and Korea National Commission for UNESCO (KNCU) conducted a program to train teachers who could put HRE into practice in daily school life (Lee, 2000).

In 1997 KNCU published a book entitled *Human Rights Education: How to Implement It*. MOE provided funding for the book. It was a pioneering work in the field of HRE (Park, 1999). The book is divided into three sections: theory and techniques in HRE, analysis of textbooks and school life and lesson plans. As in the case of Philippines, NGOs are playing a vital role in Korea with KNCU as a shining example. From developing material to teacher education to spread public awareness, KNCU is setting up an example.

The Philippines like Taiwan suffered from Martial Rule which was imposed in 1972 by the then President Ferdinand E. Marcos. It was only in 1986 the Marcos government was overthrown by a mass movement organized against it. After the re-establishment of democracy, it was made sure by Constitutional provisions that any HR violation would not take place in the future. The teaching of HRE was made mandatory in schools by Article II of the 1987 Constitution (popularly known as “Freedom Constitution”) and the Executive Order No. 27 (Claude, 1996). It shows the intensity of the conviction for HR held by the government of Philippines.

To implement HRE policy, HR concepts and values have been incorporated in social studies, value education and other subjects at the elementary and secondary levels (Losaria, 1998). In addition, in 1992, the Commission on Human Rights (CHR) and the Department of Education, Culture and Sports (DECS) decided to work together in implementing HRE. The cooperation between the two covered various aspects of HRE for instance, curriculum development, training and capability building, monitoring, research and evaluation, policy and legislative support, cooperative programs and networking (Chauhan, Dalangin, Santos, and Reyes, 2000).

The Philippines government took a very special step to promote HRE. Apart from (internal) cooperation among its agencies, the government sought collaboration with NGOs. The government persuaded NGOs to sign a memorandum of understanding (MOU). These NGOs were Amnesty International (AI), Amnesty International Pilipinas (AIP), UNESCO, Jose W. Diokno Foundation, Philippine Educational Theater

Association (PETA), Pamahayanan (urban housing organization), Philippine Alliance of Human Rights Advocates (PAHRA), and Likhaan (a women's organization) (Atutubo, 1998; Soto, 2001). The collaborations resulted in the development of modules for teaching, conferences, seminars and training in HRE.

## **1.2 Human Rights Education in Taiwan**

HRE in Taiwan received impetus when the process of democratization got accelerated. It culminated when Taiwan adhered to the UDHR in 1997. Taiwan was a little late in joining the decade program but it gradually speeded up its programs to catch up with other nations. The government, NGOs and academicians all had joined hands and consequently various international seminars, workshops, and training programs on HRE came into being. There was a provision in the government policy which empowered schools administration to further develop HR in their school setups. As a result of this policy, a lot more freedom was given in developing HRE. Some schools have started teaching HR as an independent but co-curricular subject. Some of these schools have very well realized the vitality of HRE, hence working in the direction of making HR an integral part of their school culture. The Taiwanese scholars have expressed their unshakable faith in HR culture and have persistently contributed through their writings, teaching and training to interns in creating and promoting HR culture based school tradition in Taiwan (Tang, 1999/March; Fong, 2004; Huang, 2006/March; Lin, 2007/March).

### **1.3 Human Right Education in India**

The project of HRE in India got impetus in the year 1995 after the announcement of the UN's Decade for HRE in 1994. The National Curriculum Framework, 2005 (NCF-2005) accepted "human dignity and rights" as a guiding principle for curriculum framework. In 1996 National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) in collaboration with the Canadian Human Rights Commission organized a seminar on HRE. There are a few NGOs that are working in the direction of promoting HR and HRE. A great step forward in the sphere of HR is the right to compulsory elementary education. This Act of Right to Education ensures that every child from age 6 to age 14 attends the school. This is the fundamental right and extremely important in accruing other rights. A bunch of Indian scholars who call themselves "Radical Humanists" hold a different opinion from the education policy makers. They believe that HRE taught as an academic discipline would never lead to the desired objective of activism on the part of the learners. Thus, they vote for HRE that is activism oriented.

### **1.4 Why Social Science Teachers?**

The reason for selecting teachers trained in social sciences was the basic nature of the discipline. The Social Sciences learning area deals directly with society, social groups, and individuals as social entities. It also addresses the issues, such as how societies work and how people can participate in it as informed citizens or members of that society. The subjects covered in the social sciences discipline are history, political science, economics,

sociology, anthropology and geography. The content of all these subjects have relations with HR and carry the potential towards a better, sound, and strong understanding of HR. It is not the intention here to judge the HR understanding of teachers from other disciplines such as languages, sciences or mathematics. Rather the argument is that social sciences teachers have an extra edge over others because of the nature of their discipline that is more conducive for incorporation of HRE.

### **1.5 Research Questions**

Q. 1. How the pedagogy of HRE is perceived by social science teachers of the elementary school of Taipei and ND in the context of their values, beliefs, attitudes, and ideals towards HRE (Subjective category)?

Q. 2. How is the pedagogy of HRE of social science teachers of Taipei and Delhi put into practice (Objective category)?

Q. 3. What is taught in HRE in the social science classrooms of Taipei and ND intentionally and unintentionally (Objective, subjective and normative category)?

Q. 4. What are the problems and obstacles faced by social science teachers during the process of teaching human rights (Objective and subjective category)?

Q. 5. Can there be a general pedagogy of HRE, which can be applied across different educational settings (Objective and normative category)?

## **1.6 Purpose and Significance of Study**

The present study is aimed to explore the role of elementary school Social Science teachers in promoting HRE. The study also intends to describe how Social Science teachers of elementary school perceive HR and HRE. It also throws light on the praxis of HR educator. Further, it explores the obstacles faced by the Social Science teachers while putting HRE into practice. The premise of the study is that the pedagogical believes and praxis of a teacher are central to the successful implementation of HRE at the elementary school level. Two reasons could be adduced to illustrate the point. First, HRE is taught in fragments that spread across various subjects. Second, at this level students are less equipped with cognition and skills to comprehend the concept of HR on their own. Students who are mostly adolescent need proper guidance, explanations and instruction from the teacher to develop the comprehension of certain abstract concepts. The teacher therefore plays a key role in the successful implementation and promotion of HRE. The present study focuses on social science teachers at schools in Taipei and ND to evaluate the objective, strategy and outcome of HRE. This study also proposes general recommendations for a successful conduct of HRE in institutions of learning.

## 1.6 Scheme of Chapters

This work consists of seven chapters. The first chapter introduces the purpose, significance, and limitations of the study as well as the main chapters themselves. The second chapter surveys the literature on the evolution of the concept of HR and HRE. The survey is organized around the following themes: definition of HR, role of UN and UDHR, role of national governments, NGOs and INGOs, definition of HRE, Pedagogy of HRE, goals and objective of HRE, approaches and models of HRE, HRE and Social Science, relationship between citizenship, peace and HR education, case studies, and challenges for HRE.

The third chapter provides an elaborate description of the research methodology and research design used in the study. In addition, it throws light on macro and micro research settings. Macro settings provide a detailed description of socio-cultural milieu of Taiwan and India. Micro settings draw a picture of Taipei and ND schools and classroom environments.

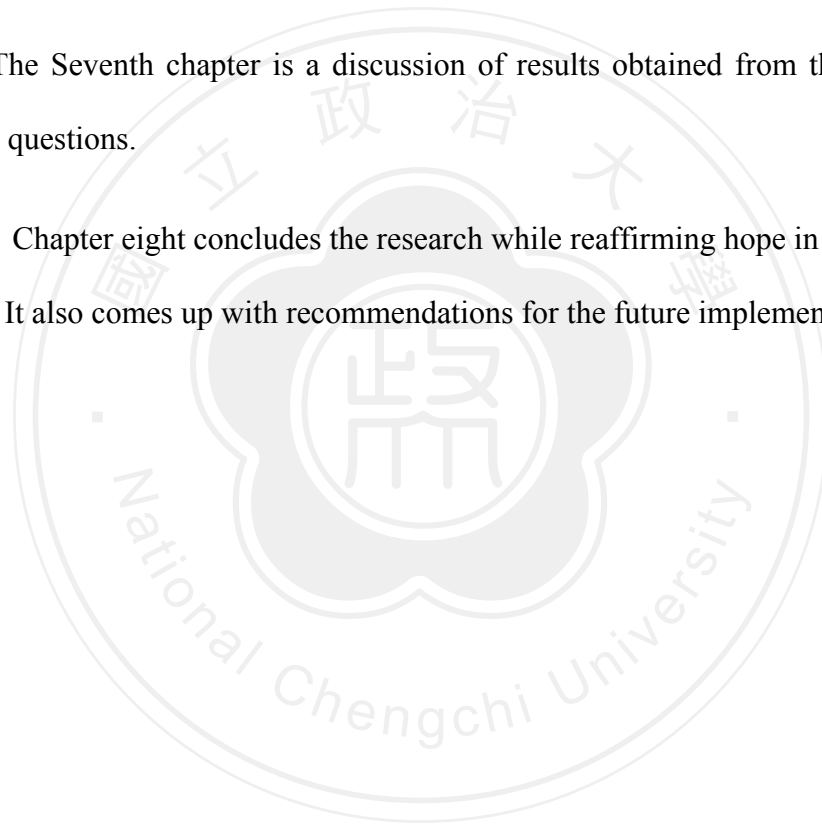
The theme of the fourth chapter discusses the educational history, policy, reforms, institutional and organizational development of HRE in Taipei as well as the role of NGOs. The second section of the chapter focuses on six grade Social Science teacher's pedagogical belief and practices of HRE. It also provides details of problems and challenges the teachers face while implementing HRE in their classrooms.

The fifth chapter follows up the discussion of the preceding chapter in a different locale. It deals with the same questions and themes but in the context of ND teachers and schools. It also gives a historical background of Indian education and developmental stages of HRE.

Chapter six compares, analyzes and synthesizes the data obtained from Taipei and ND elementary school teachers to arrive at a broader picture.

The Seventh chapter is a discussion of results obtained from the perspective of research questions.

Chapter eight concludes the research while reaffirming hope in the pedagogy of HRE. It also comes up with recommendations for the future implementation of HRE.





## Chapter Two

### Pedagogy of Human Rights Education: A Survey of Literature

“Dear Teacher: I am a survivor of a concentration camp. My eyes saw what no man should witness: Gas chambers built by learned engineers. Children poisoned by educated physicians...So I am suspicious of education. My request is: help your students become human.” (Haim Ginott quoted in Andreopoulos & Claude, 1997, p. xxii).

#### Introduction

Significant time has elapsed since the Holocaust but Ginott’s words can still send a chill down the spine. The Holocaust is not merely an event in history, a bygone episode. Sometimes the intensity and validity of a concept can be demonstrated through an extreme example. It is true that the scale of human rights (HR) violation in the Holocaust was extraordinary and perhaps no act of genocide in the history of human civilization can be equated with this incident. The point of interest for my study is however the connection between HR and education. Ginott is convincing that general education has somehow failed to raise humanity to the level where it could not be violated. The failure reminds us forcefully of a specialized segment of education termed as human rights education (HRE) that is being evolved and invested with tremendous faith and hope. The

present chapter attempts to explore, discuss and analyze issues, themes, contexts, and debates relating to HRE as articulated in a range of literature.

The literature on HRE dates back to 1948, the year of proclamation of Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The UDHR itself shows a strong faith in education and its role in spreading knowledge and awareness of HR and freedom of individuals irrespective of their nationality, race, ethnicity, religion, class, gender, disability and language.<sup>2</sup> It would be appropriate to consider the UDHR as the first piece of writing on HRE. The strong determination to promote and ensure HR pronounced in the declaration, led to a serious debate and discussion on the role of HRE. The discourse of HRE received further impetus from the International Congress on the teaching of HR held in Vienna in 1978 (Claude, 1996). Ever since, international declarations, covenants, seminars, conferences, workshops, and symposiums have played a crucial role in demonstrating and establishing unprecedented and urgent need for HRE. In addition, the discussions have provided a framework for shaping the theoretical discourse on HRE.

## **2.1 Universal Declaration of Human Rights**

The UDHR was the foundation stone of the concept of HR. More work needed to be done for it to acquire a concrete shape. However soon after its proclamation, its

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<sup>2</sup> The General Assembly proclaims this Universal Declaration of Human Rights as the common standard of achievement for all peoples and all nations, to the end 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* and by progressive measures, national and international, to secure their universal and effective recognition and observance both among the peoples of Member States themselves and the peoples of territories under their jurisdiction (excerpt from the preamble of UDHR, 1948, emphasis is mine). See Appendix A.

progress was retarded by the tensions generated due to the division of the World into two poles led by the United States of America (USA) and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republic (USSR). Both camps were divided in their conceptualization of the right configuration of civil and political rights on the one hand and economic, social and cultural rights on the other. The binary opposition of the two political ideologies became the Achilles heel of the UDHR. To resolve the tension and reach a consensus between the two groups, on 16 December 1966, the General assembly adopted the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR). It took a decade to implement the two set of bills, and the rights could be enforced only in 1976.

The year 1991 witnessed the disintegration of USSR followed by the end of the Cold War. The turn of events intensified the thinking on HR. Reardon (1995) argued that most of the problems faced by the world during the Cold War and later in its aftermath could be viewed as issues of HR (p. 1). Andreopoulos (1997) asserted that the end of the Cold War witnessed the resurgence of a troublesome array of unconventional challenges, and in the process unmasked the poverty of our conceptual tools (p. 9). There were staunch ideological and psychological hindrances in the way of the successful implementation of HR leading to their considerable weakening by the end of the Cold War. It took a lot of effort to bring HR back to life. The present situation is such that no country can get away with HR violations. The international community remains on constant vigil and raises its voice against incidents such Israel's attack on innocent

Palestinians. How much of their protests and condemnations actually translate into concrete remedial measures is a separate issue because nothing much is being done to resolve the Arab-Israeli conflict and restore peace in the region. The mismatch between reality and idealism further reinforces the need to give greater depth to the understanding and implementation of HR both socially and politically.

## **2.2 Definition of Human Rights**

HR can be explained and understood from various perspectives. There are moral, ethical, natural, and legal perspectives and justifications for HR. There are those who take a wider view of HR and there are those who reject all such rights that do not emanate from their constitution. There are views to privilege society over individuals and there are views to consider the individual just as precious as the society. In such a complex scenario the definition adopted by the UDHR appears to be quite simple but wide ranging: “[HR] are equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family” (UDHR preamble, 1948). This definition focuses on three important issues. First, it considers humankind as a family and all human beings as its members irrespective of race, color, class, speech, religion, and nationality. Being human therefore automatically qualifies one to be a holder of HR. Second, HR are equal. No one has privilege over others. Third, HR are inalienable. One cannot be denied entitlement to these rights in any circumstances. The Human Rights Educators’ Network of Amnesty International (USA) reiterates the above definition of HR. Amnesty International defines HR as the rights people are entitled to simply because they are human beings, irrespective of their citizenship,

nationality, race, ethnicity, language, gender, sexuality or abilities (1998, p. 134). To put it differently, where Constitutional rights tend to exclude certain groups from protection on the basis of citizenship, HR are universal and inclusive in their nature. Ramirez (2006) considers HR as complementary to the list of acquired rights, and he also emphasizes the commitments of civil society in ensuring HR to all.

The proclamation of UDHR entitled every human being to UHR. Osler extends the scope of the definition of HR by conceiving them as broad principles within which we can work and engage with each other and which we can apply in our efforts to resolve problems when we cannot easily agree on the best option (2008a, p. 458). The conception of HR in terms of guiding principles would ensure that public policies both at the formation and implementation level take rights of an individual into account.

### **2.3 Human Rights Education and Fulfillment of Human Rights**

Carter and Osler (2000) have argued that it is only through education, both experiential and cognitive, that [HR] will be achieved (p. 336). This holistic view of education points specifically towards HRE. The proclamation of universal [HR]—in the form of Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) in 1948—ensured that long due attention should be paid to HRE in order to promote better understanding of HR. However, the efforts initiated immediately after the declaration in the direction of HRE were not substantive or sufficient. Further, these initiatives were sporadic and unorganized. In other words, there was no unified and persistent attempt to address the

various issues pertaining to HRE. Apparently, there was not much literature available on HRE. There was no dearth of legal and philosophical literature on HR but very little educational literature was available in the field of HRE (Spurgeon, 1986; Lister, 1991). Lister (1984) provides a precise condition of literature and research on HRE in his statement that ‘it has little or no research base; examples of practice are hard to find, outstanding pioneers are lacking (cited in Bobbett, 1991)’.

The seed of HRE at the international level was sown when the United Nations declared the Decade for HRE spanning between the year 1995 and 2004. The program had led various initiatives to be undertaken to promote HRE in different parts of the world, sometimes independently and sometimes in collaboration with the UN. Reardon (1997) considered HRE as a global educational phenomenon. All societies, irrespective of their political system, culture, tradition and ideological standing, essentially require the component of HRE in their education system. No society is in a position to claim to be unmindful of issues of HR violations, inequality, poverty, environmental degradation, unequal development, etc. by pretending that they do not exist. HRE endows individuals, institutions and nations with awareness and provides with solutions, to the extent that it can, to widely prevalent problems.

### 2.3.1 What is Human Rights Education?

HRE is an emerging field, and it is all encompassing in nature. It is more than educating students and people in HR i.e. to know one's right and respect others'. HRE addresses the developmental aspects of an individual in totality. It builds on cognition, attitude towards, and skills required for establishing the HR in a society. Scholars have defined HRE differently. The difference in defining HRE primarily lies in the emphasis given to a certain aspect of HR. For instance Diallo puts emphasis on dignified life HRE seeks to provide:

[HRE] provides the opportunity to mobilize groups by bridging isolated issues and individual lived experiences with the language and understanding of basic protections of the things all human beings need to live in dignity and have quality lives. Using the [HR] framework has taught me that it is much more productive to strategize around that which you are fighting for, rather than what you are fighting against (Diallo, p. 128).<sup>3</sup>

Diallo made an interesting observation that the nature of HRE is encompassing. It addresses every possible issue which can prove a hurdle in the way of an individual's right to live with dignity. Another interesting point made by Diallo is the positive approach followed by HRE. The positive approach means that instead of fighting against HR violations one should fight to reinstate HR. Flowers (2002) conceded that there is no

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<sup>3</sup> The year of publication is not given in the text.

consensus on a single definition of HRE and argued that there are three conflicting strands in the definition provided and used by governmental bodies (including UN), NGOs, and academicians. She emphasized that the distinction draws on the vested interests of the three bodies and the role they expect to play in the promotion and expansion of HRE on a big scale. The following section analyzes the definitions along with the perspectives and roles of all the three bodies.

#### **2.4 Three Agencies of HRE: UN and National Governments, NGOs & INGOs, and Academicians**

There are three agencies that are involved in promotion of HR and HRE. These are the UN and national governments, NGOs & INGOs, and academicians. To understand how HRE is being implemented in a particular context, one has to observe the role of these agencies too. As far as institutionalization of HRE is concerned, the UN had played an important role by initiating the Decade of HRE in 1994. During the United Nations Decade for Human Rights Education, the field was institutionalized through the development of an internationally framed and produced curriculum and methodology supported by various governmental and nongovernmental [HR] centers (Sliwinski, 2005, p. 221). The decade had covered almost all aspects from policy, curriculum, resources, methodology, research, teacher education, trainer's training, in-service training, and government official's training to involvement of various stakeholders into HRE program. The integrated approach of the UN in the form of Decade for HRE became instrumental in the institutionalization of HRE across nations.



From the origin to institutionalization of HRE, at every stage, the contribution of the UN has been unprecedented. Some reservations have been registered as far as UN's input in promoting HRE is concerned, but its overall impact on HRE policy formation at international and national level is formidable. To implement HRE policy across the globe, the UN also provided with resources to help the disadvantaged nations in their HRE programs. In the Vienna Declaration and Program of Action, it is stated that HRE, training and public information were essential for the promotion and achievement of stable and harmonious relations among communities and for fostering mutual understanding, tolerance and peace (World Conference on Human Rights, 1993, p. 2).

In the field of HRE, governments by and large did not attain much in the early years of declaration (Tibbitts, 2004a). It will be fair to suggest that governments are not very proactive as far as implementation of HRE is concerned. For governments, the role of HRE is to create peace, continuity of social order and oppose socially disruptive behaviors and attitudes (Flowers, 2002, p. 3). It is apparent that governmental organizations primarily avoided disruption and conflict. It is a well-established fact that social disorder can compel governments to give up power. Mihr (2004) argued that teaching HR to people is tantamount to revolutionizing their minds, advancing their skills and transforming their behavior according to HR standards. All this could pose a threat to governments, especially to those who use the education system to manipulate people as well as those who represent authoritarian regimes. In Flowers (2002) opinion, governments necessarily look after their interests which can be served by remaining in

power. National governments do not hesitate to employ any instrument for their survival. HRE can also be used to serve the purpose of national governments. Thus, it is crucial to analyze the intentions of national governments behind introducing and formulating HRE program.

Claude (1997) noted that the United Nations is a creature of state governments (p. 396), and rightly pointed out that some governments are so powerful that they are in a position to exert influence on the UN policies on HR and HRE. Baxi (1997) noted that “in the great dilemma of the Age of Rights disempowerment and reempowerment of the state must be addressed seriously in fashioning programs and strategies for HRE” (p. 143). In other words, the power contemporary states enjoy does not sit pretty with HR practices, and the current power structure is required to be fundamentally and radically changed. There must be provision of responsibility and accountability on the part of national governments. The new power structure needed to be guided by HR principles, perspectives, passion, zeal and commitment. It would only then be possible to ensure the spread of HR culture among societies at the grassroots level.

INGOs are nonprofit organizations with international perspective in development, education and UHR. They generally operate from Western nations. On the other hand, NGOs or domestic organizations function within a nation. Some are truly “grassroots” organizations (Schafer, 1999, p. 70). Orlin noted that NGOs are the “Human Rights Gatekeeper” and rely on the HR theory for legitimacy (1998, p. 1). Boli and Thomas (1997) argued that INGOs form a “world culture”. They identified the principles of

universalism, individualism, voluntaristic authority, rational progress, and world citizenship as central elements of “world culture” (p. 171). These principles of INGOs are consistent with HR, HRE and HR culture. Hence, INGOs and NGOs play the role of catalyst in propagating HR culture by promoting “world culture”. The goal of HR culture is achieved especially through educational instruments and means i.e., HRE.

Orlin (1998), Ramirez, Suarez and Meyer (2006) conducted pioneering studies focused on the number of organizations dedicated to HRE. They found that the number quadrupled from 12 to 50 between 1980 and 1995. Tibbits made a valid point that in reality this number would be much higher because the studies did not include those organizations that do not have online existence or webpage (2008). The figures are good enough to suggest enhancement in the activities and programs related to HRE both quantitatively and qualitatively.

Flowers (2002) has highlighted the NGO’s transformative and outcome based definition of HRE. The NGO activists are skeptical of the state’s intentions in maintaining peace and social order by using HRE as an instrument. Their basic premise is that governments would do anything to maintain the current power structure. For them, radical solution provided by HRE will help in breaking age-old unequal and exploitative power structure. When activists spoke in radical language for bringing in change, the source goes back to Paulo Freire’s radical or critical pedagogy that advocated activism.<sup>4</sup> Radical or critical pedagogy is grounded on the ideas of justice and equality. It believes

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<sup>4</sup> There is no difference between the radical and critical pedagogy: they are used interchangeably.

that there is always a dominant power which works both in open and subtle ways to perpetuate unequal power relations that have been the main cause of human sufferings. The purpose of radical or critical pedagogy is to instill critical consciousness i.e. capable of revealing the agenda of dominant power. Through critical consciousness, the downtrodden would be enabled to end the sufferings inflicted upon them and look towards establishing a just and equal society. It has been argued that the NGO's working definition of HRE owed a great deal to Freire's critical pedagogy.<sup>5</sup>

In congruence with Freirian radical or critical tradition, Koenig presented a holistic view of HRE covering economic, civil, political, social, and gender related aspects of rights and urged for equal participation by everyone so that not only the sense of claim to these rights but also a feeling of ownership can be developed. Koenig alludes to the relationship between critical thinking and radical pedagogy:

HRE is a process of learning that evokes critical thinking and systemic analysis, with a gender perspective, with the learners...women and men learning to analyze their situations within a holistic framework of human rights about political, civil, economic, social and cultural concern relevant to the learners lives...to result in a sense of ownership of human rights...leading to equal participation in the decision that determine our lives and taking actions to claim them (Koenig quoted in Flowers, 2002, p. 7).

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<sup>5</sup> Freire had developed many important concepts which have become the foundation of many of these NGO's guiding principles, such as dialogue, banking concept of education, love for the world, radical pedagogy, consciousness, community participation, etc. For further details, see: Freire, P. (1998). *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (M. B. Ramos, Trans. and Revised ed.). New York: Continuum.

Scholars and activists affiliated with INGOs and NGOs perceived HRE as an international movement (Amnesty International, 2005; Tibbitts, 1996, 2008). To make the movement a reality there is need for HR literature. NGOs are the key institutions that are developing and publishing HR literature in almost all languages (Bobbett, 1997). Thus, despite various obstacles, NGOs are making a significant contribution in promoting HRE and preventing HR violations.

In any discussion of the role of INGOs and NGOs in promoting HR culture through HRE, the HREA would find a preeminent place. HREA is an INGO established out of cooperation and collaboration between the USA and the Netherlands. The HREA defines itself as:

[A] political, non-profit organization whose main mission is to support efforts aimed at introducing [HR] concepts and values into educational curricula and teaching practices. HREA is dedicated to quality education and training to promote understanding, attitudes and actions to protect human rights, and to foster the development of peaceable, free and just communities.<sup>6</sup>

Lohrenscheit (2002) characterized HREA as a global and “virtual” organization. It supports HRE by training activists and professionals; developing education programming and materials; and through community building using on-line technologies (Tibbitts, 2004b). HREA founded a community of scholars, activists and students of

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<sup>6</sup> <http://www.hrea.org/abouthrea.html>

HRE's on listserv. The inter-net community discusses every possible aspect of HRE. The membership reached 3,200 in 2004 with members drawn from different parts of the world. It would not be an exaggeration that the community and its deliberations have revolutionized the field of HRE.<sup>7</sup> The HREA is a truly HR committed organization which is expanding its base among scholars by the day.

The third group is of academicians and educationalists, some of them influenced by Freire's radical pedagogy. The group tends to shift the emphasis from outcomes to the values that create and inform the outcomes (Flowers, 2002, p. 8). For them, as Flowers puts it, "Human" of the HRE matters the most. The scholarly approach seems to be far more idealistic than its other two counterparts in orientation. Tarrow provided a definition of HRE that includes both facets of HR education; education as a fundamental HR right and education about HR rights:

HRE not only encompassed within it the concept of human rights, but is the ultimate sanction and guarantee of all the others. It is responsible for informing people of their responsibilities and their rights and should build public awareness that oppressive laws and inappropriate traditions may be reformed. Thus it offers a dual perspective of education as a [HR] and education about [HR] (1992, p. 1).

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<sup>7</sup> One can visit to [www.hrea.org](http://www.hrea.org) and becomes a member of this community and can get latest discussion posted on it by email along with other related information about various programs, courses, events, workshops or seminars on HRE etc.

For Tarrow, HRE not only constitutes an important component of HR but also ensures fulfillment by informing people of their responsibilities towards HR of others. Reardon noted that HRE is social education that intends to educate for human dignity and integrity (1995). The extension of Reardon's argument can be seen in Hicks' view. He saw HRE as a reaction to the need to take action against the dehumanization and annihilation of peoples witnessed all too frequently in recent history (1997, p. 80). Baxi (2007) argued that HRE worldwide has to be based on some premises. These premises are: [HR] movements embody the truths of peoples' struggles everywhere... [HR] are not, in their origins, western or non-western... [HRE] movement is worldwide, a way of restoration of the estate of peoples everywhere in the world (p. 40).

J. Paul Martin, Director of the Columbia University Center for the Study of Human Rights, brings in the norms and values dimension of HRE:

More than most other forms of education, HRE focuses on norms and values, both of which vary from society to society, often also from religion to religion and culture to culture within a given society. Human rights are evolving in a world, which has come to realize that common standards are necessary if we are to live together with a reasonable degree of peace and assure justice and fairness for those without power and especially those subject to persecution. (quoted in Flowers, 2002, p. 9)

For Martin HRE is one of the many forms of education. HRE creates an environment of common standards conducive for the spread of peace and justice in

different socio-economic milieu. Fritzsche expresses a similar view that HRE is an internationally recognized universal approach that aims to go beyond any national boundary (2008, p. 45). Andreopoulos (1997) sees HRE as an international obligation and task.

Sliwinski attempted to synthesize the above-mentioned arguments. In his opinion HRE seeks to instill a sense of dignity and ethical responsibility by teaching students about universally accepted principles and standards of conduct (2005, p. 219). Hornberg (2002) holds that HRE is by its very nature a topic which has the potential to help students transcend national, social, cultural and economic and other boundaries (p. 190).

The above discussion on the definition of HRE and perceptions of governments, NGOs and educationists towards HRE covers three institutional sections of the society. What about the common people? Do they have to say anything about it? There is no doubt that HRE is a frequently discussed concept and appears to be very well known to people. In reality it is not. In 1997, a study was conducted in the USA to count the number of people aware of UDHR. A staggering 93 percent of people in the USA were not familiar with UDHR (Human Rights USA, 1997; Suarez, 2007). This was the situation in USA more than a decade ago where the history of legal validity and acceptance of equality, fundamental rights, freedoms and happiness of an individual dates back to the American Declaration of Independence of 1776. The Declaration stated that ‘We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal; that among these are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness’ (quoted in Clapham, 2007, p. 10). This



general perception of people about human rights and UDHR is an indication that despite tremendous efforts invested and initiatives taken by the UN, Amnesty International and National Human Rights Commissions, HRE could not achieve success in presenting a clear picture of what exactly HR are to the people.

HR educators and scholars are also not agreed on a single definition of HRE. Shulamith Koenig's posted a definition of HRE on the listserv to get response from the academic community.<sup>8</sup> In the discussion that followed no consensus could be reached. On the listserv internet discussion board as many as three thousand responses were posted by scholars, teachers and activists on the definition of HRE.

It does pose the paradox that the field of HRE is a very specialized as well as a very general discipline. It therefore requires special attention from scholars, teachers, policy makers and activists to fully comprehend its specific as well as general character and the context in which it is put into practice. Furthermore, by defining a concept, there is a possibility of limiting its scope too. HRE is such a vast and limitless concept it requires a flexible outline. In other words, HRE is a constantly evolving concept and it is difficult to formulate a pointed definition. The lack of a universal definition of HRE would not cause any harm to the status and outcome of HRE as long as we are clear about the aims, objectives, goals and limitations of HRE.

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<sup>8</sup> [www.hrea.org](http://www.hrea.org).

## 2.5 On Pedagogy

Pedagogy is a vast and dynamic concept. The conventional point of view on pedagogy divides it into theory and practice. It perceives pedagogy in terms of either science (theory) or art (practices). The traditional understanding of pedagogy has changed towards an integrated approach. The integrated approach itself got diversified. Gramsci did not see any conceptual incongruence between theory and practice (cited in Entwistle, 1979, p. 149). Similarly, for Gadotti (1996) pedagogy is a theory of praxis.<sup>9</sup> He states that all pedagogy refers to practice and intends to be put into practice (p. 7). It can be inferred from his statement that practice particularly refers to teaching and teacher. McCulloch and Crook (2008) defined pedagogy as the general principles of effective teaching, entailing a complex blend of theoretical understanding, practical skills and competencies (p. 429). The definition by McCulloch and Crook primarily paid attention to the teacher, teaching knowledge and skills. There can be no doubt that teacher, teaching knowledge and skills of teaching are indispensable components of a successful pedagogy. Keeping this in mind the centerpiece of the current study is the teacher. It is appropriate to have a comprehensive understanding of pedagogy in order to understand the role of the teacher better.

A complete picture of pedagogy will piece together all its components. Evans (2008) enlisted a number of essential elements of pedagogy such as the teacher, context (urban, rural, school location, environment, etc.), content, view of learning (theories of

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<sup>9</sup> Praxis is a practice backed by an ideology or a program.

learning), age and stage of learner, purposes and so on (p. 520). The elements mentioned by Evans are integral components of pedagogy. Watkins and Mortimore have suggested four distinct phases of pedagogy in recent decades. The focus of each phase is different from the other. Every phase has one of these elements (mentioned by Evans) as a distinct focal point which characterizes the whole phase. The focus of the first phase is the style of teaching (for instance, authoritarian, democratic, traditional, progressive, teacher-centered or student-centered). The second phase focuses on the content and educational and child psychology. The third phase shifts the focus to the qualities of an effective teacher and the intricate processes of teaching in relation to the various theories of cognition. The last and recent phase focuses on an integrated conception of pedagogy that attends to technical competencies of teaching in relationship to critical knowledge bases and contextual forces (Watkins and Mortimore quoted in Evans, 2008, p. 520).

Thus, one can discern in recent literature the evolution of a pattern pertaining to pedagogy. In different phases of time a certain element of pedagogy has received attention and with the passage of time the focus has moved to other elements. A very recent development in the understanding of pedagogy is the integrated approach. In the integrated approach all elements and their constant interactions are given equal attention and importance.

## 2.6 A Word on Critical or Radical Pedagogy<sup>10</sup>

The discussion of literature on pedagogy will not be complete without the mention of critical pedagogy. McLaren (1995) visualizes the present time as a precarious moment in history, where relations of subjection, suffering and contempt for human dignity are at the center of social existence. The present education system is not only reinforcing but also validating the current power structure and relations prevailing in our society.

Critical pedagogy has become an umbrella term that includes Freirean pedagogy, feminist pedagogy, etc. But they all are connected with a common ideological foundation and propagate a common set of principles, such as how society and culture form and nurture social disparities, how power relations work in favor of dominant blocs, how social facts are closely related with values and dominant ideologies, how certain groups are unjustly privileged, and how mainstream research practices are involved in the reproduction of systems of class, race, and gender oppression. Kincheloe (2005) defines critical pedagogy with an emphasis on its positive and unlimited potentials:

The understanding of critical pedagogy will provide us with tools that will help implement a pedagogy that promotes social justice, cultivates the intellect, and expands the horizons of human possibility. There is so much human beings can do and accomplish that is not being done in the

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<sup>10</sup> Critical or radical pedagogy are similar concepts. Giroux (1992) explained that “I can’t conceive of a radical position that is not at the same time, and even in the first instance, critical both in historical terms about the ways schools have evolved in this country and ideologically in terms of the particular kinds of values that operate in our schools and in our practices of education” (p. 10).

first decade of the twenty-first century...critical pedagogy takes us on that journey (p. 45).

In a nutshell, critical pedagogy can be defined as an incessant revolutionary struggle to reveal the hidden realities, oppression, and exploitation existing in society in order to liberate humanity. In this process it is made and remade without fear or doubt. Unprecedented possibilities are available to harness human potentials with the help of critical pedagogy. In this sense, critical pedagogy is a valuable tool for teaching and learning of HRE because that is what HRE seeks for the development of all human potentials without any psychological, social or economic obstacle.

## **2.7 Teacher and Pedagogy of Human Rights of Education**

Cotton (2006) suggested that unless curriculum developers take account of teachers' beliefs in designing new curriculum materials, those materials are unlikely to be implemented in their intended format (p. 67). A curriculum is only as powerful as the teacher using it (Tibbitts, 2005, p. 36). Thus, the teacher's agency in implementing curriculum is indispensable and her/his belief system plays a significant role in achieving the goals fixed by curriculum planners. Thus, any discussion about the pedagogy of HRE has to focus on the teacher as the main human agency involved in pedagogy. This section would deal with a range of literature on the correlation between the pedagogy of HR and the teacher. Tarrow (1987) edited a seminal work on *Human Rights and Education* in two parts: education as HR (ten chapters) and education about HR (three chapters). The

volume gives a lucid account of the status of HRE in various countries. The second part deals with teaching, training and HRE in schools in a comparative framework. Shafer (1987) stated that schooling is a human right, the assurance of right to education logically must be accompanied by education about HR if individuals are to comprehend what rights accrue to them, their responsibility toward others, and the boundaries of state power set in the various HR agreements (p. 191). Shafer was of the opinion that through human rights education, people can become aware not only of their rights but also their responsibilities. Shafer mentioned that it is in social studies that HR can be best located. She took the examples of three states, viz. America (Capitalist state), The Federal Republic of Germany (European democracy) and The German Democratic Republic (Socialist state), and showed how differently HRE is conceived in them. She is of the opinion that even if the state policy is not very friendly toward HRE, the teacher can still realize the goal of HR by her pedagogical skills. Shiman (1991) too expressed the opinion that in these exciting times for [HRE], the challenge of [HRE] ultimately falls on classroom teachers, not on state agencies (p. 201). In other words, even if the state is proactive in the matter of dissemination of HRE in the schools but the teacher does not have the right temperament and commitment towards establishment and furtherance of HR through her/his pedagogy, then there is no assurance of fulfillment of the aims of HRE.

Stobart (1991) argued that the effectiveness of HRE depends on the commitment, quality and skills of the individual teacher who will need both training and support. In other words, he tried to combine the nature and nurture thesis. He believes in teacher's

innate capacity to teach efficiently and effectively but argues for support and training for further development and polishing of teaching skills. Best (1991) stated that defending and promoting [HR] is largely a matter of education and it depends on the attitudes and efforts of teachers (p. 120). In all these positions, particularly the last one, the agency of the teacher is held to be quite critical in the attainment of the goals of HR. Asano (2000) in a study on Japanese school reform, HR and global education suggested that only enthusiastic teachers could introduce activities to enrich the life and culture of schools. The enthusiastic teacher is one who is engaged in 'relationships'. As Freire (1997) writes:

The role of man was not only to be in the world, but to engage in relations with the world—that through acts of creation and re-creation, man makes cultural reality and thereby adds to the natural world (p. 43).

One cannot engage in a relationship without passion and enthusiasm. This applies to the teacher student relationship as well. A sparkling teacher can induce positive attitude towards HR among her students. McLeod (1991) saw the teacher in two roles, as an exemplary person, and as a methodologist or strategist (p. 177). The first suggests that the teacher is open to new ideas, and the second refers to the pedagogy she/he practices. These two roles of the teacher are very significant in HRE in a multicultural society. McLeod held the two roles of the teacher to be conducive to attitudinal changes or development of positive human relations which is the foundation of a HR conscious and sensitive society.

Meintjes (1997) envisaged the criteria a teacher of HRE should adopt and outlined them as follows: (1) students should be able to recognize the HR dimensions of a present problem, and (2) they should be able to think of new and more solutions. These criteria involve two issues: conceptualization of HR and their implementation in the life within the premises of school as well as outside. A similar opinion is echoed in the final draft of UNESCO International Congress on Teaching of HR:

[HRE] and teaching should stress that a new international economic, social and cultural order is essential to enable all people to enjoy their [HR] and to promote and facilitate education on [HR] at all levels in all countries (UNESCO, 1979, p. 90).

The UNESCO recommendation pointed that the era and society we live in is in rapid transition and in the midst of international and domestic phenomena such as globalization, immigration (both legal and illegal), information technology and communication (it has shortened the distance by rapid transmission of information and made the world flat, (Friedman, 2006), unemployment, population growth, class differences, gender discrimination, racial prejudice, child abuse, child labor, environmental degradation, and terrorism, etc. In such a tumultuous environment, complications have exceeded the advantages conferred by ‘benevolent’ developmental transformation all over the world.<sup>11</sup> Pedagogy of HRE will enable learners to understand

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<sup>11</sup> The reason behind the usage of live instead of exist is that contemporary modern human being lacks critical consciousness. In other words, she is reluctant to participate and deliberate in the process of her



that a significant number of deprived or downtrodden sections of the society have some basic, inalienable, imprescriptible, HR to protect against unequal treatment, exploitation or abuse, which are accorded to them for being human and to protect their dignity and integrity. The teacher will make learners realize that HR cannot be violated or denied. Further, the teacher will prepare them to look beyond the present scenario and unravel the problem that a considerable number of people are in reality denied of HR due to their lack of awareness or due to exploitation by powerful groups.

The idea of HRE is welfare oriented but its potential misuse cannot be denied. Flowers (2003) warned against the misuse of [HRE] by those who learn the language without embracing the vision, its appropriation by one group or another for their own good (p. 17). The special language of HRE can become an ideological tool to serve those who are politically or culturally powerful. Freire (1998) wrote:

What is equally fundamental to the educational practice of the teacher is the question of ideology. Sometimes its presence is greater than we think. It is directly linked to that tendency within us to cloak over the truth of the facts, using language to cloud or turn opaque what we wish to hide. We become myopic. Blind. We become prisoners of artifice. Trapped (pp. 112-113).

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own development. Freire was very conscious of and careful regarding the distinction inherent in the praxis of the two words.

Following Freire's viewpoint, not only the language but the ideology practiced by a teacher could become a tool to misinterpret or misuse HRE. Educators are thus required to be extra cautious while teaching their students. They need to pay special attention to the technical language used in the legal documents pertaining to HR regulations. The purpose is to ward the danger of the future generation being lost in the language of human rights. Freire (1998) argued that a teaching which does not involve rigorous reflections on the teaching practices cannot be termed a correct way of teaching. In other words, the teacher of HRE must apply dialogical strategy to think over what she teaches, and how? Other relevant questions are what are the other possible ways of discussing the same issue? How her teaching was induced or influenced by ideology.

An interesting fact is that culture is an outcome of human learning and all kinds of practices, traditions and beliefs which undermine or deny HR are also cultural. If culture is created by human beings then it is subject to change. Thus, with the help of human act, this anti-HR culture can be re-created. Culture is the addition made by men to a world they did not make; culture is the result of men's labor, of their efforts to create and re-create; the transcendental meaning of human relationships; the humanist dimension of culture (Freire, 1997, p. 46).

The teacher must be aware of the fact of creation of culture. The effectiveness of HRE and HR practices largely rely on this awareness. If the teacher considers culture as transcendental then the possibility of social change becomes highly unlikely. For the pedagogy of HR, the teacher must think that culture is temporal, i.e. as times change,

culture must also change. As US President Abraham Lincoln said, ‘The dogmas of the quiet past are inadequate to the stormy present... As our case is new, so we must think anew and act anew (cited in Tibbitts, 1994). This quote is very appropriate and relevant in arguing for achieving HR based culture in all societies.

The implicit sanctions on behavior toward other people and to the self which are exemplified in the authority figure of the teacher are powerful influences for the young child (Lyseight-Jones, 1991, p. 73). This authority of a teacher on children is contested by many scholars.

The teacher’s legitimacy is now being questioned, along with the value of his subject matter and the methods he has been taught to use. He is asked to defend and justify beliefs he once could take for granted. He is asked to account for himself to diverse groups of people. It becomes increasingly evident that he cannot fall back on shared agreements or find his sanction in what is understood to be the moral law (Greene, 1973, p. 237).

In a changed educational scenario the teacher is not anymore a moral authority. Teaching is considered a profession, and like any other profession accountability is attached to it. The teacher is responsible for the educational achievements and overall development of the pupils. In addition to accountability a new hope is vested in the teacher to inculcate HR culture among students through teaching of HRE. Freire (1998) strongly put forward the view that teaching is a human act and the role of the teacher is

more than transferring knowledge of the subject matter. The inference from Freire's quotation is that the teacher has a very special position in the process of learning. Here, learning is not a mechanical activity. It is a human activity, a live act. Thus, the teacher is more significant than the lessons or textbooks. This role becomes more crucial at the outset of the teaching of HR because it involves inculcation of HR values, attitudes and skills among early learners.

The development of HR values, attitudes and skills cannot be an outcome of a mere transmission of the knowledge of the content of HR related regulations or legal texts or international conventions. For this, teaching must involve and establish a link with daily life experiences of pupils and teachers. Magendzo (2005) urged teachers to be conscious of the manifestation and experience of HR in day to day life as well as in their personal and collective experiences (p. 139). The Media tends to sensationalize HR issues and violations. The learners easily form their opinion about these events based on media reports. The impressions of learners' about HR are not theoretically grounded. In other words, they cannot provide valid reasons for their opinions on certain issues related to HR. Thus, the role of the teacher is to compare and contrast the relationship between empirical content of HRE taught in the classroom and the impressions of learners derived from the media.

The teacher is required to make the teaching lively to arouse curiosity. It is in wonder and questioning that learning begins (Greene, 1973, p. 268). Thus, in HRE both teacher and learners have to question the various aspects of HR implementations and

violations and the way students could possibly contribute to curbing the infringement of HR and ensure fairness in society. This can be achieved only if the teacher can bring out the complexity of the ideas of inequality, discrimination, hatred and prejudice. These ideas and tendencies are the main cause of degradation of humanity in general and human dignity in particular. McLaren, (1995) suggested that in order to reclaim human dignity we need the pedagogy of dissent. Pedagogy of dissent educates students into the prevailing anti-HR traditions unfavorable to the majority of the masses and against humanity and human dignity. All this cannot be achieved without high esteem, happiness and self-motivation amongst teachers (Lyseight-Jones, p. 75). In simple terms, teachers are required to realize that teaching profession is more than what they think it is.

Freire found the root cause of crisis in modern education system in the banking concept of education.<sup>12</sup> He argued that Banking education not only maintains but also stimulates the contradiction through the following attitudes and practices:

- (a) the teacher teaches and the students are taught;
- (b) the teacher knows everything and the student knows nothing;
- (c) the teacher thinks and the students are thought about;
- (d) the teacher talks and the students listen—meekly;
- (e) the teacher disciplines and the students are disciplined;

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<sup>12</sup> In the banking concept of education, knowledge is a gift bestowed by those who consider themselves knowledgeable upon those whom they consider to know nothing.

- (f) the teacher chooses and enforces his choice, and the students comply;
- (g) the teacher acts and the students have the illusion of acting through the action of the teacher;
- (h) the teacher chooses the program content, and the students adapt to it;
- (i) the teacher confuses the authority of knowledge with his or her own professional authority, which she and he sets in opposition to the freedom of the students;
- (j) the teacher is the Subject of the learning process, while the pupils are mere objects (p. 54).

There can be little doubt that the banking concept of education does not consider the child a thinking being. The process involved in banking education is mechanical and treats human beings as machines. Critical pedagogues have offered a viable alternative. Freire (1998) came up with a solution that lies in human effort itself. He argued that human existence cannot be silent, nor can it be nourished by false words, but only by true words, with which men and women transform the world (p. 69).<sup>13</sup> The question emerges that what is the role of teachers in transforming the world. Giroux defines the role a teacher in following words:

It is very hard work. That is why teachers need to be intellectuals, to realize that teaching is a form of mediation

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<sup>13</sup> To speak a true word is to transform the world. When people talk about change their words hold no meaning unless translated into actions and lead to change or transformation in current system. For further details see Freire (1998). *Pedagogy of the oppressed* (M. B. Ramos, Trans. Revised ed.). New York: Continuum.

between different persons and different groups of persons and we can't be good mediators unless we are aware of what the referents of the mediation we engage in are. Teaching is complex, much more complex than mastering a body of knowledge and implementing curriculums. The thing about teaching is that the specificity of the context is always central. We can't get away with invoking rules and procedures that cut across contexts (1992, p. 17).

Perumal (2008) substantiated the above view by suggesting that despite the 'nobility' of her educative objectives, teaching is a complex and ambiguous activity (p. 211). Teaching is a responsibility that requires a lot of intellectual rigor and physical stamina. What makes teaching complex is its context specific nature. Giroux affirmed that there are no sacrosanct rules of teaching which cannot be applied to every context. On the other hand, Osler and Starkey (1994) pointed out that commitment and skills of teachers are two important aspects of the teaching profession that can make HRE effective in any part of the world.

## **2.8 Teaching of Human Rights**

There is a wide variety of pedagogies prevalent in different disciplines: pedagogy of science, pedagogy of social science, pedagogy of mathematics, etc. The pedagogy of HRE has not received the attention it deserves. The reason for this is the tendency either to assimilate HR concepts into social sciences or separate them as co-curriculum. There is no dispute over the significance of the teaching of HR but no special attention has been

given to develop the pedagogy of HR. This section will survey the literature that has been produced so far on the teaching of HR.

The teaching of HR (as human values) was partially visible in moral education of the different education systems. In 1948, the preamble of universal declaration of HR emphasized the role of teaching in achieving the goals of HR. In 1978, UNESCO International Congress on Teaching of HR was held in Vienna. The document that was prepared carried guidelines listed below (UNESCO, 1978, p. 2). Lawson (1991) adumbrated the foundational principles that could constitute HRE, viz. reciprocity, solidarity and justice. These principles explain at least to an extent how HRE should be practiced.

### **2.8.1 Guidelines for Teaching Human Rights Education-UNESCO**

The guidelines provided by UNESCO proved to be a landmark in the teaching of HRE. The guidelines included principles and considerations that could form the core of HRE:

1. [HRE] and teaching should be based on the principles which underlie the Charter of the United Nations, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenants on Human Rights and other international human rights instruments. Consequently, equal emphasis should be placed on economic, social, cultural, civil and political rights as well as individual and collective rights. The indivisibility of all human rights should be recognized.
2. The concept of human rights should not be formulated in traditional or classical terms but should include the historical



experience and contributions of all peoples particularly in relation to the major contemporary problems such as self-determination and all forms of discrimination and exploitation.

3. [HRE] and teaching must aim at:

(i) Fostering the attitudes of tolerance, respect and solidarity inherent in [HR].

(ii) Providing knowledge about human rights, in both their national and international dimensions, and the institutions established for their implementation.

(iii) Developing the individual's awareness of the ways and means by which human rights can be translated into social and political reality at both the national and the international levels.

4. While education should make the individual aware of his or her own rights, it should at the same time instill respect for the rights of others.

5. Care should be constantly taken to create awareness about the close relationship between human rights, on the one hand, and development and peace, including inter alia disarmament, on the other hand. UNESCO should make it a priority task to promote the analysis and understanding of this relationship.

6. Human rights must be seen as an aspect of professional, ethical and social responsibility in all fields of research, study, teaching and work.

7. [HRE] and teaching should stress that a new international economic, social and cultural order is essential to enable all people to enjoy their human rights and to promote and facilitate education on human rights at all levels in all countries.

8. [HR] must be taught at all levels of the educational system, as well as in out-of-school settings, including the family, and in continuing education programmes, including literacy and post-literacy programmes. States shall strive to improve and broaden [HRE] and teaching and co-operate to this end.

9. It is not enough to dispense teaching and education in the spirit of a respect for human rights; human rights should also be taught as a subject integrated in the appropriate disciplines and in particular fields such as philosophy, political science, law and theology, they should be taught as an independent course.

10. In order for the teacher of human rights to be able to carry out his or her task properly, it is particularly important that his or her personal integrity and freedom of expression be guaranteed (pp. 74-75).

The principles and considerations listed above are universal in nature because these are emanating from the UDHR where universality and indivisibility are the basic premise. This is a comprehensive and tangible set of guidelines for teachers of HRE grounded in historical experiences and contemporary problems. It inconspicuously states what, why, when and how of teaching HRE. The guidelines also provided the conceptual framework for HRE.

## **2.9 Goals, Objectives and Content of Human Rights Education**

The guidelines do talk about principles and considerations of HRE, but they remain quiet about the goals and content of HRE. The Council of Europe offered a list of goals which are cited in Meintjes (1997):

- (i) Knowledge of the major ‘signposts’ in the historical development of human rights.
- (ii) Knowledge of the range of contemporary declarations, conventions, and covenants.
- (iii) Knowledge of major infringements of human rights.
- (iv) Understanding of the basic conceptions of human rights (including also discrimination, equality, etc.).
- (v) Understanding of the distinctions between political/legal and socio/economic rights.
- (vi) Understanding of the relationship between individual, group, and national rights.
- (vii) Appreciation of one’s own prejudices and the development of tolerance.
- (viii) Appreciation of the rights of others.
- (ix) Sympathy for those who are denied rights.
- (x) Intellectual skills for collecting and analyzing information.
- (xi) Action skills. (p. 69; Heater, 1991, p. 242).

The goals stipulated in the Council of Europe’s publication covered the aspects of knowledge, understanding and skills developed through HRE. Meintjes (1997) argued that the objectives of these goals are largely cognitive and attitudinal (p. 69). He further acknowledged the presence of behavioral objectives especially in the context of “Action skills”. What he meant by cognitive, attitudinal and behavioral “objectives” can be explained. These “objectives” denote a holistic development among children, in all

spheres, whether it is at the level of cognition of HR or at the level of attitude towards HR or at the level of practice of HR in daily life. The HR educators can use these goals to pursue a number of above-mentioned and many more objectives through various means.

Reardon (1995) developed the core concepts and content of HRE for different age groups of school children (see Appendix B). The framework of core concepts and values of HRE outlined above is according to development sequence of children, UDHR and goals of HRE mentioned in the Council of Europe publication. Since the focus of my study is elementary school, the discussion would revolve around the later childhood stage and the curriculum designed for it. At later childhood level, the core concepts included are law, citizenship, community rights, charter, constitution, freedom, declaration and social responsibility. The HR instruments, used to discuss these concepts and values are community standards, declaration of Independence, African Freedom charter, U.S. Bill of Rights, the UDHR, Convention on the Rights of the Child. Through these standards and instrument the above-mentioned core concepts and values could be understood and inculcated respectively among young children. At this stage, students are capable of understanding these concepts and this is the right time to realize their responsibility along with freedoms.

## **2.10 Approaches and Models of Human Rights Education**

In the present context, approach means a way to look at various issues; model signifies a framework to put an approach into practice. There are different approaches to

HRE. It is important for teachers and HR educators to be well versed in approaches to HRE. The understanding of these approaches provides a better grounding in HRE and its implementation. The approaches to HRE are holistic values approach, historical approach, international standards and institutions approach and reconstructionist approach. Reardon (1995) gives a comprehensive account of these approaches. The following discussion will highlight their significance for teaching HRE.

### **2.10.1 Holistic Values Approach**

Holistic Values approach is a normative approach that originated from System Theory.<sup>14</sup> System Theory premised that every phenomenon is a system in itself and an integral part of a system at macro level. To understand any phenomenon, it is necessary to see it within the systemic approach. Reardon (1995) introduced the concept of holistic values approach for HRE. This approach perceives education as ‘education for human dignity and integrity’. Within the holistic approach dignity is defined as the fundamental innate worth of the human person and integrity as the wholeness of the physical, mental, aesthetic, and spiritual facets of the person (Reardon, 1995, p. 5). Human dignity and integrity form the core concepts of the holistic approach. Lohrenscheit (2002) counted human dignity to be the core value of a better world (p. 174), while Reardon characterized dignity and integrity as the inter-reliant concepts at the center of the ethical system. This approach is in coherence with UDHR principles too, where human dignity and integrity are the prime focus since the inception of UDHR.

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<sup>14</sup> Holistic values approach is a normative approach because it is determined by values.

Five values are derived from the ethical system based on human dignity and integrity, viz. economic equity, equal opportunity, democratic participation, freedom of person, and sustaining and sustainable environment (Reardon, 1995, p. 6). The five values cover almost all aspects which are crucial in securing human dignity and integrity but more could be added to the list according to needs and circumstances.<sup>15</sup>

These same values suffuse [HRE] and thus endow it with a dynamic quality of education for change. They emphasize participation in the struggle for universal human dignity.....[HRE] is intended to prepare the learner to become a maker of history, bringing values and concepts into lived human experience and changing the human condition toward the achievement of the “good society” (Reardon, 1995, p. 7).

In a nutshell, holistic values approach is a value-based approach. The purpose of it is to protect human dignity and integrity through HRE. It follows a developmental sequence and values framework of HRE (to be discussed in detail in the section on HRE models).

### **2.10.2 Historical Approach**

To look at HR and teach them from a historical perspective as well as to teach history from the lenses of HR is called historical approach. Scholars have traced back the evolution of HR from the Code of Hammurabi and the Ten Commandments to the

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<sup>15</sup> In the age of globalization the pace of change is fast and poses new problems not only to human dignity and integrity but to the very existence of humankind. Thus, change in values is necessary to restrain the negative impact of emerging threats to humanity.

American and French Revolutions and most recently UDHR. History becomes the foundation of HRE insofar as HR are derived from and defined out of the lived history of human beings (Reardon, 1995, p. 8). The lived history of human beings implies the efforts made by the common people to regain their rights. The HR context of history emphasizes the human social experience of ordinary people, not just the achievements of outstanding leaders (Reardon, 1995, p. 8). Hence, the historical approach to HRE is both individual and group based.

In historical approach the HRE content is likely to be more history oriented.

Starkey (1991) listed some themes to be discussed in the history curriculum:

[T]he origins and growth of democracy, slavery, colonialism, imperialism, revolutions, their ideals and their impact, the suspension of human rights in wars, the United Nations, European unity, the growth of trade unions, social and education legislation and development, communications and the mass media (pp. 24-25).

Starkey's brief and mostly Eurocentric list of topics can be enlarged by including national and regional necessities, specific historical experiences of non-European societies, and other events and incidents pertaining to HR.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> This Council of Europe publication caters to the educational needs of the Europeans. But it can be a point of reference for non-European countries too.

### **2.10.3 An International Standards and Institutions Approach**

In this approach, international standards comprise primarily UDHR, ICCPR, ICESCR, and the main institutions are the UN and its bodies and national HR commission. Meintjes (1997) suggested that a general and abstract approach can be adopted with the focus on UDHR (1997). This general and abstract approach towards UDHR considers HRE as an instrument in achieving empowerment which prepares the ground for HR culture in a society. Reardon (1995) argued that even though the world has changed considerably, the Declaration is still the most comprehensive conceptual statement of rights. She further added that the UDHR should be the centerpiece of any [HR] curriculum (p. 9). The Universal Declaration itself can be seen as a curriculum in 30 steps or paragraphs, which are basic to any program of [HRE] (Lohrenscheit, 2002, p. 175). Fernandez and Jenker listed as many as forty international and regional documents which have can be used as teaching material (cited in Lohrenscheit, 2002, p. 175). These documents give directions, provide content or teaching material and highlight the role of teachers in the implementation of HRE. Thus these international instruments and institutions are key factors in the promotion and development of HRE worldwide.

### **2.10.4 Reconstructionist Approach**

Reconstructionist approach is process oriented. It demonstrates how societies learn to identify social wrongs, acknowledge how they violate human dignity and define and apply HR standards to overcome them. A Reconstructionist approach demonstrates



how HR movements emerge (Reardon, 1995, p. 11). The social movements emerge and reemerge because social change has been a continuous demanded in the history of humankind. This was because there was never a period or point of time when disparity, inequality, exploitation and violence did not exist. These conditions prepared the ground for the actions taken by the downtrodden against perpetual injustice and legitimized them. Reconstructionist approach based HRE entrusts a huge responsibility and visualizes teachers with hopes that they would bring in social change with effective implementation of HRE. Reardon (1995) correctly maintains that this approach offers possibilities for hope in the human future (p. 12).

#### **2.10.5 Service Learning Approach**

Service learning is experiential learning designed to provide a service needed by the community while allowing students to learn and apply course concepts in the real world (Eyler and Giles cited in Krain and Nurse, 2004, p. 192). Service learning is based on course work and fulfills the goals of course work. It is different from community service.<sup>17</sup> It provides a linkage between the course work and real life experiences. Krain and Nurse (2004) noted that:

Service learning allows students to move beyond textbook examples and participate in actual case. Students taking part in service learning projects can put names and faces to the otherwise anonymous people affected by HR issues.

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<sup>17</sup> Community service is an extra-curricular activity. While its purpose is to serve the community it does not have academic or theoretical grounding.

Immersing themselves in a real world environment helps them to see the complexity of situations faced by the people with whom they interact (p. 193).

This approach gives an opportunity to students to practice what they have learnt in the classroom. They can evaluate, analyze and apply theories into the real world. With the help of service learning approach, the level of abstraction of HR principles can be minimized through concrete situations available on the ground.

Tibbitts (2002) outlined three models of HRE and the teaching of HRE, viz. (1) Value Awareness Model (2) Accountability Model, and (3) Transformational Model. Tibbitts claimed that the three models can lead to further research and theory development in HRE.

#### **2.10.6 Value Awareness Model**

The Value Awareness Model is based on philosophical-historical approach. This model focuses on norms and values founded on humanity and dignity (Tibbitts, 2002, p. 163). The content of this approach includes a history of HR, international conventions, information about key instruments and mechanisms of protection. In this model teachers engage their students to inculcate interest in HRE. This approach exposes learners to the message of HR through education. It also strives to spread public awareness regarding HR involving mechanisms such as, public art and advertising, media coverage, and social gathering.

### **2.10.7 Accountability Model**

The Accountability Model is founded on legal approach. It prepares learners for (1) directly monitoring HR violations and advocating with the necessary authorities (2) taking special care to protect the rights of people for which they have some responsibility (Tibbitts, 2002, p. 165). This model trains the learners to deal legally with the enforcement or violations of HR.

### **2.10.8 Transformational Model**

The Transformational Model relies on psychological-sociological approach. It believes in empowering the individual to recognize HR violations and become pro-active to prevent them. It especially covers themes of gender, racism and minorities. This model is inspired by social developmental psychology, and involves self-reflection and emotional support from within the community of learners (Tibbitts, 2002, p. 166). It is pertinent to mention Freire's concept of critical conscientization. By critical conscientization, he meant development of the awakening of critical awareness through educational efforts (1997, p. 19). Critical awareness enables learners to see themselves as subjects who can bring in change and transform their societies.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> The term Subjects denotes those who know and act, in contrast to objects, which are known and acted upon. See the note by Ramos in Freire, (1998).

## **2.11 Human Rights Education: Part of Social Science or Independent Discipline or Integrated into School Curriculum?**

HRE is a relatively new field in the sphere of education. It is an emerging practice, sanctioned at the intergovernmental, national and regional levels (Tibbitt cited in Jones, 2006, p. 197). Though started lately, it shows significant signs of progress. There is no consensus over its status insofar as it is not quite settled whether HRE should be a part of social science or treated as an independent discipline or integrated into school curriculum.

Gadotti (1996) argued that just as the last century was the century of Natural Science this has been the century of human and social science (p. 6). There can be little dispute that the education about HR first began with their incorporation in social sciences. O'Brien (1999) strongly argued in favor of integration of HR into social studies. There is plenty of literature discussing and analyzing the role of social studies in implementing citizenship education and promoting democratic culture in a society (Angell, 1991; Chilcoat and Ligon, 1994; Kickbusch, 1987; Longstreet, 1985; Oldendorf, 1989; Oliner, 1983; Wood, 1985). Similarly, parallels are drawn and it has been insisted to teach and promote HR through social studies (Fritzsche, 2008; Osler, 2008a).

Jones (2006) noted that HR content usually appears within the discipline of social studies (p. 197). Tibbitts (1994) showed how in the post-communist Central and Eastern European societies<sup>19</sup> HR principles at the primary and secondary levels of schooling were

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<sup>19</sup> Tibbitts was project director of a three-year national effort in HRE in Romania.

introduced in Civics' curriculum. Ogundare (1993) discovered in his study of Nigeria that the only subject that exposes children to HRE in primary and junior secondary schools is social studies. Wade (1994) conducted a case study on fourth graders' conceptual change in understanding HR in elementary social studies. The study concluded that social studies is a major source in education about HR. Osler (2008a) maintains that HRE is not an alternative to civics, social studies, religious education, moral education or education for democratic citizenship (p. 465). HR principles need to underpin both the content and practices of all these subjects.

Tibbitts (2002) noted that HRE has the prospect of evolving into a full-fledged field—both within HR and within education. Lately there is an effort to develop HR as a separate, independent discipline. Reardon is a pioneer HR educationalist who developed a conceptual framework for HRE. Flowers (2003) developed a similar program for HRE (See Appendix C). Her program starts from age three while Reardon's started from age five. Reardon developed her framework on the ground of Core Concepts and Values, HR Standards and Instruments, and Issues and Problems that are involved in HRE. On the other hand Flowers made goals, key concepts, practices, specific HR problems and educational standards and instruments. These two frameworks serve as foundation for the development of HRE as an independent subject in schools.

There is another group of HR scholars and educationalists who believe in the integration of HRE into school curriculum. They think that inculcation of HR culture depends on horizontal, vertical and circular (dynamic) expansion of HRE. For that HRE

is required to assimilate in all subjects and curricular or co-curricular activities. Kepenekci (2005) holds the view that effectiveness of [HRE] largely depend on its status as a separate course as well as a part of general education (p. 55-56). Council of Europe (2003) suggested it emphatically to include education in [HR] in all school curricula (p. 77). Hornberg (2002) discussed German concept and educational system of general education and integration of HRE into it.<sup>20</sup> Hornberg noted that:

[T]his concept centers around the notion of “epoch-typical key problems” and the critical-constructive didactics. Current “epoch-typical key problems” are: war and peace; the meaning and problematic nature of the principle of nationality versus specific (s) or culture (s) and interculturality; ecology; growth of the world’s population; societal inequality; steering information and communication media; individual happiness, human responsibility and acknowledgement of the other (p. 190).

All these “epoch-typical key problems” have direct bearing for HRE. HRE has the potential to provide knowledge about and develop skills to combat problems efficiently. A step further was suggested by Tibbitts (2004b) that a HR perspective should also be applied to the education system as a whole.

## **2.12 Human Rights Education and Adolescents**

One should catch young mind early for learning. Yadav (1978) says this is the stage at which critical reasoning about controversial issues pertaining to HR is to be

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<sup>20</sup> The concept of general education was outlined by Klafki (cited in Hornberg, 2002).

developed. To elucidate, adolescence is the age when through HRE a critical and correct perception about and of HR can be developed. Adolescence spans roughly from 10 to 14 years when the cognitive development of abstract concepts starts taking place among pupils around this age. Concepts associated with HR can, and should, be acquired from an early stage (Henry, 1972). Ahmad (2000) opined that children acquire their basic values early in life and the values they are able to imbibe at this early stage stick with them for the rest of their life (p. 44). A Commonwealth Study conducted by Bourne, Gundara, Dev, Ratsoma, Rukanda, Smith, and Birthistle concluded that while some HR ideas could be introduced earlier, the general view is that the age of 11 is the right time to start (1997, p. 20). Once a child is conditioned by one type of culture, it is difficult to change her/his fundamental thought orientation. Thus, the nature of educational culture of the adolescents becomes very significant. This is applicable to the development of the culture of HR among adolescents at the elementary level education.

Young children have an acute sense of what is fair, just and right in their relationships with their peers, parents and teachers. Nothing rankles more than unjust treatment. This primitive sense can be built upon for the more sophisticated concepts of rights which have been developed in political contexts (Heater, 1991, p. 241).

The observation made by Heater is valid to a great extent.<sup>21</sup> Dye (1991) argued that the adolescent age group offers an opportunity and a need for HRE, for broadening horizons, and for exploring human themes that hold a personal interest which can be developed through correlation with experiences. The age from 11 to 14 is the years of rapid socialization and development of the notion of “us” and “them,” a significant factor in HR violation. It is necessary to make pupils realize that there are no innate differences among human beings except for those created by culture. This is the right age to press issues such as inequality, prejudices and discrimination widely prevalent in the society (Reardon, 1995). Ely-Yamin (1993) is of the opinion that HR must become part of students’ consciousness as they begin to form perceptions of their society and their personal and national identities (p. 14). In other words, adolescence is the age when through HRE a correct perception of human identity can be developed. Students will have to ponder that their first identity is that of human beings and the rest is secondary and comes later in the priority list.

Krain & Nurse (2004) are convinced that if children are directly introduced to and engaged in interaction with victims of HR violations, the experiment can have a long lasting effect. They recommend service learning approach for the teaching of HR. As mentioned earlier, service learning is experiential learning. It is that part of HR curriculum in which students first learn about the content of HR and then have a real life

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<sup>21</sup> This was my personal experience too when I was teaching in an elementary school. Children have an innate sense of justice.



experience, for instance, through visits to juvenile prison or interviews with people who have been denied HR. The purpose of service learning is to establish a link between classroom education and practical life.

Bullying is a common practice among adolescents in school. Kirman (2004) argued that the concept of bullying can be used as a theme in human rights education curriculum. He outlined the objectives of this unit as follows: (1) learn that people, including children, have [HR], (2) learn about examples of [HR] violations, (3) study how these [HR] are protected, (4) examine the definition and examples of bullying, (5) understand that bullying is a violation of [HR], (6) decide what they can do about [HR] violations (7) review anti-bullying procedures in their school, (8) act, where possible, to prevent local bullying and other [HR] violations (p.334). Thus, Kirman showed how various issues pertaining to HR violation which are in a way related to the students' day to day life could become a significant theme in the curriculum of HRE.

Reardon (1995) explicated that while developing a positive attitude among the adolescents toward HR, the teachers sometimes start preaching. At this age, adolescents dislike lectures on values, attitude and behavior coherent with HR tradition. Thus, to a very large extent it depends on the pedagogic strategies of a teacher to involve adolescents in the discourse on HR without putting them off, offending them or giving them the impression of a preacher. One way of generating students' interest and involvement is to make the themes and issues relevant to the students.

### **2.12.1 Human Rights Education and Prospective Teacher Education and In-Service Program**

Teacher Education program is an effective means to prepare prospective teachers. Magendzo (2005) is of the opinion that many teachers not only lack the knowledge of international and national HR instruments and institutions, they are also unprepared emotionally, pedagogically and culturally to teach HR. They are caught up in an authoritarian culture and lack a critical approach to their educational work (p. 141). Thus, teacher education and in-service training have become more important than ever. Sebaly (1987) prescribed that incorporation of HRE in teacher preparation program will certainly help the teachers in inculcating human rights perspectives and skills among their students. Sebaly further discussed how human rights education can be incorporated in the teacher education curriculum by making prospective teachers know that HR are variously defined according to different political and economic traditions. In addition to that the shaping of syllabi and teaching methods for HR should focus on the conceptual framework of the particular discipline, and enable students to see connections with other domains of [HR] inquiry (p. 214). Hence, Sebaly suggested training prospective teachers in a more interdisciplinary approach to the pedagogy of [HR].

The main purpose of any training or in-service program is to make teachers sensitive toward HR. Flowers & Shiman (1997) suggested five dimensions of an ideal training program. The five E dimensions of HR training are (1) explanation of HR definition, legal and moral status, (2) examples of HR violation as well as fulfillment, (3)

exhortation or appealing everybody to act in accordance with HR principle, (4) experience or providing opportunities to work to improve HR conditions, (5) environment or creating a HR embedded culture stretched from classroom to the other institutions. On the other hand, Best (1991) devised a five day training program to train in-service teachers. For her, incorporation of HRE in in-service training is crucial. She recommended four major themes for short term five day teacher education program: (1) legal concepts and approaches concerning HR, (2) history of HR and underlying philosophy, (3) intercultural approach to education with the aim of implementing HR, (4) school life, education attitudes and HR (p. 121). She held the four themes to serve as the foundation of HRE and for teaching the in-service teachers.

Effective human rights education requires committed and skilled teachers (Osler & Starkey, 1994). For that purpose, Osler and Starkey suggested that teachers are needed to be trained in HR, especially in HR law, so that they would be confident of the strong legal authority provided by international HR instruments. They outlined a list of features for an effective HR teaching project: (1) information about democracy and HR in theory and practice, (2) democratic decision-making, including participation in the management of the project, (3) independent reasoning and critical awareness, and (4) negotiation and participation skills (Osler & Starkey, 1999).

Freire (1998) has brought in the ideological factor into teaching. He explicated that the dialogical way of thinking (reflection over one's teaching) is not an easy task. Thus, during teacher education, prospective teacher must be trained in how to think

correctly? How to reflect on what they are doing and why they are doing a thing in a certain manner? Freire's suggestion is significant for teacher's training in HRE. This is a subject area where ideology always plays a role. It is crucial to learn how to distinguish ideology from HRE. And, thus, the teacher can ensure the real achievement of goals of HRE. The Council of Europe (1985) outlined the goals, contents, practices and methodology of training prospective teachers in HR. The Committee of Ministers recommended the following guidelines:

1. The initial training of teachers should prepare them for their future contribution to teaching about [HR] in their schools. For example, future teachers should:
  - (i) be encouraged to take interest in national and world affairs;
  - (ii) have the chance of studying or working in a foreign country or a different environment;
  - (iii) be taught to identify and combat all forms of discrimination in schools and society and be encouraged to confront and overcome their own prejudices.
2. Future and practicing teachers should be encouraged to familiarize themselves with:
  - (i) the main international declarations and conventions on [HR];
  - (ii) the working and achievements of the international organizations which deal with the protection and promotion of [HR], for example through visits and study tours.
3. All teachers need, and should be given the opportunity, to update their knowledge and to learn new methods through in-service training. This could include the study of good practice in teaching about [HR], as well as the development of appropriate methods and materials (p. 3).

The Council of Europe outlined a comprehensive guideline inclusive of national and international, theoretical and experiential, summative and formative perspectives of training in HRE.

### **2.13 Challenges for Human Rights Education**

HRE is not a field without challenges. There are threats to its existence. There is skepticism about its successful implementation. There are hostilities and intimidations from people and institutions that do not believe in HR at all. For some they are “nonsense upon stilts”.<sup>22</sup> The implication of the notion of “nonsense upon stilts” is that the existence and practice of HRE is redundant and meaningless. Lohrenscheit (2002) raised many thought provoking questions about HRE which are worthy of consideration:

1. How can [HRE] contribute to the transformation of educational institutions and education systems on the basis of HR principals and democracy?
2. What effects can [HRE] offer especially in restrictive or contradictory situations (for instance in schools where corporal punishment is still practiced)?
3. How can we ensure empowerment? And how can we prevent learners from feeling disempowered when for instance they are confronted with the many [HR] violations?
4. How can we learn and teach about all HR in surroundings where some of them are denied as for instance in smaller, patriarchally organized communities where women’s rights are denied?

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<sup>22</sup> Jeremy Bentham cited in Sen (1999) who argued that “natural and imprescriptible rights” are nonsense because they do not have a legal foundation.

5. How can we on a sustainable basis integrate HRE into the existing national education systems? For instance, should HRE in schools be a special course, project oriented, or a general principal to be integrated into the whole curriculum?

6. What do we tell our learners when they know about their HR but cannot find meaningful ways to realize them (e.g. in poorer countries where even basic rights, such as education, health or housing are not fulfilled)? (p. 183).

Lohrenscheit outlined a comprehensive and exhaustive list of challenges that HRE has to address and provide solutions in order to fulfill expectations. These are the practical challenges that HRE is currently facing. Lister has also listed a number of challenges faced by the concept of HR itself as well as HRE:

1. [HR] are too complex for immature minds.
2. [HR] overstress *rights* and understress *responsibilities*.
3. To teach [HR] is a form of indoctrination, in which the teacher becomes a preacher.
4. [HR] teachers are usually more interested in social change (or in subversion) than in maintaining the fabric of society.
5. [HR] is a culture-bound conception, born in Western Europe and North America, foisted on the world in 1948.
6. There is no consensus about what it is 'to have a right', and no consensus about [HR] in general. Schools should teach only those things about which consensus exists.
7. [HR] are too individualistic and private. Group rights, collective rights and the importance of the public domain are underrepresented.
8. If we arrogate to ourselves the right to pass judgment upon, and seek to interfere with, the internal administration of

justice in other countries, we are in effect according the same right of judgment and interference in our own. There is no good so great that it is worth purchasing it at the price of national independence.

9. [HR] issues are complex, long-term, and often intractable. Teaching about them can give students a feeling of impotence, rather than enable them to act upon issues and affect their outcomes.

10. Teachers of HR go too far. They are not satisfied with teaching *about* [HR]. They want to teach *for* [HR]. They assert women's rights, children's rights and animal rights. Some even talk of 'the rights of trees'. Ordinary citizens will not support this (1991, p. 252).

Together, Lohrenscheit and Lister reveal the challenges that HR and HRE are facing and raise questions that need to be answered. Currently, school systems are infested with anti-HR notions and practices for instance, authoritarian nature of school; authoritarian teachers; pupils' views ignored; poor communication; marks and grades seen as all-important; ultra-strict rules that tend to ignore creativity of teachers and students alike; and rote learning. These issues, questions, doubts, dilemmas and debates remain there but they do not by any means lessen the validity of HRE for students in particular and for common people in general. It is a source of empowerment, an instrument to realize the dream of having a world where human dignity and worth are duly respected, rights and freedoms are enjoyed by all equally by dint of being human being regardless of citizenship without losing the sight and significance of responsibility in realizing HR.

In this chapter we tried to cover the literature on almost all aspects of HR and HRE that are relevant for the current research. There are certain issues such as the definition or nature of HR and the role, scope, and limitations of HRE the final word is yet to be said. The study of the subject nevertheless remains important just as the conviction of human society for an HR based culture.





## **Chapter Three**

### **Methodology and Research Design**

This chapter provides a detailed description of the research design and methodology adopted in the present work. It also delves on the problems that were confronted during the fieldwork. The chapter concludes by providing the details of macro and micro research settings of Taipei and ND where the research was conducted.

#### **3.1 Personal Ideological Standing and Becoming a Researcher**

This section deals with my personal ideological standing towards the research. I believe that everybody has an ideological standing and that should be disclosed beforehand because it affects not only the process of research but also results. I believe in democracy, freedom, equality and HR. There is no society - no matter how developed it is - that is not ridden with some kind of inequality, unequal distribution of resources, oppression, exploitation, and misuse of power. I believe that empowering people who are at receiving end through education can change things. Education in general and HRE in particular empowers the downtrodden by inculcating the skills of literacy and numeracy and by making them aware of their rights as human beings. I developed an understanding of how education can be used for empowering masses when I first read the literature on critical pedagogy by Paulo Freire. The fundamental belief of critical pedagogy is that all relations are guided by power. The dominant class wields the power and determines the

nature and form of relations. Power relations are the main cause of human suffering. Freire's writings are based on his experiences of educating illiterate agriculturalists of Brazil. His critical pedagogy has yielded concrete results by equipping peasants with the basic skills of reading, writing, and arithmetic and looking at the social, economic, cultural, and political issues from a critical perspective.

When I decided to work on HRE I did not have much information by way of background on the theme. The literature on HR and HRE not only helped me to understand their meaning and significance for contemporary society but also enabled me to establish a direct link between HR and critical pedagogy. If HR is the objective then critical pedagogy is a medium to attain it. I employed critical qualitative research methodology to conduct the present research and this methodology proved to be an asset both for my work as well as for me as a researcher. After the research was completed my faith in the agency of the teacher was reassured especially in communicating to her students the complexities of power relations and exposing their implications for inequalities, oppression and exploitation rampantly prevalent in our society.

### **3.2 Research Design**

Bryman (2004) argues that in comparative research design, social phenomena can be better understood because they are compared in relation to two or more meaningfully contrasting cases or situations. The aim of comparative research is to seek explanations for similarities and differences in order to gain greater awareness and a deeper

understanding of social reality in different national contexts (Hantrais, 1996). Comparative research design involves the use of more or less identical methods for comparable cases. As far as the comparison of HRE is concerned, Reardon (1997) noted that UDHR has served as an ideal standard for comparing two or more countries adhering to the Declaration. She further explicated that irrespective of HR's Western origins, these standards have a sufficiently valid universality to have been commonly accepted as human values, the core principles of which are adaptable to most cultures (1997, p. 28). Torney-Purta (1987) has indeed argued in favor of comparative framework to study HR and Education. She stated that internationally recognized HR can be used as a starting point to conduct country comparisons.<sup>23</sup> It gives a welcome coherence of organization to a very diverse theme (p. 223). Following this line of argument, the present study analyzes and compares the phenomenon of pedagogy of HRE in two different educational settings of Taipei and New Delhi (ND) through the application of the methodology of interview and classroom observations of social science teachers.

The present comparative study can lead to many new and stimulating insights and a deeper understanding of issues that are of central concern in HRE in Taipei and ND. In addition it may also be helpful in finding how should HR be presented in two different national contexts without losing the international perspective. It has brought out similarities and differences of the pedagogies employed by the teachers, problems and

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<sup>23</sup> It was recognized by both Taiwan and India after the declaration of HRE decades in 1994.

challenges faced by them, and students of the two capital cities and, finally, the implications of all this for a general theory of pedagogy of HRE.

### **3.3 Critical Qualitative Research Method**

To implement the model of comparative design, the current study employs critical qualitative research method. It is one of several genres of inquiry into non-quantifiable features of social research (Carspecken, 1996, p. 3). The basic premise of criticalist scholars is that inequality, oppression, and unequal power relations are the main features of all societies whether they are hidden or apparent. Hence, the purpose of critical qualitative research is not only to expose such disparities but also ensure social change through unbiased research. The critical qualitative research has been successfully applied by various scholars in different social settings to study diverse social phenomena such as education (curriculum, pedagogy, students achievement), religion, identity, gender and management (Carspecken, 1996). The application of critical qualitative research to study the pedagogy of human rights education can yield rich dividends.

#### **3.3.1 Critical Epistemology**

In critical qualitative research, critical epistemology is used as a conceptual tool to conduct inquiry. Critical epistemology provides the principles for conducting valid inquiries into any area of human experience (Carspecken, 1996, p. 8), including the present one in which it works as a framework for a better understanding of the problem, conduct a valid research, analyze data and produce effective results. A valid research is

based on validity claim. Validity claim entails, first, the procedure followed to come to a claim, and, second, the acceptance of it by a certain social or cultural group. Carspecken (1996) categorized validity claims into three sets: objective, subjective and normative. The objective category includes existing things and events that are directly accessible to all; for example, classroom observation notes, recording or videotaping. The subjective category includes feelings, desires, intentions and states of mind which are directly accessible only to the subject-actor. The observer does not have a direct access to these and has to rely almost entirely on versions received from the subject. There is always a possibility that the whole picture is not presented by the subject. In the normative category, value<sup>24</sup> claims play an important role. Value claims are a subset of normative truth claims because these are concerned with what is good, bad, right, and wrong, but include also ideas about what is proper, and what is appropriate; that is, what behaviors ought to be exhibited in which circumstances (Carspecken, 1996, p. 82). The normative category includes consensus about an activity or event whether it is proper and appropriate. As claims, they impose on others by tacitly insisting that the other should conform to a certain convention (Carspecken, 1996). In the academic world, there is a broad agreement among scholars over value based norms. In a nutshell, objective category denotes “the world”, subjective category indicates “my world” and normative category implies “our world”.

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<sup>24</sup> Norms and values are distinct but internally connected.

On the basis of the three validity claims categories, five stages have been evolved in critical qualitative research: (1) compiling primary record (2) preliminary reconstructive analysis (3) dialogical data generation (4) describing system relations (5) system relations as explanations of findings (Carspecken & Apple, 1992; Carspecken, 1996). After the formulation of general, comprehensive and flexible research questions, the research can go through the five stages. In the subsequent sections the five stages would be explained in the context of the research questions of the present study. These stages are flexible and circular in nature, and carry the possibilities of frequent referring back to the earlier or later stages while conducting research. The research questions have been substantiated with many more questions asked during interviews as well as in informal conversations with interviewees.<sup>25</sup>

### **3.3.2 Research Questions**

Carspecken (1996) suggested that for any qualitative study, the researcher can formulate as many general and flexible research questions as the interest dictates. The list of these general and flexible research questions can be modified by adding and dropping them during the course of field research. Following Carspecken's recommendations, the following research questions have been formulated.

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<sup>25</sup> Informal conversations generally centered on the various aspects of the research and were also documented.

Q. 1. How the pedagogy of HRE is perceived by social science teachers of the elementary school of Taipei and ND in the context of their values, beliefs, attitudes, and ideals towards HRE (Subjective category)?

Q. 2. How is the pedagogy of HRE of social science teachers of Taipei and Delhi put into practice (Objective category)?

Q. 3. What is taught in HRE in the social science classrooms of Taipei and ND intentionally and unintentionally (Objective, subjective and normative category)?

Q. 4. What are the problems and obstacles faced by social science teachers during the process of teaching human rights (Objective and subjective category)?

Q. 5. Can there be a general pedagogy of HRE, which can be applied across different educational settings (Objective and normative category)?

### **3.4 Stage I: Compiling Primary Record**

The purpose of the present study is to probe the pedagogic beliefs, values, and practices of Social Science teachers who are involved in teaching HR. So the data for their beliefs and values about HR were collected by interviews, and, for the part of practices, observation technique was applied. Thus in the present research the primary data came from interviews, while the data generated by observations were used to substantiate and validate the findings of the primary data.

### **3.4.1 The Procedure of Compilation of Primary and Secondary Data**

The focus of this study is six teachers of Taipei and New Delhi and their pedagogic beliefs and practices of HRE. The research began with an introduction with the teachers. The introductory interview was meant to probe their personal backgrounds as well as reasons to choose the teaching profession. It is premised that those teachers who come into teaching profession by their choice are more enthusiastic about innovation in their teaching practices and they enjoy their work more. For the teaching of HR, apart from commitment to them, it is also necessary for a teacher to enjoy her profession from the bottom of her heart (Flower, 2003).

Interviews with the subjects of this study gave me an opportunity to go into the depth of the teachers' feelings, values and belief systems. It also provided me with insight into the cultural background of the six teachers. It equipped me to an extent to read the psyche of these teachers. I had developed a rapport with the teachers by showing my keen interest in them as well as an understanding that we can trust each other. In addition I had established a line of communication with them. We were engaged in a continuous dialogue going around HR and HRE. It is important to mention that the subjects of this research were very comfortable with the questions I put forward. Their answers were not one liners and they were elaborating their statements, opinions and arguments as well as offering clarifications. An example from Taipei and ND would illustrate it better:



<b>Taipei (Xie)</b>	<b>ND (Sheela)</b>
<p>There is very little material on HR teaching available in Chinese. Almost everything on HR is in English. This makes HR very “alien” to Taiwanese teachers. There are two reasons to call it “alien”. First it was never a part of Taiwanese culture and born in western societies. Second, the literature pertaining to it is primarily available in English and European languages. There are a few attempts to translate the available content into Chinese. Some authors are writing on HR in Chinese but it is not enough. I think if adequate material on HR can be made available in Chinese to the teachers this problem can be solved. As it comes down to us from the West, the examples, events, situations, and incidents mentioned in the literature are alien to us. I also try to correlate and contextualize HR concepts, issues, and incidents to Taiwanese conditions. It is difficult but a challenging enterprise.</p>	<p>There are plenty of themes and issues which can be taught from the perspective of HR. There is curriculum which can be matched to the declaration of HR. But it is content that is being taught in schools. HRE is a part and parcel of all subjects taught in the classroom. One can correlate HR issues to newspaper items as well. Correlation will make the understanding of that concept clearer. Simply teaching it as a text will not happen. It’s up to the teacher to just pick it off. When you start teaching a lesson, you can’t teach everything from HR perspective. But there is a lot about which you can sensitize the children through the lesson not simply treating that as literary text. Unfortunately many teachers are not practicing it and that is why HRE is not yielding positive results on a large scale.</p>

The above quotation is an excerpt from the interview transcripts of Xie and Sheela on the question of the problem they face while teaching HR in their classrooms. They gave elaborate answers with reasons, explanations and efforts they were putting to

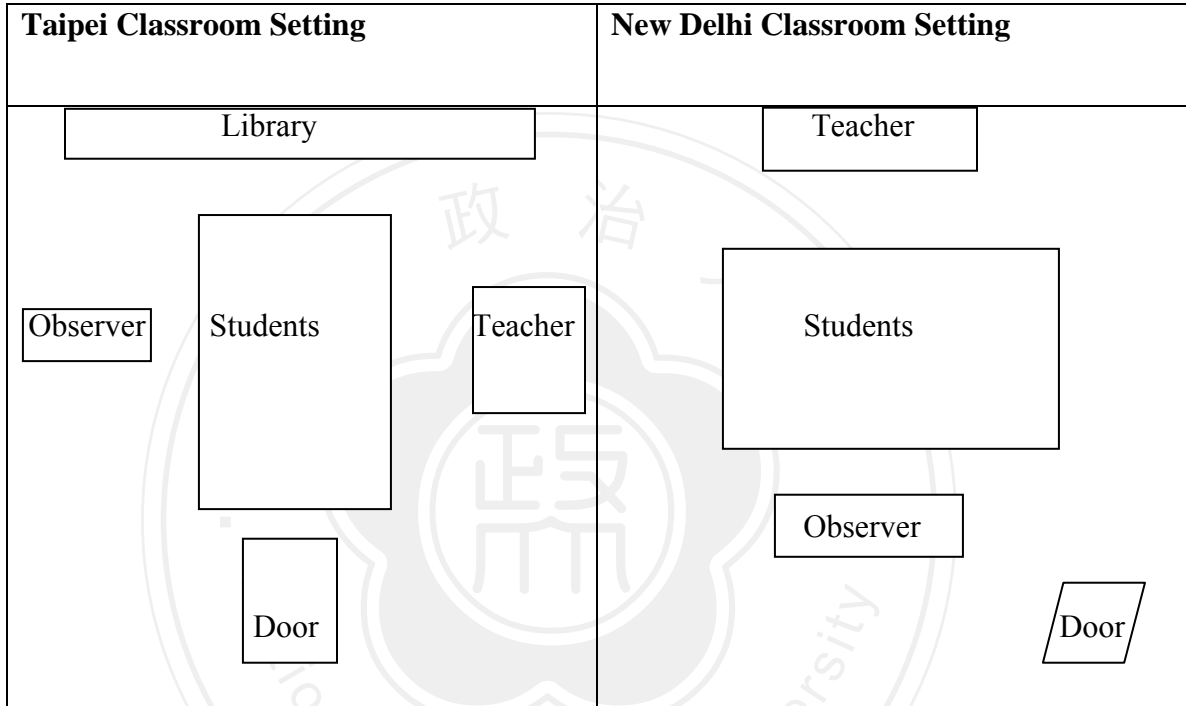
overcome the problems. These interview transcripts served as primary record because they provided categories, patterns and themes for analysis. The importance of these interviews made careful transcription absolutely necessary.

The second level of the compilation of the primary record was of observation. By observing these teachers I tried to see whether they were practicing the values and ethos mentioned in the interviews in the classrooms or not. In stage one of the present study, various tools, such as intensive field notes (with all the details), observations, audio recording and video recording (with the permission of the teacher) were simultaneously used. The details of the context of all classroom observations and interviews were recorded in advance. Sometimes the context of observations and interviews was different from the previous meeting. The change was subtle or significant. Such minor or major contextual changes are required to be incorporated in the compilation of primary record. These changes affected the teachers' pedagogic practices. For instance, while the observation of an class in a ND school was on, it suddenly started raining. It was in the month of June, when the temperature of ND was 45°C. The weather was hot and humid. The sudden shower of rain lightened the serious mood of the class. The students started shouting out of excitement. The situation was not peculiar to the class I was observing but the whole school had joined the chorus. The teacher was standing still. She had a mild smile on her face and a gesture of resignation to the inevitable. It took around ten minutes to get back to the usual classroom atmosphere. At first sight, this might appear an insignificant instance but it had important bearings on the teaching. When the class

resumed the teacher and students had lost the track. The teacher started a new theme of rainwater harvesting and its importance for human existence and environment, and linked it with the problem of pure drinking water in Indian cities and villages. She also mentioned the right to drinking water and the responsibility to save water. This incident was an indication of the teacher's commitment to highlight the fundamental rights of individuals in various contexts. This instance shows that she is practicing the integrated approach to HR in her curriculum by associating the right to drinking water and responsibility to save water even in an abrupt situation.

Apart from sudden changes, the other factors recorded were day, date, location, sitting arrangement, special occasions (women's day, children's day, or human rights day), etc. Sometimes, special events provide a background for the teaching on that particular day. In addition, conversations, activities (teaching and non-teaching), body postures and other events taking place in the classroom were also recorded as meticulously as possible. All verbatim statements were put in italics. Time was recorded frequently, so that the sense of time interval remains and it helps later in the analysis. The observer's occasional comments were incorporated simultaneously in parenthesis. All written and recorded observations were typed on word document with date and time. Even though the practice was to transcribe the record on a daily basis, there were times when unforeseen reasons delayed the transcription. However, as a matter of rule I listened to the recording everyday and made a list of questions to be asked or clarifications to be sought from the interviewee. Simple line diagrams were drawn to

explain classroom settings, such as placement of furniture and other equipments and the position of the teacher, students and the observer. Given below are the plans of Taipei and New Delhi classroom settings:



In the classroom my first priority was the teacher. Thus the focus of my attention was the teacher's behaviour, activities, and speech. An example of how I built the primary record is as follows:

Ma

Date: 10/4/09 (11.10 a.m.)

Subject: Environmental Problems

[Ma comes in the classroom and starts setting up the computer. She switches on the projector. Students are chattering. Ma picks up the microphone]

(1) M: I have something to show you today.

[Ma shows a ten minutes documentary on environmental havocs like flood, earthquake, tsunami, and deforestation]

11.25 a.m.

(2) M: How do you feel about this documentary?

[The students are quiet and look at each other. One student raises her hand to respond. Ma is quiet and watches the students very eagerly and attentively. She asks the girl to respond, and before she finishes her answer many more hands are raised and there are loud voices]

(3) M: What is our rule of communication?

[Suddenly the class is quiet and only hands are raised] {Need to ask Ma about this code of conduct}.

11.35 a.m.

(4) Do we have such natural disasters in Taiwan?

[Some students have raised their hands to answer the question]

This discussion continues for a while. At 11.40 a.m. the class gets over.

(5) We will continue this discussion in our next class. You need to write a short essay on recently seen, heard, or experienced natural havoc.

[Ma is talking to few students who are touching her. She is patting a student's shoulder; a girl student is sharing her experience; Ma is listening carefully, Xie enters the classroom and asks Ma to accompany her].

This record was further substantiated later on when audio and visual recording were heard and seen. There were some gaps which were filled by the recordings. The above example from Ma's classroom indicated that she was giving opportunity to her students to speak in the classroom as well as referring to the code of conduct in the classroom which ensured that everybody had a right to speech as well as responsibility to listen to others. The basis of dialogue was democracy where everybody had an equal opportunity to speak and chaotic behavior was discouraged. Hence, this record from classroom observation had served to validate the data gathered from the interviews.

### **3.5 Stage II: Preliminary Reconstructive Analysis**

Once a substantial amount of thick observation records was available, the process of inferring and reconstructing meanings out of them began. This deduction was inter-subjective in nature because inferences were based on the observer assuming the position of the subject and the third person (other than observer and observed). Taking various positions was not an easy task. I was aware of the moments when my personal point of view was influencing the analysis. I formulated a wide horizon of meaning field on the

selected sections of transcription. The selection of main sections from transcription was based purely on research questions which I was interested in. At another level reconstruction took into account the normative factors which made these meanings possible. All social acts derive their meanings from the background sets of rules (Giddens, 1979). In other words, normative factors provide validity and reasons (i.e., why certain meaning has been derived) to the reconstructed meanings. Stage II provided the foundation for the next stage of analysis when the subjects were also involved to further clarify the preliminary reconstruction. Following is an excerpt from the interview of one of the teachers from India:

It was a very hard life. My siblings and I had to work in the field with my parents and attend school. Sometimes I had to take leave from the school to work in the field especially during the harvest. There was no one who could help me with my homework as my parents were not educated. I had to study on my own. There were frequent power cuts and we had to study in the paraffin oil lamp. The village school did not have enough teachers so sometimes seniors doubled as teachers. And when we became seniors, we played the same role. I still remember those traumatic days of my secondary school. In our secondary school, there was no mathematics teacher for the whole academic year. There was no tutor in the village. For that one had to go to the town and my father would never allow. I had realized it in my early years of schooling that I would have to study on my own and that was the only way to end the problems once and for all. I wanted a dignified life. It does not mean that I looked down upon my parents' occupation. I wanted to do better and improve our living standard.

This excerpt throws light on various aspects of the Indian society, especially Maya's socio-economic and cultural background. It also shows the conditions prevailing in the schools located in villages. From this passage I developed the category, teacher at eleven.

How this stage was followed can be further substantiated by the instance in which I asked Zhang why she wanted to become a teacher. She had to choose teaching because her parents thought it was the ideal profession for her. In the teaching profession one is expected to get sufficient time to take care of the family and household tasks. But she said with conviction that she always wanted to become a teacher. So, it was her decision too to go for teacher education program. This was an interesting situation. On the one hand, she revealed that her parents were traditional to the extent that they decided what was good for her. On the other hand, she insisted that it was her own choice to become a teacher. There could be many explanations for this situation. The environment she was growing in may have influenced her choice for a particular profession. Or else the free of cost teacher education program could have been a better option for a family that was not very rich. Another possibility could be the nature of teaching profession which provided option and time for further studies. It was also a financially safe and secure government employment. It is also possible that she went into this profession by the force of various factors but gradually started appreciating it and ultimately teaching became her chosen profession instead of an imposed one. When presented with all these explanations, Zhang



did not contradict them out rightly but insisted that it was her choice and decision to go into teaching. Thus, despite my skepticism I had to respect her opinion.

### **3.6 Stage III: Dialogical Data Generation**

In stage three, I involved the subject into the analysis process by giving her an opportunity to reflect on the various issues and meanings constructed in stage two. This was a more democratic process of analysis because the subjects had a voice in it. For instance in the above example I suggested all possible explanations responsible for her becoming a teacher. But she remained adamant that it was her choice and not an imposed decision. There are no fixed rules or time for the beginning of stage three. It primarily depends on the researcher. When the researcher is certain about the thickness of primary record, the third stage begins automatically. Without enough and firm grounding in the primary record, the third stage cannot be started. In the present study, in the case of Taipei, stage three started after one week of intense observations and interviews. In the case of ND it took three weeks to form a thick base on which dialogical data could be generated.<sup>26</sup> As facilitator, the researcher can construct a supportive and safe normative environment which will help in exploring various issues in depth (Carspecken, 1996).

In the case of Sara, teaching was not her first choice. She wanted to become a Civil Servant. It was only after she could not qualify for Civil Services that she decided

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<sup>26</sup> There is a point worth mentioning here. In my research experience the dialogical data generation took place in stages. The first stage was an informal one when the very first day I involved the subject in a dialogue over issues such as the definition of discipline. This stage was not very intensive but my subjects were challenging my ideas and perceptions. In the process of generation the dialogical data was very preliminary in nature and it was only in later stages that they firmed up.

to become a teacher. A valid question therefore was whether teaching as second preference affects the pedagogy of the teacher? It was during the dialogical data generation stage that I asked this question, to which Sara replied as follows:

It was heart breaking when I came to know that I was not selected—though I made it to the interview—and it was my last attempt to appear in the Civil Services Examination. It seemed as if life came to an end. I was disturbed for quite a while. Gradually, I realized that it was not an end but a new beginning. I got full support from my parents especially from my father. I decided to plan my career afresh. I thought I would become a teacher. As a Civil Servant I wanted to bring change in the society. The closest profession with this objective, in my opinion, is teaching. I sat in the entrance examination for the B. Ed. program and qualified. After completing the teacher-training program, I applied for a teaching post and got selected in the very first attempt. I was appointed in the same school where I used to be a student. I think I am satisfied and happy with my current job, i.e. teaching. It gave me back my confidence and self-respect. It is a challenging job to deal with adolescents and contribute to their development.

Sara explained that she does not regret any longer not becoming a Civil Servant. She likes to take up challenges and believes that ‘our society needs a complete transformation’. She considers teaching a challenging but satisfying profession. The challenge lies in dealing with adolescent children who are developing at a fast pace both physically and cognitively. The adolescents are inquisitive too. Their appetite to know more and more about things has to be satisfied instantly. An interesting point made by Sara was that teaching rekindled her confidence in herself and brought her self-respect back. A profession is very rewarding when it becomes a source of confidence and self-

respect for an individual. Sara likes to read and the teaching profession gives her an opportunity to read.

An interesting phenomenon occurred during the course of the research. An informal sort of interview with a teacher took place in the very first meeting which was recorded. Later I found the information significant not only for devising further research strategies but also to form the bases of analysis. Miss Zhang in Taiwan showed tremendous interest in sharing her teaching experiences and challenges of implementing HRE in the four sections of sixth grade. In addition to sharing her experiences, she looked forward for gathering suggestions to improve her work. She wanted me to give feedback as soon as possible. She was quite interested in Indian education and teachers and wanted to know how Indian teachers were implementing HRE. These personal predilections of Miss Zhang never diminished or disappeared during the research. She remained as enthusiastic as on the first day. In the very first meeting some sort of a bond was established between the two of us based on trust and mutual agreement which remained in place while the fieldwork was in progress. Zhang never said no to any question and tried to be honest with her explanations. I never found any discrepancy or contradiction in her statements. Thus, in this stage not only the dialogical data was generated with the help of preliminary informal interviews and discussions but also provided conviction for the method on which research was conducted.

In this stage, the subjects were provided opportunities to comment, and to express their views and opinions without hesitation. It was ensured that their identity will never be revealed and their opinions would never be disclosed to the school administration.

### **3.7 Stage IV: Describing System Relations**

In the context of the present study, system relations denote the relationship between teaching and the teacher's cultural background. The subjects of this study are six social science teachers. They come from a wider social set up to function in a micro school site, embodied with beliefs, values, opinions and ideas about issues that are culture specific. When they enter the classroom, they do not put these aside and transform themselves into a different being. For example, if a teacher has strong opinions about race, gender, class, and caste (in the Indian context), these will be reflected in her classroom teaching as well, overtly or covertly. Thus, the researcher needs to examine the full cultural settings of her subjects. To fully reconstruct the culture of the subjects, I spent time with the subject outside the classroom, in teacher's lounge, in assembly, etc. When the research was in progress, the parent of a Taiwanese student came to the school to meet her son's teacher, Ma, who happened to be my subject. I requested the teacher to permit me to sit and observe the meeting. The teacher allowed me to be a silent observer during the discussion. The session helped me to gather information about communication and problem solving skills of the teacher as well as values she believed in. After they finished the discussion and reached a solution on how to deal with the problem, their

conversation became informal.<sup>27</sup> Interestingly, the informal talk gave glimpses of the social background and life style of the teacher. She was telling about her childhood years. She told the parent how her parents especially her father was too sensitive toward his children. He always handled the situation calmly. He believed in communication instead of imposing authority. She made it clear to the parent that by being strict with her son she could not eradicate the problem. She said her father could only win over his children with love and understanding. So, she suggested the parent to be patient with the child and establish a line of communication first.

This was an example of how the teacher's family background guided her decision making process. She was endorsing those ethos and practices which she had experienced in her childhood and found to be favorable to the health of parent-child relationship. In this instance, the nature of the solution offered showed that she was trying to change the conventional authoritarian attitude of parents towards their child which sought solution in discipline and punish. For her the integrity of the child was important and for this reason she did not want the mother to do anything which would make the child feel culpable or guilty.

### **3.8 Stage V: System Relations as Explanations of Findings**

This stage explains findings in the wider context of society. No qualitative study can be restricted to classroom or the school. Since the present study is concerned with

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<sup>27</sup> The boy was caught red handed smoking in the school basement. The solution that was agreed upon was to first observe him closely and then talk to him without making him feel guilty.

teachers and their pedagogy of HRE, at this stage it would be relevant to ask the question whether there can be a general theory of pedagogy of HRE that can be applied to various settings first to understand the undercurrents and second to make its implications in a particular context more effective. This question has been dealt in chapter six.

### 3.9 A Note on Data Collection

The data for the present research were collected from two categories. The first category can be termed primary as the information is directly attained from the subjects and formed the backbone of the present research.<sup>28</sup> The research involved six teachers of sixth grade or class from Taipei and ND.<sup>29</sup> The names of teachers and schools have been changed to protect the anonymity of the subjects and institutions involved in this study.<sup>30</sup> These teachers are of social sciences background, that is, they specialized in social sciences during the teacher's training program.<sup>31</sup> The reason for selecting teachers trained

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<sup>28</sup> The subjects of the present research are teachers. A teacher is the most important agency in the education system. The success of not only HRE but any other subject or the school for that matter largely rests on the shoulders of teachers. In addition, teachers exercise tremendous power over adolescents. They listen to their teachers and follow them rather blindly. This makes the teachers' position far more crucial because ultimately it is the teacher who determines the direction and impetus of development of HR culture in her/his classroom and later even outside.

<sup>29</sup> Grade (Taiwanese usage) and class (Indian usage) are used interchangeably in the present research. The students of sixth grade are aged between 10 and 13. These are the years of rapid socialization and development of various social concepts and notions. This is the ideal stage to introduce HRE. It will last longer if introduced at an early stage. A detailed discussion on adolescent and HRE can be found in the literature review.

<sup>30</sup> An interesting observation worthy of mentioning here is that the Taipei teachers expressed least concern over anonymity while their Indian counterparts repeatedly requested that their names and opinions must not be revealed to the administration.

<sup>31</sup> In Taipei, elementary school teachers have to teach all subjects apart from their area of specialization in the teacher's training program, i.e. social sciences. Thus, while selecting the subjects, I deliberately chose those teachers who had specialization in social sciences and also some degree of training in HRE. In the

in social sciences was the basic nature of the discipline. The social sciences learning area deals directly with society, social groups, and individuals as social entities. It also addresses the issues, such as how societies work and how people can participate in it as an informed citizen or member of that society. The subjects covered in the social sciences discipline are history, political science, economics, sociology, anthropology and geography. The content of all these subjects have relations with HR and can be resulted in a better, sound, and strong understanding of HR. It is not the intention here to denigrate the HR understanding of teachers from other disciplines such as languages, sciences or mathematics. Rather the argument is that social sciences teachers have an extra edge over others because of the nature of their discipline that is more conducive for incorporation of HRE.

In addition to their social sciences background, it is ascertained that the teachers have got some training in or at least have a basic understanding of the concept of HR, and they are currently implementing HRE in their classrooms. All the six teachers are in the age group of thirty to fifty five. All of them have a bachelor's degree and five of them have a Master's degree. Five teachers continued their higher studies along with employment. Apart from teachers, the administrative staff, principals and other people who were involved in HRE program of both the schools were also interviewed to fill the

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case of ND, sixth class/grade teachers are supposed to teach the subject of their specialization in the teacher's training program.

gaps arising out of lack of information on administrative aspects and measures pertaining to HRE implementation.<sup>32</sup>

The second category comprised interviews of scholars who have done pioneering work on HRE in Taipei and ND. Initially the sole purpose of interviewing Taiwanese scholars was to cover the available literature on HRE in Chinese.<sup>33</sup> Later, while interviewing scholars in Taipei, it was realized that a whole range of information and facts (both official and unofficial) shared by the scholars were not necessarily present in their articles or works. Those scholars who are also activists had a lot of practical experiences, and their predicaments while raising the voice for HR protection and implementation of HRE in the schools added value to the responses. The scholars shared their experiences in a large measure during the interview. Sometimes, an impediment can prove to be a blessing. This is what happened in my case. The limited ability I had in reading Chinese led to the interview mode and it opened up new vistas in the understanding of HRE in Taipei. After realizing the importance of interviewing scholars and activists of HRE in Taipei, I decided to interview Indian scholars which also proved useful for the current research.

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<sup>32</sup> In the case of Taipei, various scholars who have done or are working on HRE were also interviewed. These interviews will be discussed in the chapter four.

<sup>33</sup> The reason behind this strategy was my limited ability in reading Chinese. I was able to manage in spoken Chinese, thus, interview of HRE scholars was a feasible and an efficient way to get the whole picture about HRE from the perspective of Taiwanese scholars.



### **3.10 Procedure of Selection of Schools in Taipei and New Delhi and Some Extraordinary Research Experiences**

In the beginning of my fieldwork, I was a bit worried about finding the right school as well as the process of approaching the school and getting permission to conduct the study there. Luckily, the Taipei part was not a problem as I had spent a year and a half in an elementary school, learning Chinese with first and second graders. My apprehension that Taipei would be an unfamiliar territory and that it would be difficult to find a school for fieldwork was allayed. On the other hand, ND was my native place. I was rather over confident that I would be able to handle any problem in my own city. It was beyond my imagination that I would confront insurmountable problems in ND. In the case of Taipei, one of the five professors of the Ph.D. committee constituted to evaluate my proposal and dissertation extended a helping hand. She not only found the school but also introduced me to the administration. It was a smooth sailing.<sup>34</sup> Right from the start I became part of the school community. They expressed their desire to know about Indian culture and education and asked me to make presentations. I immediately agreed and made three presentations. The whole experience of field work in Taipei was very pleasant and fulfilling.

Now it was the turn of ND. One day I met with a primary school Principal Mrs. Arora. I spoke to her about my research and field work experiences in Taipei. She

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<sup>34</sup> All the members of the Committee helped me in different ways. Prof. Chen introduced me to the school where I conducted my fieldwork and Prof. Tang introduced me to one of her students who had done some excellent work on action research in HRE in Taiwan.

introduced me to a school where there were some teachers who had got in-service training in environmental and HRE. One fine morning I went to the school to seek permission for conducting fieldwork. I humbly expressed my intention and purpose of the visit to the principal of the school. I was told to wait outside. After waiting patiently for about forty minutes I was allowed to see the principal. Upon hearing the purpose of my visit, the principal asked for a letter of permission from the Assistant Commissioner of District Education. Without wasting time I immediately rushed to the Commissioner's office to get the letter. The Commissioner was not present in his office and the staff was totally unaware of his whereabouts. I was advised to wait. The four long hours of waiting seemed unending when with the mercury touching 48° Celsius. At last the Commissioner arrived and I regained hope. Suddenly a crowd of people came out of the blue to meet the Commissioner and everybody was given a tiny piece of paper with a number written on it. I was number 16 in the waiting list. It took another one and a half hours to meet the Commissioner and present him with the application for permission to conduct fieldwork in one of the schools under his jurisdiction.

I was called in and asked about the purpose of coming. As I mentioned the purpose, the Commissioner asked for the application and identity proof. I produced the necessary documents and after seeing them the Commissioner enquired about my fieldwork in Taipei. I was finally granted the permission to go ahead with my work. Armed with the permission letter and a lot of optimism I went back to the school. Once again I had to stand in front of the principal's office in order to be seen. After an hour he

saw the permission letter and with an unfriendly gesture commented, “Oh! So you managed to get it”. He asked the vice-principal to give me a list of do’s and don’ts. Having gone through the tedium of bureaucratic procedures I was naturally unable to establish an instant bond with the administration of the school in ND as I was able to do in Taipei. This episode made me ponder over the vast difference between the two administrative set ups. How can one explain it? One possible explanation could be the difference in the professional ethos of the two countries. There is a possibility that my status as a foreigner in Taipei and an Indian in ND might have affected the response I received. A third possibility could be that while Prof. Chen accompanied me to the school in Taipei, in India there was no such support.

During the data collection process interesting incidents or discoveries took place. One day during an interaction with Taiwanese teachers, I asked about their in-service training experiences. This group of four teachers revealed that they felt a dire need for updating their concepts regarding creativity and innovation in education. The source of inspiration was a teacher-student (Internee) who was very creative and innovative not only in his lesson delivery but also in his interaction with students. For them, it was an eye opening experience. They were determined to bring in change in the realm of pedagogy too. They asked the internee if his teacher could come and conduct a workshop on “Creativity and Innovation in Education” for them. The internee arranged a meeting between these teachers and his teacher. The teacher came and convened a workshop which these teachers found very profitable for their teaching. I enquired about this

resource person and I was told that he was teaching in one of the private colleges of Taipei. I did not have any other clue about him but I was aware that interactions with that teacher would throw more light on the pedagogical skills and personalities of these teachers. These teachers had opened up to that teacher and he had accessed their inner world. All this information I thought would certainly be helpful in this research.

After a few weeks, on one afternoon I ran into one of my seniors from the department of education, NCCU. He and I have the same advisor and he knew about my research. The senior asked, “How was the research going on?” The question worked as a spark. I was already overwhelmed with my exciting research experiences and I was eager to share. During the conversation I mentioned the nagging feeling I had about not being able to trace the resource person and also explained how valuable the person could be for my research. The senior smiled and said, “Your search is over. I know the person very well.” I screamed, “Who is he? Where is he?” He said, “The person is standing in front of you.” I was astonished that my senior was the very resource person I was looking for all this while. I instantly fixed an appointment with him for an interview. The whole experience seemed surreal. I kept on thinking about this extraordinary incident and realized that the more one talks about or shares ones research experience with the people working in the same field or background the greater are the chances of discovering new things or resolving knotty problems.

### **3.11 Micro Research Settings: Schools in Taipei and New Delhi**

The units of analysis selected for the current study are government schools. The study unfolded in the sixth standard classrooms of Taipei and ND. One theme from HR curriculum taught in both settings was observed from beginning to end. The age group of the pupils of sixth class was between ten and twelve years and they comprised both girls and boys from the lower, middle and upper middle class of Taiwanese and Indian society. Both the schools have many similar features especially the total number of students and teachers and socio-economic background of the students.

#### **3.11.1 School in Taipei**

The elementary school selected in Taipei was located in Taipei County. The school had around three thousand students. The number of students in the school had started decreasing due to demographic change. There has been a sharp decrease in the number of children in Taiwanese society. To make up for the shortfall, the school is working to attract students from distant places. Competition for students among schools has ensured that they had something extra to offer to attract parents. This school is also not untouched by the problem of competition. In response, it has come up with a new idea of citizenship and HRE. The aim of introducing citizenship and HRE is to prepare good and just citizens for Taiwan in the future. The other notable features of the school life are sports and music. The aim of the school is to let students decide what they would

like to do. “We try to let their creativity unfold. We believe every student has a special ability and our effort is to develop every student’s special ability fully”.<sup>35</sup>

The school is getting funds from Taipei County Government. The infrastructure of the school is very good. Every classroom is equipped with a computer, projector, LCD screen, micro-phone, speakers, a small library (apart from the main library), comfortable desks and chairs and other basic amenities.

The keystone of an institution is its head. The smooth functioning of any institution depends on the capacity, ability and leadership skills of the head. The principal of this school is a man of deeds. He is doing every possible effort ranging from infrastructural development to introduction of new courses (HRE, citizenship education) to the development of teachers’ potential through in-service training to giving them freedom to create and innovate in their respective fields. A very remarkable initiative started in his leadership was collaboration between the school and the community.<sup>36</sup> More than hundred parents were serving as volunteers. They were helping the school in various ways: helping students of the school in crossing the busy road in front of the school; when teachers are attending meetings, parents help them by taking their classes; telling stories to the students; helping the school in preparing skits and other programs; they provide educational help to weak students of the school.

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<sup>35</sup> This was told by in-service teacher education and curriculum development in charge of the school.

<sup>36</sup> I found that this is increasingly becoming a common practice in Taiwanese schools.

Grade six, the site of my research, consisted of twenty five students. At the time I started my fieldwork, the teacher was teaching a theme on privacy. Thus, the observation was based on the delivery of the topic of privacy taught in the context of HR and citizenship education. It took seven weeks to complete the theme. The topic had both theoretical and practical components. After discussing the issue of privacy in theory, a practical activity was conducted called public hearing. In the public hearing students played different roles such as teachers, students, parents, officials, policeman, member of an NGO person and HR activist. The audience consisted of representatives from community, parents and personnel of the MOU. The public hearing raised the issues of privacy from the perspective of HR. It was a very enriching experience for not only students but to everyone present there.

### **3.11.2 School in New Delhi**

The elementary school selected in ND was located in South Delhi. The school has around three thousand five hundred students. The number of students in the school is increasing due to various reasons such as, constant growth in population, migration of people from different parts of India to the capital, and popularity of the school. Now as the demand is soaring, the school is feeling all kinds of pressure from the influential people. Parents who are influential or have access to influential people are putting pressure on the school administration to get their children admitted out of the way. In contrast to the demand, the school lacks in many basic amenities such as infrastructure and teachers. The teacher student ratio is 1:40. This shows that teachers are overburdened.

There are seven sections in class VI. It means there are two hundred and eighty students in total. It is unreasonable to expect from teachers to pay full and equal attention to all students in a classroom. The classrooms have a blackboard, chalk and few maps that are damaged on the edges. The desks and walls are in a poor condition. There are only fifty computers for thirty thousand five hundred students. In other words, the infrastructure is by no means conducive to stimulating the thinking process in the students. This condition is due to the lackluster attitude and educational policy of the Indian government. The government spending on education is below three percent of GDP and schools are either not allowed or not able to generate resources for themselves. The outcome is dreadful condition of education system not particularly in this school but all over India.

The school is aiming for international co-operation. It is currently collaborating with British, Swedish and Swiss schools. The collaboration is primarily in the area of information technology and sports. The Ministry of Education praises the school's performance in sports. The aim of the school is the overall development of its students. The school is getting funds from Government of India.

Financially hard pressed and lacking infrastructural facilities, the school principal is under pressure to optimize and perform. When the foundation of any institution is weak, the situation of the head tends to become precarious. In the case of ND school, the principal is expected to use his experience and leadership skills to manage available



resources efficiently and judiciously and look for alternatives to generate resources.<sup>37</sup> In the midst of financial crunch, the principal's chamber tells an altogether different story. The room has all comforts ranging from luxurious furniture, computers, telephones to air-conditioning. After seeing the principal's room one would hardly believe that the school has a shortage of resources. During my fieldwork in the school, I developed a profile of the principal from personal observations and interactions with him as well as opinions gathered from the teachers and students of the school. This understanding is intersubjective in nature and not subjective or objective. That is, there are multiple accesses to this understanding. The researcher did not draw this picture all by herself. There were contributors to it and they were constantly interacting with the subject. The profile indicated that the principal was not quite democratic in his attitude and working style. Arrogance and autocratic tendencies were visible in the principal's behavior from time to time. There was a vice-principal of the school who was modest, kind and far more democratic in her approach. She was always busy with the work assigned to her. She patiently listened to the grievances of both teachers and students. The school was fortunate to have at least one person in the administration that was capable of sensibly handling routine matters and serious issues. Her predicament was that she could not wield much power because that rested with the principal.

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<sup>37</sup> For instance international collaboration could also be a way to generate human and hardware resources. But this possibility is ignored by the school administration.

Three Sections of class VI (A, B and E) were chosen for study, each consisting an average of forty-five students. At the time I started fieldwork, the teacher was teaching a unit on diversity and discrimination. The unit covered themes such as difference and prejudice, creating stereotypes, inequality and discrimination, untouchability, right to equality, women's rights, rights of the Dalits,<sup>38</sup> right to education and secularism.<sup>39</sup> It will be interesting to see how the appearance and teaching of such themes would link up with HRE in general and how would they work themselves out in the world outside the confines of the school.



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<sup>38</sup> Dalit is a generic Hindi term for untouchables or lower caste people (depressed social group).

<sup>39</sup> Secularism has two meanings in the Indian context; first that state and religion remain separate (the classical definition of secularism taken from Europe), and second that the state will patronize all religions equally (the India specific definition based on the notion that the Indian society is a deeply religious society and the state cannot choose to stay away from religion or religious issues).

### 3.12 Observation Schedule

<b>Name</b>	<b>Theme Taught</b>	<b>Time per Class</b>	<b>Total No. of Classes</b>	<b>Time Period</b>
Zhang	Privacy	30 min.	12	March 3, 2009 to April 14, 2009
Ma	Justice, Environmental Problems	30 min.	10	March 5, 2009 to April 13, 2009
Xie	Freedom	30 min.	12	March 4, 2009 to April 11, 2009
Sara	Inequality	30 min	7	October 4, 2009 to November 14, 2009
Sheela	Creating Stereotypes	30 min	9	October 7, 2009 to November 13, 2009
Maya	Untouchability & Social Status	30 min	10	October 9, 2009 to November 10, 2009

### 3.13 Observation Procedure

Before, I dwell upon this theme, it is important to mention here that HR educators are different from general teachers. They are not pretentious, and they do what they believe in. Their classroom behaviour does not differ from the outside of the classroom. They are same with their students irrespective of the presence or absence of an outsider.

In the case of Taipei school the classroom observations were video, audio and manually recorded. The teachers did give their consent to do video and audio recording. Zhang had put my audio recorder in her pocket so that the quality of recording can be improved. She was also using microphone for better quality of voice. I used to sit at the end of the class and take notes. Initially, the students were interested in what I was writing but gradually they got accustomed to it and accepted me as a class member. Usually, my notes had included my reflections or questions about classroom practices, content taught, and students' behaviour.

In the case of New Delhi I was only allowed to do audio recording. I used to sit at the back. Students were not interested in me because they often had research scholars in their classroom and for them it was not a new phenomenon to show keenness.<sup>40</sup>

As the focus of my research was the teacher, the teacher became a priority of my observation. I tried to record everything the teacher was doing or saying as fully as

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<sup>40</sup> The reason for frequent visits by research scholars was due to the fact that NCERT was located at a walking distance from the school.

possible. It does not mean that students were ignored. Their representation was recorded but as a second priority.

### **3.14 A Note on the Procedure of Validity Check**

The process of collecting data involved interview as primary tool and observation as secondary tool to validate the data collected from interviews. The process of collection of data was validated by establishing a consensus between the subject and the researcher over the collected data to ensure validity of the process as well as the outcome of the process. In critical epistemology validity means truth and truth is defined in terms of consensus to truths claims. A truth claim is an assertion that something is right or wrong, good or bad, correct or incorrect (Carspecken, 1996). A truth claim is time and space specific. As time changes, the culture, thinking, and composition of a community also changes. A community giving consensus to some truth claims might stop after ten years, thus, making the truth claim redundant. In the present research setting, there are two cultural and spatial groups that serve as research settings. The theme of HR was central to the research; in other words, how six teachers from these two cultural backgrounds perceived and practiced HR. The concept and nature of HR is universal across cultures. The concept of human dignity and respect to it is a central to the HR and hence, all individuals are equal. For HR, differences are created by culture and culture is a human creation and thus can be changed. Thus, HR are truth claims because almost every nation in the world adheres to them.

This applies to the research settings in Taipei and ND too. A few validity claims that were taken up are as follows: first, all subjects believe that HR are important for all individuals. Second, the concept of HR is not born in their culture and needs to be learnt. Third, there are challenges and problems in implementing HRE and that needs special attention.

In the present study, there were two mechanism employed to establish the validity of the findings of the research. The first mechanism employed to check the validity of the claims the six teachers had made in their interviews about their beliefs and values about HR and HRE, was classroom observations. Whether the positions the teachers had maintained in their interviews were consistent with classroom practices or there was a deviation from what they have claimed. It has been found that HR educators practice what they believe in. Their classroom practices were matching with their beliefs and values. For instance, Xie argued in favor of the use of multimedia to teach HR. She argued that the use of multimedia makes HR teaching more effective. She also voted in favor of the use of historical biographies as content for HRE. She shared her experience of screening of *The Diary of Anne Frank* in her class. The validity of her claim was checked when one day she screened another movie called *The Color Purple*. Another example comes from Zhang. She mentioned in her interview that she gives her students an equal opportunity to speak in the classroom. This was validated when she organized a Public Hearing Meeting. She invited some of the parents to see how their children are conducting the public hearing meeting. In the meeting every student of the class had

some role to play. Some assumed the role of parents, some as students, some representing NGOs, some public officials, and some played the role of teachers. They discussed how to ensure the safety of the students of their school while crossing the road in front of their school. This meeting was conducted in a very democratic way and every student got a chance to speak on the issue.

The second mechanism employed to check the validity was discussion with the subject on a certain claim. If a consensus was reached the claim stood validated. This mechanism was employed on subjective realms where I tried to explain something for a certain behavior of a subject. For instance, Zhang is in her early fifties and claims that she cannot read HR literature in English. I contended that she was very comfortable with the information technology which she learnt recently; why could she not then learn English. I argued whether it was psychological that she thought she would never be able to read English. She refuted it by saying; “it was more a problem of exposure. If I get an exposure to an environment where English is read and spoken I would be able to learn as I learnt how to work on computers”.

It is important to note here that HR educators have a grounded understanding of what they believe in and they practice their vows. They are very ethical, particular, and sensitive about their statements. They do not give statements randomly. Their statements are backed by arguments and practices which provide a foundation for validity. Their interview transcripts put together can also throw some light on internal validity too.

## **Chapter Four**

### **Pedagogy of Human Rights Education and Social Science Teacher in the Elementary School of Taipei**

This chapter introduces Taiwan including its geography, demography, history interwoven with educational developments in different eras and current status of HRE in the elementary schools in Taiwan in general and Taipei in particular. The chapter offers a case study of three teachers and their pedagogic practices pertaining to HRE.

#### **4.1 Landscape and People**

The geographical settings of any country are crucial in shaping aspects of its socio-cultural, economic, and political life. Taiwan is a mountainous Island, strategically located in the South China Sea and Western Pacific Ocean. It is separated from China by the Taiwan Strait and sandwiched between Japan and the Philippines. Taiwan straddles the Tropic of Cancer ( $23\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}\text{N}$ ) some 2,600 kilometers north of the Equator (Knapp, 2007). This is responsible for the subtropical climate of the Island. With a total area of 13, 800 square miles it is shaped like a tobacco leaf or a yam.

The island is the second most densely populated area in the world with 592 people per square kilometer. The population of 23 million people is concentrated along the narrow Western Coastal Plain. The population on the Island is ethnically diverse,



comprising thirteen aboriginal groups and Hoklos, Hakka and Han Chinese. Each group has its own language or dialect. Mandarin is the official language. The local languages are not mutually comprehensible. The existence of many languages makes the Island linguistically diverse too. Taiwan is a multi-religious society with followers of Buddhism, Taoism, Christianity and Islam. Weiming (1996) stated that even though Taiwan is not impervious to religious fundamentalism, religious pluralism is a feature of its society. This is also true that there are no recurrent incidents of religious intolerance, and that the religions coexist peacefully.<sup>41</sup> These physical, demographic and cultural features form the foundation and determine to a large extent the nature of education.

#### **4.2 Literacy, Education and Knowledge in Taiwan: A Historical Overview**

Historical background helps the understanding of the current dynamics and underpinnings of a society. The recorded history of Taiwan dates back to the fourteenth century when it was called ‘Ilha Formosa’ (‘beautiful island’) by the Portuguese.<sup>42</sup> Formosa later came to be known as Taiwan meaning ‘terraced bay’. To some she is known as “precious island” (*baodao*) (Weiming, 1996). Taiwanese educational history fall into the following eras: Dutch rule (1624-1662), Japanese colonial rule (1895-1845), rule of Republic of China (ROC) (1949-1987), Lee Teng Hui period (1988-2000), new

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<sup>41</sup> When I first came across a Taiwanese family where the son and the daughter-in-law were Christians, the mother was a Taoist and the father was an atheist and they were living together practicing their beliefs or non-beliefs I was astonished because in the society I came from such instances are rare. Later I discovered that it was a norm in Taiwan.

<sup>42</sup> Before the arrival of the Portuguese, aboriginals lived there but they have not left any written records. However, archeologists are working rigorously to reconstruct the pre-history of the country.

phase of Taiwanese democracy (from 2000). In the following section, along with the history of education, the purpose and nature of education would also be analyzed. In addition, there will be a discussion on the concept of human being as well as the kind of human being education would produce.

#### **4.2.1 Dutch Rule (1624-1662)**

In AD 1626, Verenigde Oostindische Compagnie (VOC) or the Dutch East India Company captured Keelung and subsequently Tansui in AD 1629. Taiwan became a Dutch colony. The Dutch brought cattle from India that helped in improving farming (Chou, 1999). During the Dutch rule, Christian missionaries educated the Taiwanese natives, and it can be said that the Dutch were the first to introduce some kind of an organized system of education in Taiwan. Dutch missionaries and school teachers were placed in remote areas and assigned administrative and educational responsibilities. The sole purpose of education was to proselytize aborigines to Christianity. The aboriginal people of Taiwan were seen as savage and needed to be civilized. It was hoped that properly educated younger generation would be purer Christians (Wills, Jr., 2007, p. 91). The perception of human being during the Dutch regime was derived from the dichotomy of civilized (self-perception) and uncivilized human beings (perception of aborigines). Sometimes, the aborigines were not even considered human beings. They were dehumanized and termed savage. These perceptions not only sanctioned but also legitimized the missionary domestication of the savages. In brief, education in Dutch period was hegemonic in nature and founded on a prejudiced premise.

#### **4.2.2 Japanese Colonial Rule and Education (1895-1945)**

The modern era in Taiwan begins with Japanese colonial rule (Yee, 2001). The history of modern Taiwanese education therefore dates back to the Japanese rule over Taiwan during 1895-1945. During the Japanese occupation of Taiwan, the education system was molded to suit the interests of the colonial government. Japan had a permanent interest in Taiwan and education was included in the process of deepening colonial rule. “Becoming Japanese” was at the core of the then education system (Lin, 2003, p. 134). Tsurumi (1977) has outlined the aim of colonial Japanese education very lucidly. She stated that education was much more than an ideological tool. It was an instrument of fundamental social, political, economic and cultural change (p. 2). The colonial educational policy was directed to fashion the society in way that people not only respected Japanese culture but also identified with it. However, Gotō Shimpei, a Japanese official was concerned for the well being of the colonial inhabitants and keeping this in focus, he introduced educational reforms (Lamley, 2007, p. 210). Elementary common schools (kōgakkō) were established where instruction in Japanese language and culture was given along with training in classical Chinese and Confucian ethics. Textbooks of these schools suggest that the common school was meant to assimilate Taiwanese at the bottom of the Japanese social order. Taiwanese were not educated by the schools to rise to positions of power or decision-making (Tsurumi, 1977, p. 145). Shimpei’s administration began an elementary school for girls and three normal schools subsequently in 1899. For Japanese residents in Taiwan, there were separate primary

schools (shōgakkō). For Gotō, unequal educational opportunities were not inappropriate colonial policy. He found universal education imprudent because it hampered the full assimilation of the colonial population (Lamley, 2007).

As officially described, the “Policy of Assimilation” required a restructuring of the curriculum. Subjects such as Natural Sciences, Sciences, Medicine and Japanese Language and Literature became the mainstay of the new curriculum. Their purpose was the development of basic skills and creation of trained labor. Disciplines that had the possibility of inducing nationalism and anti colonialism among students, such as Chinese Language and Literature, Political Science, History, Law and Social Sciences were deliberately left out of the curriculum. Only such students as were able to go abroad for higher studies could have had the opportunity to study these subjects. The education system was attuned to the ideology and objectives of the colonial rule to the extent that during the Second World War a large population of young Taiwanese boys was willing to serve in the army in order to safeguard Japanese rule. Since conscription was yet to be introduced, this kind of patriotism could be held to be a function of ideological hegemony and education.

The Japanese colonial rule had a special assimilation policy for the aboriginals of Taiwan, both adults and children. A special police was posted to the interior and mountainous area with duties of administrators, doctors, counselors, teachers and disciplinarians (Lamley, 2007). The nature of education here was moral and the purpose was training in Japanese language, culture, and traditions. The purpose of education was

mundane. For instance, the aborigines were trained in agriculture and trade. At the top was the agenda of inculcation and promotion of national spirit through training in Japanese language and culture.

In the Japanese colonial period, provision of primary and elementary education and absence of secondary and higher education were driven by colonial ideology and for the existence and sustenance of colonial rule. The education served as an instrument and it cannot be denied that it produced a whole generation of patriotic Japanized Taiwanese. The Japanese education system in Taiwan was premised on the distinction between rulers and subjects. The concept of human being was determined by the status of Japanese as colonizers and Taiwanese as colonized. In the eyes of Japanese rulers, the Taiwanese lacked dignity and remained inferior. The whole agenda of assimilation was driven by the idea of difference between the two and their status as rulers (superior) and subjects (inferior). Thus, education in colonial Taiwan was not much different from Dutch education. The difference was of scale and magnitude. The soul of both educational systems was the same based on the principles of inequality and exploitation and aiming incessantly towards legitimizing their colonial rule.

#### **4.2.3 Education under the ROC and Martial Law (1949-1987)**

The Japanese left Taiwan in 1945 after their defeat in the Second World War but their administrative system remained in place for a few years. In 1949 Chiang Kai-shek took control of Taiwan as a base to regain Mainland China from the Communist Party of

Mao Tse-dung. He retreated with the representatives, elected in China, of the three parts of Congress namely the National Assembly, the Control Yuan and the Legislative Yuan. He imposed Martial Law and introduced a new set of administrative measures because it was not possible to conduct the elections and reelect the representatives of the Congress anytime soon unless the CCP were overpowered by the KMT and reestablished itself as a legal ruler of China which seemed to be an impossible task. But the desire and hope to rule over China again was kept alive by Chiang Kai-shek (and later his son Chiang Ching-kuo). Lew (1976) argued that Taiwan was the only society that preserved in considerable measure the Chinese way (*huaxia*) of life characterizing pre-1949 China. This makes the Taiwanese case more interesting where traditions are preserved in tandem with modernization.

There was an attempt to bring a major shift in Taiwan's economy. It was believed that with the help of a sound economic base, the recovery of mainland China could be speeded up. The rapid economic growth helped in getting support and allegiance of people too (Appleton, 1996). Agriculture was the mainstay of Taiwanese economy. In order to develop and increase the agricultural produce, a program of land reform was introduced in the early 1950s that was designed by Sun Yat-sen but never introduced in China (Chou, 1999). The program was implemented in three steps. The first step was a reduction of 12.5 percent in rent paid by the tillers to the landlords. The second step was the sale of public land to tillers at low prices and payable in installments. The third step was fixing the area of land owned by a person—both dry and paddy—to 14 and 4 acres

respectively and transfer of rest of the land the government. The mode of payment was not cash; 30 percent was paid in the form of shares and 70 percent in land bonds (Hsieh, 1964). The pro tiller land reform program undoubtedly consolidated the power of KMT government in rural areas (Hughes, 1997). The land reforms were certainly successful in appeasing peasants (Chu, 1996). This agricultural development translated into urban and industrial development of Taiwan. In other words, agricultural reforms paved the way and ensured the economic miracle of 1980s. Chou (1999) observes that the successes of the land reform followed by industrial development were immediately incorporated into the elementary school curriculum in the form of stories illustrating how the families of tillers and workers were grateful and indebted to the government for the betterment of their lives. Hence, the curriculum was laden with KMT propaganda from the earliest era of economic development.

In the realm of education, changes were brought about under the framework of three important considerations: social, political and economic. In the first instance the Japanese education policy was replaced with a Chinese oriented policy. From 1950 Mandarin became the official language as well as the medium of instruction in schools. The use of Japanese and local Taiwanese dialects in schools were strictly prohibited. Once again Chinese literature and history became part of the curriculum. Education was seen as an effective instrument to destroy ‘pseudo’ Japanese identity and make the Taiwanese more Chinese. The curriculum was designed to create a composite Chinese society based on Dr. Sun Yat-sen’s philosophy of “Three Principles”, viz. nationalism,

democracy, and welfare. This was used as an integrating force for its emphasis on social cohesiveness. It was already introduced in China in 1911 as an underpinning factor.

#### **4.2.3.1 National Spirit Education, Identity and Sinicization<sup>43</sup>**

Education takes shape in particular social, political and cultural contexts (McLaughlin and Juceviciene, 1997). Education also plays an important role in the formation of national identity in a country. Gellner (1983) talks about the vital role of mass education in bringing about a national culture. It is one of the main purposes of education to inculcate the virtues which solidify the sense of unity along with patriotism among the students. Education through curriculum, teaching, language, text books and with the help of its impact on other social institutions attempt to inculcate a common identity. The formation of this common identity was sought by national spirit education. Chiang Kai-shek opined that the defeat of KMT by CCP in Civil War was partly due to the failure of national spirit education (Chou, 1999; Tsai, 1997). This assertion made sure the entry of national spirit education into education goals, aims, national curriculum and textbooks. National spirit education born out of Dr. Sun Yat-sen's educational philosophy and eight Confucian values, viz. loyalty, filial piety, mercifulness, love, faithfulness, righteousness, harmony and peacefulness (Ministry of Education cited in Tsai and Bridges, 1997, pp. 37-38). In addition, national spirit education had also emphasized anti-communism and recovery of China from "Communist Bandits". In a nutshell, national spirit education was an attempt to inculcate a Chinese national identity

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<sup>43</sup> *Ming-tzu jing-sheng jiao-yuu* translated as national spirit education by Chou (1997).



that was present from pre-communist era. This development of looking for an identity existing in pre 1949 China led to various attempts of preserving the then characteristics, for instance traditional characters for writing Mandarin.

The question of identity or national identity in Taiwan was, and is, a burning issue. It received a lot of attention during Martial Law when the policy of Sinicization of Taiwan was deliberately made a part of all official policies including school curriculum. The year 1949, in the history of Taiwan is considered the beginning of “White Terror”. With the implementation of Martial Law, the process of democratization in Taiwan got disrupted. One of the main purposes of Martial Law was to spread Chinese identity among the Taiwanese population. The Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek was of the opinion that after fifty years of Japanese colonial rule, people of Taiwan had forgotten their real identity. They thought of themselves as Japanese. For him the aim of Japanese colonial rule was (by using power, ideology and cultural hegemony) to transform the people of Taiwan from Chinese to merely Japanese slaves. He acknowledged that to a great extent the Japanese were successful in their pursuit. He waged a whole new movement to retransform this so called Japanese slave identity of the people of Taiwan into their real identity which was Chinese since time immemorial. To achieve this goal and in response to Mao’s “Cultural Revolution”, Chiang Kai-shek began “Cultural Renaissance”. In schools, the “Cultural Renaissance” became an important part of all curricular and extra-curricular activities (Chun, 1994).

The first main measure was adoption of Mandarin as national language in schools, offices and public places. The use of Mandarin was made mandatory. On the other hand, the use of Taiwanese was strictly prohibited. All opportunities in government or public sector were open only for those citizens who were capable of speaking Mandarin. The reason behind making Mandarin the national language was to inculcate Chinese nationalism among the various groups in Taiwan. Political scientists agree that the spread of a common language ensures and generates the sense of unity among the people of the same place. Smith places language along with ideology in the formation of nation. He defined nationalism as an ideological movement for attaining and maintaining autonomy, unity and identity on behalf of a population deemed by some of its members to constitute an actual or potential 'nation'. In fact this definition embodies elements from both ideology and language-cum-symbolism of the nation (Smith, 1991, p. 73). In other words, language can be used to inculcate or arouse sentiments of nationalism, for example common national identity or sense of belonging to the country and people. Thus, Mandarin was being used to propagate Chinese nationalism in Taiwan.

Textbooks were at the heart of the education system as they were the only source of teaching (Su, 2007). During the Martial Law, the second measure adopted was revision of education. This responsibility of review of curriculum and publication of textbooks was assigned to the National Institute of Compilation and Translations (*guoli bianyi guan*)

(NICT).<sup>44</sup> For decades the NICT had served the ruling KMT in its aim of imprinting in Taiwanese hearts the nationalist view of what it meant to be Chinese, until the institution began to change at the end of the 1990s (Corcuff, 2002).

To inculcate Chinese nationalism, a textbook on “Filial to relatives and committed to the nation” was introduced under the course titled “Life and Ethics” (*shenghuo yu lunli*). The text began with a general discussion of Chiang Kai-shek’s childhood and why he chose to join the army. Stafford (1992) gives an example which goes like this:

You'll soon be grown up. You're very filial toward me, regularly helping with the chores, studying hard; it's clear that you're a good child. But you should know the real meaning [*zhenyi*] of filial piety [*xiao*]. So-called 'filial piety' isn't simply asking after, regularly working for, and supporting one's parents, etc. - the formal standards ... You need to know, filial piety and patriotism [*zhong*] are inseparable. When small, one should be utterly filial [*jinxiao*] towards one's parents, when grown, one should be utterly loyal [*jinzhong*] towards the nation. If in the future you sacrifice yourself for the nation [*xianshen baoguo*, literally 'sacrifice the body-person to repay the country'], if you fulfill filial piety through your patriotism [*yi xiao zuo zhong*] and do great things for the nation and the people, that would truly be the 'Great Filial Piety' [*daxiao*], and that is my greatest hope for you (pp. 369-370).

The purpose of the textbook was purely propagandist. It was striving towards unconditional allegiance from people of Taiwan to give even their lives to serve the KMT

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<sup>44</sup> Some scholars have translated this as National Institute of Edition and Translation (NIET because *bian* has got two meanings one is compilation and other is edition. Here compilation appears more appropriate.

government. It presented Chiang Kai-shek as a filial son towards his mother as well as the motherland.

The education policy was meant to contribute towards rapid economic development. Chiang Kai-shek was of the opinion that higher literacy rate accelerates economic development. Consequently compulsory elementary education was introduced in 1968. The government's commitment was reflected in increased expenditure on education (Ashton, Green, James and Sung, 1999). In 1968, nine years of Compulsory Education comprising six years of elementary and three years of junior high school education was introduced in Taiwan. The policy played an important role in Taiwan's economic modernization during 1960-1980.

The responsibility of education was assigned to NICT. The syllabus focused on only those issues and themes which were in tune with the legitimacy of *Kuomintang* (KMT) rule and Chinese Nationalism. On the one hand, textbooks were full of values that favored the KMT's leadership such as authoritarianism; loyalty to leaders and sacrifice for the nation; idolization of leaders; anti-communism; the importance of the recovery of the Chinese mainland; the labeling of the regime of the People's Republic of China (PRC) as Chinese communist bandits; the political and moral thoughts of *Jiang Jie-she* and *Jiang Jing-guo* (Law, 2002). On the other hand, values that were deemed by the ruling party to challenge their leadership were completely excluded from textbooks. Thus, the syllabus became an instrument to legitimize the KMT rule.

#### 4.2.3.1.1 Meilidao or Kaohsiung Incident<sup>45</sup>

Amid this modernization endeavor and martial law, there were incidents of resistance shown by Taiwanese. The Meilidao incident is one such event worth mentioning here because it was the first time international HR were mentioned in Taiwan. It compelled the ruling party to introduce further changes in the curriculum to avoid such opposition in near future. The Meilidao was a magazine which was established and started publication in August 1979. This magazine was a propagator of democracy in Taiwan and a staunch supporter of independent Taiwan. On December 10, 1979 the Meilidao has organized a rally to celebrate the International Human Rights Day in Kaohsiung. The request for the rally was rejected and declared illegal by the concerned authorities. But Meilidao decided to proceed with its original plan. The Kaohsiung police tried to disperse the crowd but suddenly a tussle between the crowd and police broke out. Government announced that 182 policemen and one civilian injured (Roy, 2003). The Police arrested the eight rally organizers and charged them with sedition. They were

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<sup>45</sup> There is another incident preceded to Meilidao (where HR are being violated) worth mentioning i.e. February 28 incident or popularly known as 2-2-8 incident. The 2-2-8 denotes February 28 of 1947. On this day, Taiwanese population collectively came on the streets of Taipei and opposing Taipei Monopoly Bureau. On February 27, two agents of Bureau harassed a woman, who was allegedly selling tobacco products of foreign brands, which was considered illegal. During this harassment few people interfered and in response to that the Bureau personnel fired. In outcome of that one person died on the spot and few injured. This act of Bureau personnel was considered brutal and against the democratic ethics. So, people had decided to demonstrate in front of the Bureau office but when they found it closed they moved to Governor General's office, which was heavily guarded. They pressurized the government to accept their "Thirty-two Demands". The first demand was to give autonomy to Taiwan as a province within the ROC. This demand can be considered as the first explicit instance of emerging Nationalism in Taiwan. But this movement could not culminate in full fledged Nationalism but it paved the way for national movement of Taiwanese national identity and Taiwan as an independent nation. Unfortunately later on this movement was brutally suppressed by Chen Yi's administration with the help of army.

charged that they demanded Taiwan independence on the other hand organizers expressed that they advocated for self determination. These eight people accused for Kaohsiung Incident were sentenced twelve years to life imprisonment.

The compulsory education gave the bureaucracy considerable power over influencing the formation of identity in young people (Hughes and Stone, 1999). In accordance with government's repressive policy, all those works were banned which were taking up the issue of Taiwan as an independent entity or supporting Those who were found guilty of it got severe punishment by the KMT government. Thus, during the period between 1949 and 1971 education was being used as a hegemonic tool to promote Chinese nationalism on Taiwan. In 1975 after the death of Chiang Kai-shek, his son Chiang Ching-kuo became the chairman of KMT Central Committee. Younger Chiang was not in favor of Martial Law but decided to continue with it till its end in 1987. But he began to introduce some institutional changes. He has realized the fact that the "White Terror" cannot help further. People are aware of the current situation and they can anytime start the campaign against the KMT rule. So, he preferred to soften the rule and worked in the direction to make it more humane. The government believed that Taiwan in the 1980s would be a liberal society in which those in authority espoused a preference for procedures that encouraged the exploration of issues affecting the lives of its citizens (Tsai and Bridges, 1997). This shows the willingness of government to introduce changes which make society more liberal. In so doing, education was not ignored either. The then assistant Minister of Education made a statement:

The assumption is that the society is changing all the time, so each proposed solution is a hypothesis to be tested. The structure of this society is temporary, multiple, dynamic, and the evolution of a great variety of value systems increases the severity of educational misconceptions. There are different ideas and values emerging in an open society, and education has an important and practical role to play in clarifying those values (Quoted in Wu, 1989, pp. 1-22).

This statement of assistant Minister of Education was an indication of the introduction of new reforms in various institutions of society, polity, economy through bringing changes in education system of Taiwan. For this, responsibility was being assigned to The Taiwan Provincial Institute for Elementary School Teachers' In-service Education (The Taiwan Institute). The Institute a model loosely based on American model of curriculum development, but in Taiwan it was slightly changed and the focus here was inquiry teaching. In other words the Taiwan Institute brought reform in pedagogy rather than in curriculum. The basic premise of inquiry teaching is the teacher is the centre is learning process. The teacher controls and decides what should be taught and how should it be imparted and what would be the outcome? Thus, through inquiry teaching, KMT government again achieved success to impart the knowledge, they desired of. The aims of this reform of measure introduced in the form of inquiry teaching were being summed up by the Taiwan Institute as: To cultivate pupils' manners, behaviors and habits of good living; to cultivate basic knowledge and ability to adapt to modern social

life; to practice excellent traditional morality; to help them to be active pupils and patriotic citizens (Tsai and Bridges, 1997). This statement shows that the language has been changed but the attitude was still the same. In other words, the main focus or aim of education was still to inculcate Chinese nationalism among the students and to prepare this new generation in the same old pot. During the process of these reforms, Chiang Ching-kuo abandoned Martial Law in 1987. The renunciation of “White Terror” led to a whole new era of development in all sphere of life.

#### **4.2.4 Lee Teng-Hui Period (1987-2000)**

In 1988 Lee Teng-hui came to power with the avowed objective of making Taiwan a democratic country. Myers (1996) observed that Taiwan’s process of building a civil society and democracy both from the top down and the bottom up had followed a different trajectory from Singapore, Hong Kong and Macau (p. 1073). Lee Teng hui won election in 1996 and became the first popularly elected president to Taiwan. Further he was the first Taiwan born president. He started democratic reforms, and the first measure he took was to ensure constitutional protections of human rights. Education became an important vehicle of democratizing polity and society. It was meant to inculcate civic virtues that were deemed necessary for the development of democracy. A new curriculum was designed which included civics, law and politics (Lu and Huang, 1999, p. 254). It is expected from these subjects to expand the ideas associated with democracy from the beginning of junior high school. Chou (1999) argued that the process of Taiwanization led to the process of democratization in Taiwan. The process of Taiwanization was



imbued with values of freedom, equality and HR which are core values of democracy as well.

Lee remained in power for twelve years. During his rule two major educational reforms were brought out in 1993 and 1999. His education policy can be characterized by six main features:

1. Making education central in preparing students to face the challenges of modernization and globalization and cope with the changes brought about by them.
2. Taiwan had a share of one percent in the world trade. Quality and efficiency required to compete in international market to be achieved through education.
3. To bring higher education under the umbrella of compulsory education in order to have a consolidated Kindergarten to High School (K-12) system.
4. Making curriculum orientated more practical and assigning teachers a central role in the process.
5. Making humanities the core area of learning due to its correlation with democracy.
6. Making curriculum flexible and empowering teachers to organize the syllabus according to the needs and understanding of students (Lin, 2003, pp. 134-138).

These features indicate that development and social welfare were the major driving force of Lee's educational policy rather than politics or ideology. Moreover, the overall development of the young generation was the main focus of contemporary education. The new curriculum included local dialects as well as English as required courses. This step was in accordance with the aim of preparing Taiwan for international

competition and globalization, so that it could become an active member of the world community.

Curriculum makers have also emphasized the role of pedagogy in successful implementation of new curriculum. Hence, teachers' manuals were developed. Teachers were directed to follow three approaches by the Ministry of Education:

Teachers should encourage students to participate in classes. Three approaches are provided here: first, teachers praise children when they express their opinions verbally or non-verbally; second, teachers should create a climate where children feel comfortable to express their opinions (i.e., if the teacher does not agree with children's opinions, the teachers should not directly criticize their opinions as wrong. Instead, the teacher should say something like: "Why do you think so? "What would be the result if you did it in such way?"); third, teachers should frame questions so as to arouse children's thinking. Teachers do not necessarily always tell students correct answer; rather, teachers should ask questions to guide students to think and leave them alone to find the answers for themselves (Cited in Chou, 1999, pp. 23-27).

This measure was the first step in ensuring children's individuality, right to think and right to decide freely. How far it is practiced in the classroom by teachers is a moot question.

#### **4.2.5 Education in a New Phase of Taiwanese Democracy (2000 to Present)**

The Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) of Taiwan was founded in 1986, and came to power in 2000. The ideology of DPP is centered round Taiwanese nationalism. The party is working to make Taiwan an independent country and regain the seat in the United Nations which it lost in 1971. The education policy of the DPP is shaped by its ideology and objectives. The leader of DPP, Chen Shui-bian, has followed the philosophy of “Three Principles of the People” which was the legacy from the earlier rule. Moreover he tried to push Taiwanese nationalism through education by incorporating four hundred years of Taiwanese history in the curriculum.

#### **4.3 Educational Reform**

With the transformation from authoritarian rule to democratic set up, the wind of change in many spheres of life including education started blowing. A young, foreign educated and trained generation of Taiwanese came back to work in the country. This generation had tasted abroad the fruit of democracy. They were determined to restore democracy in Taiwan. They played an important role in forming public opinion visible every now and then in the form of rallies, agitations or mass movements. In this backdrop, a mass demonstration called ‘the Alliance for the Education Reform Movement’, demanding for educational reform was held on April 10, 1994 (Ministry of Education, 2005; Chen, 2008). They suggested that there should be a basic education law, smaller schools and smaller classes should be established and the number of high schools and

universities should be increased. The government responded positively to these public suggestions. The first gesture was seen in the Sixth National Conference on Education held by the Ministry of Education. The Commission for Deliberation on Educational Reform was established in September 1994 by Executive Yuan. It was followed by ‘the Advisory Report on Education Reform’. During this period, major reforms taken were Basic Education Law (1999), Teacher Education Law, abolition of Joint Entrance Examination, comprehensive curriculum reform and school based management (Chen, 2008, p. 294).

#### **4.3.1 Basic Education Law (1999)**

In 1999, the Basic Education Law was enacted. It made right to education a legal right. All citizens regardless of their gender, age, ability, geographic origin, race, religious beliefs, political opinions, socio-economic status, etc. were given equal access to education (Ministry of Education, 2005). It defined the goal of education in terms of cultivation of good character citizens, with democratic thinking and with a clear sense of law and order. It further emphasized that education should also develop citizens’ respect for HR, protection of environment, cultivate a sense of national identity, respect towards different social groups, gender, religions, differently abled and aboriginal people, etc. (Ministry of Education, 2005). To implement the Basic Education Law, funding was an important requirement. To ensure uninterrupted flow of resources to promote education at all levels and special educational provisions for differently abled and aboriginal people, the Law of Educational Budget Allocation and Management was enacted in 2002. The

Basic Education Law and the Law of Education Budget Allocation and Management provide the legal basis and guarantee that allow sustainable and complete development of education in Taiwan (Ministry of Education, 2005, p. 9).

#### **4.3.2 ROC: Republic of Creativity**

The 21<sup>st</sup> century is the age of information & communication technology (ICT) and knowledge based economy. In this century those who are able to create or generate new knowledge would ultimately survive and flourish. Knowledge creation has become a prerequisite for the development of any nation. Knowledge creation seeks investment and reform in education sector. The basic and applied researches are the back bone of knowledge creation. The Ministry of Education came up with the White Paper on Creative Education. The aim behind this project was to transform Republic of China into Republic of Creativity. It was implemented in the same year it came into existence, i.e. 2002. This action of the Ministry of Education was in accordance with the new worldwide trend in the direction of knowledge economy. Chen (2008) has offered a critique of the policy with the argument that emphasis on creativity could not change the grassroots practices prevalent in Taiwanese education system for instance examination and grade oriented evaluation of students. This practice is not conducive for a creative educational environment. This is rather an obstacle for the development of creativity among students. Thus, the intention of the project Republic of Creativity is good but it requires transformation in the whole education system from bottom up.

#### **4.4 Philosophical and Constitutional bases of Taiwanese Education**

In Chinese culture the family occupies a central role among all institutions. Confucius laid emphasis on such virtues that can help in consolidating the family structure. The Confucian tradition underpins Taiwanese education and co-exists with Dr. Sun Yat-sen's "Three Principles of the people" (San Min Chu-yi) mentioned above. Sun Yat-sen developed an educational theory inspired by the American system of education. For him the adoption of the western model of education particularly science and technology was the only way to improve economic, political and social conditions of the East. After 1949 these ideas formed the basis of the Taiwanese education system.

In 1949 Hu Shih, an educationalist and political activist, came to Taiwan with the Kuomintang (KMT). He was educated in America and was a student of John Dewey, who developed the theory of Pragmatism in the sphere of education. Dewey placed special emphasis on the child in the process of curriculum formation, and from here on the child centered approach in teaching became pre-eminent. Hu's contribution in structuring Taiwanese education was that Taiwan adopted the American model with variations that took care of its specific needs.

Section five of the Constitution of the Republic of China has the provision for education. Articles 156 to 167 constitute the crux and Article 158 describes the aim of education as follows:

Education and culture shall aim at the development among the citizens of the national spirit, the spirit of self-

government, national morality, good physique, scientific knowledge and ability to earn a living (Constitution of Republic of China).

The article combines Confucius and Sun Yat-sen insofar as it focuses on morality and physical development of citizens along with democracy, nationalism and livelihood. Further, article 159 has the provision that all citizens have the equal right and opportunity to be educated.

#### **4.5 Confucianism and HRE**

As we discussed earlier the Taiwanese society is deeply influenced by Confucianism and so is the philosophy of education. Scholars have attempted to interpret Confucianism in different ways. This section examines the issue of compatibility between Confucianism and HR. Confucianism evolved over the years. Zhang (2003) stated that in Confucianism all individuals are equal by nature. No individual is born to rule and none to be ruled (p. 11). This interpretation of Zhang gels with the idea of HR. He further outlined the main Confucian (ethical, political, and economic) principles:

(1) free will and rationality; (2) natural equality; (3) self-cultivation through education and equal opportunities in education; (4) the welfare of the people and the policy of benevolence; (5) mutual obligation, rather than law, in maintaining social justice (p. 12).

The above-mentioned five principles are fundamental to the soul of HR. The only principle of Confucian philosophy that is not in tune with the philosophy of HR is the hierarchical social structure supported by talent and merit. This principle endorses social inequality and works against the idea of natural equality. So Confucianism can only be selectively applied in teaching HR and HRE.

#### **4.6 Education system**

The school system in Taiwan can be divided into four levels kindergarten, primary and junior high, senior secondary and university education.

##### **4.6.1 Pre-school Education or Kindergarten**

In the sphere of kindergarten education the private sector has recently become quite active. The reason for this is higher returns on smaller investments. Kindergartens have become a lucrative business and have therefore mushroomed. Although there are rules to open kindergartens and maintain standards, these have not hampered their spread in different parts of Taiwan.

##### **4.6.2 Nine-Year Compulsory Education (Primary and Junior High School)**

The nine year of compulsory education (*Guo Ming Jiao Yu*) comprises five years primary and three years junior high school education. In 1968 this was made compulsory by the Chiang Kai-shek government. Liu has stated that during this period, the implementation of compulsory education did not simply mean extending the length of compulsory education from six years to nine years, but allowing students to acquire more



comprehensive education than in the past (cited in Chou and Ho, 2007, p. 357). It is important to remember that Liu was writing in the martial law period when the role assigned to education was to expedite economic growth. In the present scenario Liu's opinion seems more acceptable than before.

According to the law it is mandatory for parents to send their children to school or else face punitive actions. The maximum share of expenditure on education goes to this sector since it is considered to be quite important for economic development. Students are expected to work hard from the beginning. During their junior high school they do three hours homework every day and during weekends (Chyu, 1991). In addition they go to "Cram Schools" (Coaching Schools) everyday to prepare for the entrance exam. Some of these institutes are reputed and quite expensive.

#### **4.6.3 Senior Secondary Education (Senior High and Senior Vocational School)**

There are two kinds of senior secondary schools in Taiwan, viz. normal and vocational. To get admission in the normal school is difficult because there is a central examination. Only those students who get higher grades are allowed to go to normal senior secondary schools while others go to either night schools or vocational schools. The normal school pass outs only can appear in the Joint Entrance Examination for Colleges, and all white and blue collar jobs go to university graduates. This has made education at this level highly competitive and socially prestigious. To qualify the entrance exam is a matter of honor for the family, although it brings tremendous pressure on students as some kind of a final frontier to their career.

#### **4.6.4 Higher Education (Universities, Colleges, and Technical Colleges)**

Higher education includes universities and colleges. Further there are two kinds of universities, national and private. In national universities the tuition fee is much lower in comparison to the private universities. This makes the prospects of getting admission in National Universities further attractive. After 1991 there was a sudden increase in the number of universities. It is argued that the role of higher education has been critical in creating upward social mobility in Taiwan. People have found that through higher education they could acquire social status that is otherwise difficult to attain.

Another reason for the expansion of higher institutions is political and could be located in the process of democratization. After the impeachment of Martial law in 1987, people got the right to elect their representatives. They preferred those candidates who had a reputation for doing good work in the field of education as well as those who showed vision and interest in broadening the sphere of higher education. Sensing this, politicians have been active in opening new institutions so that they could attract more voters. Currently there are 143 universities and colleges in Taiwan and the number is indicative of the mass spread of higher education.

#### **4.7 HRE in Taiwan**

Taiwan has transited steadily and peacefully from an authoritarian state to a democracy in less than 15 years (Law, 2002, p. 61). The introduction of democracy in Taiwan commented upon by Law in 2002 has now become more widespread and intense in the year 2010. In other words, it is heading towards the grass root level. With the

development of democracy, voices in favor of HR and HRE are being heard loud and clear. Fong (2004) observed that human-rights-based state is the new vision of the new century Taiwan (p. 135). A landmark event in the history of HR in Taiwan is Meilidao incident on December 10, 1979 when a rally was organized to celebrate the International Human Rights Day. Since then the HR scenario has changed significantly. There are incidents of HR violation but these are not severe. There has been no genocide or civil war. The demand for HR has transformed from mere political rights to social, cultural and educational rights. In other words, the HR movement in Taiwan is now seeking for HR based culture or HR way of life.

The promotion and development of [HRE] are both affected by the macro environment such as changes in international and domestic communities, and the efforts made by members of the academe and [NGOs] (Huang, 2006, p. 73). This is valid in the case of Taiwan where all these factors were working simultaneously. For instance, the international factors were fiftieth anniversary of UDHR and Decade for Human Rights Education, which is in progress, and domestic factors included an active intelligentsia, NGOs and a comparatively democratic and receptive government. The Taiwanese intelligentsia and NGOs have organized seminars and workshops on HRE. These efforts were pursued independently or in collaboration with each other. A brief introduction of few such efforts would throw light on the developments in the field of HRE. The next section deals with the current status of HRE in Taiwan. It also documents activities,

seminars, programs and workshops on HRE. The last section is centered on future planning and implementation of HRE.

#### **4.7.1 Workshop on HRE<sup>46</sup>**

In November 1997, Professor Tang of Taipei Municipal University of Education organized a Workshop on HRE funded by the Taipei Bureau of Education. The Workshop was planned on a weekly basis preferably on Friday afternoons so that teachers could attend it after the school. It could prolong on Fridays because there was no school on Saturdays. Thirty teachers from primary and junior secondary schools—either on volunteer basis or on the recommendation of their Principals—attended the Workshop. The Workshop covered a wide range of topics from concepts and history of HR, Children’s rights, constitutional protection of HR and last but not the least, planning and revision of teaching materials.

For the planning and revision of teaching material an advanced Workshop was convened. Fifteen teachers from primary and junior high schools attended it. They formed four groups. They met on every Friday afternoon on the pattern of the previous Workshop. Their assignments ranged from translation of international documents into simple Mandarin to compilation and revision of teaching material. One of the groups has focused on development of materials and activities from case studies drawn from their observations of students’ experiences in schools (Tang, 1999/March, p. 163). A

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<sup>46</sup> This discussion is based on Huang’s (2006/March) paper.

Handbook of HRE was prepared in accordance with Nine Year Universal Compulsory Education to integrate HRE into the curriculum. The Handbook is published by Department of Education, Taipei Municipal University of Education.

#### **4.7.2 National and International Conferences on HRE**

In the year 1998, the Yang Ming University Crusades organized an “Education Camp for Junior Secondary School Students”. The purpose of the conference was to spread the concept of HR to villages and other remote areas. The issues addressed by the conference included smoking, drinking, chewing betel nut and taking drugs (Huang, (2006/March, p. 76).

In end 1998, Soochow University, Yang Ming University and Taipei Municipal University of Education jointly organized an International conference on HRE. There were participants from the US, Europe and the Asia-Pacific Human Rights Information Center in Osaka, Japan. An International Conference on Human Rights Education was held in Taipei. It was a collaborative effort of Ministry of Education, Chang Fo-Chuan Center for the Study of Human Rights, Soochow University, Taipei Municipal Teachers College and National Yang-Ming University. Distinguished scholars on HRE such as Audrey Osler, Theodore Orlin and Jefferson Plantilla participated in the conference. In December 2009, a two day International Conference on Civics and Human Rights Education in Asia took place at Taipei Municipal University of Education. The Conference addressed various issues pertaining to HRE and its relationship with

citizenship education in China, Hong Kong, Taiwan and Japan. It had covered both theoretical and practical perspectives. There were university scholars presenting the theoretical framework and teachers from elementary school with their classroom experiences and results of their action research conducted in HRE.

### **4.7.3 MOE and HRE**

The MOE came up with a blueprint or a plan in the form of a report on HRE promotion and cultivation. This document is divided into seven parts, of which four are discussed below. The first part discusses the need to promote HRE. In this, President Chen's commitment to establishment of HR in Taiwan has been reiterated. There was also an urgency to improve HR status in Taiwan and change the perception of the world regarding HR violations at home. It was discussed how education can play a vital role in promotion of HR and lay the foundation for HR culture.

The second part defines HRE and delineates five principles on which it is founded. The five underlying principles of HRE are:

1. Ability to espouse one's own rights: the individual clearly knows what one's rights are in a variety of social settings, and having sufficient social skills and abilities, stands up for his rights.
2. Willingness to espouse one's own rights: aside from knowing one's own rights and standing up for them, one must have sufficient motivation to push oneself to fight for those rights.

3. Ability to respect others' rights: the individual clearly knows the rights of others in a variety of social settings and accepts others' rights to espouse their rights.
4. Willingness to respect that others advocate their rights: the individual has the sufficient motivation to accept other people's advocacy of their rights.
5. Concern for a society's political, economic and cultural development that gradually tends towards social justice: the individual knows, is capable, and willing to care about all aspects of a society's political, economic and cultural development, so that it may gradually move in the direction of social justice (MOE, 2003, p. 9).

Knowledge, ability, willingness and responsibility are the four domains crucial for the success of HRE. They all work collectively. It is apparent that absence of any of these would result in either partial or non attainment of desired or expected results from HRE.<sup>47</sup>

Part three provided guidelines for the MOE, i.e. what can the ministry do. In the answer to this question, the MOU outlined the following targets for itself: establish a HRE promotional working group, conduct workshops for HR educators, establish a HRE guidance group and a HRE resource center, and prepare guidelines for conducting evaluation of HRE. Many of them have been implemented by the MOU but it ought to be an ongoing task. For instance, workshop for HR educators is not a one-time affair. It

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<sup>47</sup> The incorporation of the four domains was the main consideration when the nine year integrated curriculum was being developed. These are related to all seven learning areas and ten basic skills mentioned in the curriculum.

needs to be organized on a regular basis. It is a never-ending process just as the role the MOU has to play.

Part four is on what can be expected from the schools. There are many suggestions for schools to follow, such as creation of a HRE school environment including both hardware and software facilities, introducing HRE into the school curriculum and evaluation of the schools' own HR status.

In 1998, the cumulative effect of all these initiatives was Ministry of Education's decision to introduce HR into Grade I-IX Integrated Curriculum for Elementary and Junior High School Education. The integrated curriculum had two components: seven main learning areas and ten basic skills:

Main learning area:

Languages: Mandarin, Hokkien, Hakka, aboriginal languages and English; Health and physical education including sex education; Social studies including history, geography, civics, economics, law, and human rights; Arts: music, visual arts, and performing arts; Mathematics; Science: biology, physics, chemistry, earth science, environmental science, and life and information sciences; General activities: computers, club activities, scouting, outdoor activities, and home economics (Huang, 2006; Li cited in Chou and Ho, 2007).

Basic skills:

Understand self, and develop one's potential; Appreciation, expression, and creation; Life and career planning; Lifelong learning; Expression, communication, and sharing; Respect, compassion, and group cooperation; Cultural learning, international understanding; Planning, organization, and



implementation; Use of science, technology, and information; Self-directed exploration and research; Independent thought and problem solving (Huang, 2006, pp. 73-83; Li cited in Chou and Ho, 2007, pp. 344-377).

These seventeen learning areas and basic skills together form the integrated curriculum for nine years. In other words, from grade I all the above-mentioned learning areas and skills are to be taught and developed and every successive stage takes it further. All nine stages are interconnected and cannot be skipped. It is expected that the nine year integrated curriculum would broaden the spectrum of learning. Incorporation of HR as part of social studies learning area is an evidence that the scope of the curriculum got widened.

The promotion of HR was not only ensured through incorporation of it into the social studies learning area but also making it part of extracurricular activities. The Ministry of Education (MOE) has urged schools to make HR an integral part of their campuses. For MOE HR and HRE concepts are:

[HR] are inherent rights and freedoms, regardless of ethnicity, gender, or social class. They are not subject to deprivation or violation on the part of any society or government; the opportunity for individual expression must even be positively provided in order to respect individual dignity and seek the perfect life. Therefore, in actuality [HRE] is concerned with education as to the dignity of humanity, which helps us understand the basic physiological, psychological and spiritual conditions that we must enjoy...“that which makes us human” (MOE, 2003, pp. 15-16).

The MOE's interpretation of the concept of HR and HRE is in accordance with UDHR. The thrust of HRE is on human dignity that cannot be degraded by any authority. In other words, the purpose of HRE is to sensitize and familiarize students about issues of HR and encourage them to actively participate in restoration of HR if they are violated in any form.

#### **4.8 Organizational and Institutional Development in HRE**

In May 2000, President Chen called for "building of a human rights state". What he meant by HR state was a government accountable and committed to HR. The popularly elected government in a way led to a HR movement in all walks of life. The period was also notable for the emergence of governmental and non-governmental organizations and institutions pertaining to HR and HRE. A select few of them are introduced and their nature of work discussed in the following section.

##### **4.8.1 HRE Committee of MOE**

The HRE Committee of MOE was established in April 2001. Its chairperson is the Education Minister and it has 24 members from different areas including scholars, experts, NGO's and HR activists. In the year 2001, the Committee called for a meeting in October that resulted in the formation of four sub-committees. These sub-committees were: 1) research, development and evaluation; 2) teacher education and curriculum planning; 3) social promotion and publicity; 4) campus environment. A study called

“Guidelines for Evaluation in Each School Level” was commissioned to Professor Fong Chao-lin of National Chengchi University. Professor Lin Chia-fan of National Taiwan Normal University was assigned a project called “Campus Regulations vs. Students’ Rights and Responsibilities: Perspective from a Study of Legal Cases in the US and Taiwan”.

The Committee prepared a guideline to promote and protect HRE and HR respectively. It is committed to improve school campus environment by making it conducive to HRE. It has also taken initiative to conduct new researches in the field of HR. It is entrusted with the responsibilities of curriculum development and training in HRE. It is also expected to cooperate and collaborate with international agencies of HR. The Committee seeks for direction from the international institutions in the arena of HRE.

#### **4.8.2 Center for Law Related Education, Judicial Reform Foundation**

Despite political reforms, old social and cultural contentions are still hindering the practice of democracy in Taiwan (Center for Law Related Education Judicial Reform Foundation, 2008). To combat this situation and promote democracy down to the grass root level, three institutions - Chung Hwa Rotary Education Foundation, Taipei Bar Association and Judicial Reform Foundation - have joined hands together. In May 2003, they initiated a project called the “Planting Seeds of law-Related Education in Taiwan” (PASLRT). Their goal is to develop a new kind of law-related education in place of old

dogmatic pedagogies. Their purpose is to prepare enlightened and responsible citizens who are committed to democratic principles in theory as well in practice.

The Foundation is highly inspired by the efforts of the Center for Civic Education (U.S.A.). The Center for Civic Education has developed a series for K-2 and 3-6 grades called “Foundations of Democracy: Authority, Privacy, Responsibility and Justice”. There are four illustrated books on Authority: Orb and Effy Learn about Authority, on Privacy: Jessica Fish Learns about Privacy, on Responsibility: The Zookeeper Learns about Responsibility, and on Justice: Fair Bears Learn about Justice. In December 2006, the PASLRT translated the series into Mandarin and published 15,000 copies for K-2 grades and 10,000 copies for grades 3-6. The PASLRT trained 248 lawyers to help and introduce teachers to the Foundations of Democracy Series. Currently, the PASLRT is busy in developing, adapting and replacing American laws into Taiwanese ones for 7-9 and 10-12 grades.

#### **4.8.3 Taiwan Association for Human Rights (TAHR)**

The TAHR was founded on International Human Rights Day, December 10, 1984. The day was chosen deliberately to highlight the goal and purpose behind the establishment of the organization. In the beginning, the TAHR’s primary concern was to protect and promote the Taiwanese people’s civil and political rights, mainly by freeing political prisoners and advocating scrapping of political blacklist (Taiwan Association for Human Rights, 2008). TAHR is truly committed to the cause of HR. It is fighting on

behalf of all people regardless of class, race, gender, religion or nationality. It provides enormous help to protect the HR of foreigners, most likely to be violated in the case of foreign labor from the Philippines, Indonesia and Vietnam. TAHR also ventures into HRE by organizing HR training sessions and volunteer training programs, issues Online Human Rights Weekly, publishes Human Rights Quarterly and Annual Human Rights Report, translates and publishes international publications on HR into Mandarin, and organizes film festivals to promote HR.

#### **4.8.4 Chang Fo-Chuan Center for the Study of Human Rights**

In December 2000, the Chang Fo-Chuan Center for the Study of Human Rights was established at Soochow University. The Center is named after Chang Fo-Chuan who was a political scientist whose work on HR theory and history is well known. The purpose of the Center is to facilitate the development of a HR culture by encouraging research in HR, peace and development, training teachers, developing HR material for primary and junior high schools, to train HR NGO workers, and promote international exchange (Huang, 2006). The Center is involved in various activities pertaining to HR and HRE. For the first time in the history of HR in Taiwan, it has organized an “International Conference on National Human Rights Commissions”. The Conference was in line with other initiatives to fulfill a pending demand to create a National Human Rights Commission of Taiwan. Apart from organizing seminars, the Center also offers courses in HR, peace and development with the help of experts in the field of HR.

#### **4.9 HRE in Taiwan: A Part of Social Science or an Independent Discipline or Integrated into School Curriculum?**

HRE in Taiwan is in nascent stage even though it is getting attention from all walks of life. It is a part of social science, also an independent discipline, as well as in the process of getting integrated into school curriculum. The point needs further explanation. If one looks at HRE from government policy perspective, it was declared as part of social science along with history, geography and civics. In the sixth grade social science textbook there is plenty of content directly and indirectly related to HR, such as human world, family and raising boy and girl, society and country's responsibilities, global village culture, scientific revolution, industrial revolution, modern science and technology, science and technology management, united world, environmental problems, and international organizations such as Red Cross, UN, WTO, WHO, APEC. There are three publication houses that are in the business of publishing textbooks. All the three textbooks have similar topics but with different examples or pictures or layouts. They all follow the guidelines issued by the MOU.

There is a provision in the government policy which empowers schools administration to further develop HR in their school setups. As a result of this policy, there is lot more freedom in developing HRE. Some schools have started teaching HR as an independent subject but co-curricular subject. Some of these schools have very well realized the vitality of HRE, hence working in the direction of making HR an integral part of their school culture. The Taiwanese scholars express their unshakable faith in HR

culture and persistently contribute through their writings, teaching and training to interns in creating and promoting HR culture based school tradition in Taiwan (Tang, 1999/March; Fong, 2004; Huang, 2006/March; Lin, 2007/March).

The schools determined to establish HR culture primarily use the teaching material developed by TAHR. The teaching material includes teacher's guide too. The material focuses on four themes. These themes are authority, privacy, responsibility and justice. These themes constitute the foundations of democracy and develop HR values, principles and activism among elementary school students. I had the occasion to observe the delivery of two themes, privacy and justice. The sub-themes of privacy that the teacher had dealt with are, what is privacy? What kind of things do people want to keep private? How do they keep things private? Why might people's privacy behavior differ? How does culture affect people's ideas about privacy? What are the benefits and costs of privacy? How would you evaluate the benefits and costs of privacy in this situation? When should the right to privacy be protected? What ideas are useful in solving problems of privacy?

It is apparent from the sub themes that there is an attempt to throw light on all relevant aspects of privacy. The structure focuses on how to think instead of what to think. The skill or ability to think independently provides the basis for reasoned and democratic ways of coming to conclusions. This approach also takes into consideration other people's concerns and how an individual decision could affect them. Here comes the role

of teacher as mediator. The following section will throw light on Taiwanese teachers and how the pedagogy of HRE is being practiced.

#### **4.10 Social Science Teachers and HRE in Taipei School**

Teachers are key players in the implementation of the [HRE] (Hsu, 2004, p. 88). Teacher is the agency which makes the teaching and learning experience lively. The teacher has considerable impact on students especially at the elementary level. The teachers' understanding of [HR] exerts a critical influence on whether [HRE] is a success or not (Dan, 2004, p. 108). One of the important issues in the [HRE] in Taiwan is that our teachers need to be literate in [HRE] (Hsu, 2004, p. 88). HRE is a fairly recent phenomenon in Taiwan and teacher's training in HR has been initiated just few years back.

The following section will introduce three teachers who were taken as subject for current research. These HRE teachers were observed in the classroom and interviewed by me. This section provides their personal backgrounds, values, convictions and pedagogic styles, skills and principles. The description of the teachers here includes every possible detail since, as argued earlier, it shapes their personality as well as their professional beliefs and skills. These three teachers have tremendous faith in HR and HRE although they found the training in HRE that they received insufficient.<sup>48</sup> How and why did they

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<sup>48</sup> Though they received training in HRE but they themselves felt it was not sufficient because they were told in the training session what they were supposed to do. They were not given any opportunity to clarify their HR concepts or questions or doubts about HR.



find the HRE workshop inadequate would be discussed later in the chapter? Nevertheless, the workshop triggered these teachers' imagination and inspired them to leap ahead in the area of HRE.

#### **4.11 Zhang, Zhen-Zhen: An Introduction**

Zhang is in her early fifties. She comes from a middle class family. Her father was a very disciplined and strict person. Her mother was a homemaker. Her mother also shared the same ethos with her father i.e. to lead a pious and disciplined life. By pious life, they meant traditions of filial piety prescribed by Confucius. There were many restrictions imposed on Zhang and her three sisters. After completing the school she enrolled herself in the teacher education program and became teacher after she finished her training. Zhang is married with two children. Her husband is a well-educated person with a deep understanding of law and HR.

##### **4.11.1 Why Teaching?**

It was filial piety that played a crucial role in deciding the right profession for Zhang. She had to choose teaching because her parents thought it was the ideal profession for her. In the teaching profession one is expected to get sufficient time to take care of the family and household tasks. But she says with conviction that she always wanted to become a teacher. So, it was her decision too to go for teacher education program. This was an interesting situation. On the one hand, she revealed that her parents were traditional to the extent that they decided what was good for her. On the other hand,

she insisted that it was her own choice to become a teacher. There could be many explanations for this situation. The environment she was growing in may have influenced her choice for a particular profession. Or else the free of cost teacher education program could have been a better option for a family that was not very rich. Another possibility could be the nature of teaching profession which provided option and time for further studies. It was also a financially safe and secure government employment. It is also possible that she went into this profession by the force of various factors but gradually started appreciating it and ultimately teaching became her chosen profession instead of an imposed one.

When presented with all these explanations, Zhang did not contradict them outrightly but insisted that it was her choice and decision to go into teaching. If one observes the way Zhang teaches or interacts with her students, it becomes apparent that she is a passionate teacher. During our discussion she strongly asserts that she is happy and content with her profession. A tremendous amount of energy can be seen flowing in her teaching and in equal amount throughout the day. It would not be an exaggeration to say that she is a virtual powerhouse. Whatever time I spent with her - morning, noon, afternoon or evening - she was always fresh and full of energy. I asked her, “Don’t you get tired?” She smiled and replied, “You should see me in the night. I think when I am with students I feel very energetic because students are full of life and that gets into my body too.”

#### **4.11.2 Teaching: A Means not an End**

Zhang recalls that remuneration used to be very low when she first started teaching. Moreover, teaching was considered a very difficult job in the late seventies, the time when she began teaching. There were very few people who wanted to become a teacher. In such a scenario, teacher education was made free by the government to encourage people to come into this profession. Once completing the training, one can directly become a teacher. Many people from poor family background joined the teaching profession. After teaching for five years, many of them went for further studies and later moved to other professions such as law, civil services or university teaching. The government had made teacher education free to improve the educational conditions of Taiwan but ambitious people used it more for personal gains. Though we do not have the figures of how many trained teachers left this profession for other profitable options but as Zhang suggested this trend was very rampant and government had to revoke this policy after sometime. Still, the fee structure of teacher education program remained comparatively very low.

#### **4.11.3 Role of Familial Support**

An individual is responsible for her/his professional successes or failures. But strong and unconditional family support does play a vital role in professional development of an individual. Zhang believes that family support is irreplaceable. In her case the support from her husband was tremendous. Her husband is a law graduate, served in the army and currently retired. He is critical in his approach. When she started teaching social studies she faced problems pertaining to legal position of various issues

and problems. There were many themes or questions raised in social studies textbooks related to law which she could not fully comprehend. One day she shared her problem with her husband and from then onwards started a long journey of collaboration of the duo. With his background in law, he not only clarified Zhang's fundamental concepts of law but also talked about such issues in her classroom. He also accompanied Zhang and her students to field trips. During one such field trip to a court, he accompanied the group and introduced various offices and their functions to the students. He briefed the students in advance about the court's proceedings. He believed that law should be taught to youngsters from the very beginning. To fulfill this, he prepared an introductory guidebook of law for the students of this elementary school.

The need of training in law was also felt by the Center for Law Related Education, Judicial Reform Foundation. They are running various programs, seminars, workshops, developing material and training of teachers in law related education. Though their efforts are remarkable their reach is still very limited. Zhang and her colleagues are using the material translated in Chinese and developed by the Center for Law Related Education.

#### **4.11.4 Role of Colleagues**

Zhang believes in collaboration. For her it plays a vital role in professional development of any teacher. It unburdens teachers and invites them to share their new

experiences and findings in the realm of teaching. Teaching is a profession unlike any other profession where everyday one has an opportunity to interact with hundreds of students to ensure varied experiences. In the year 2002 Zhang and her three friends were given grade six for the first time. The four were best friends. They used to discuss various issues and problems related to teaching. It was the time when MOE introduced nine-year comprehensive education system. In comprehensive education system, it encouraged teachers to build up a community and work together in the direction of improvement of teaching standards. They were all helping each other but informally. It gave an opportunity to collaborate officially. They started meeting three times or more in the week. In summer vacation they met to prepare a program of action i.e. how to collaborate in the next semester. Zhang says:

Every teacher has her/his own strengths and weaknesses. Some teachers are good in mathematics and some are very good at teaching language. We discussed about it and then worked in the direction of educational exchange. So, a teacher doesn't have to prepare the curriculum alone, the group prepares it together. While doing this, we got lot of suggestions from each other. As for students, they had the opportunity to learn from four different teachers. Their experiences became more interesting and varied. Sometimes a teacher gets tired and decides to quit a few things but in collaboration it does not happen. It is due to accountability factor. Every teacher is accountable to the group; one has to cover everything assigned to her. In case if someone is unable to finish something, other group members come forward to help her. We have now more power in comparison to before. We share not only teaching but also a significant part of our life.

There is no doubt that collaboration is profitable not only for teacher but also for students. Every individual is gifted or talented in one or other field. Every teacher cannot master all the intricacies of different subjects. Collaboration among teachers opens up the possibility of learning subject specific niceties from their own colleagues. There is no hesitation in asking or disclosing their ignorance pertaining to a particular subject. Another important thing regarding collaboration is that it ascertains advance preparation of curriculum based on discussion among the group members. It also has provision to provide help to the members of the group in distress or adverse circumstances. It has great potential as far as accountability is concerned. Education system everywhere is marred by the problem of accountability i.e. who should be held responsible for failures. Collaboration teaches a lesson to the teachers to become accountable from within. In other words, teachers who are collaborating do not have any outside pressure from the principal or education officer or from the MOE for that matter.

#### **4.11.5 Zhang's Perception of HR and HRE**

Without going into philosophy, Zhang explains HR in simple terms. HR are basic rights and every individual has to protect her/his rights without violating or infringing upon other's rights. Zhang believes that it should be the basic principle of the code of conduct for teachers, students, administrators and all other members of a society. HRE

should be started from the very beginning of schooling. It should be sown early like a seed so that it can gradually grow into a plant. In Zhang's words:

I think we have some experience in HRE. We had made a distinction precisely at the elementary school, secondary school and at the university level. We cannot discuss HR declaration with elementary students. But we need to persuade them that they should respect other children and should work together. And we have emphasized that at the elementary level we can all live very peacefully.

HRE is not only meant for students but for teachers also. Teachers have to unlearn those behaviors that are against HR standards. Their concept of HR requires greater clarification. They claim that they have the right to know about everything related to child. They need to respect the rights of children. In Taiwan, although corporal punishment is illegal there are frequent instances in which teachers beat students or use abusive language. This kind of behavior, says Zhang, should be discouraged and stopped as early as possible.

#### **4.11.6 Pedagogy of HRE: Zhang's Praxis**

Pedagogy can have different meanings in different contexts. In the present locale it is revolving around the teacher. What are her principles, values or perception of teaching? What kind of teaching methodology or methodologies she believes in and applies? How she interacts with her students within the four walls of classroom and outside of it? What are her interests? How she deals with textbooks and curriculum. All

dimensions pertaining to or from the perspective of teacher have been considered under our working definition of pedagogy. Pedagogy is an outcome of multiple factors such as personal, environmental, and belief systems that are working together at the same time. In this section all these aspects would be touched upon.

#### **4.11.7 Zhang as a Learner, Facilitator, Observer, Mediator and Moderator**

Zhang is a versatile teacher. She assumes the role of learner, instructor, facilitator, observer, mediator and moderator with the changing situation. She claims to be a learner. It is evident from an excerpt of her interview.

As a fresh teacher I fully relied on textbooks. But after teaching for a while, I found that textbooks became or were rather boring. It led me to think of bringing some change. In the beginning, I prepared my own teaching material and assimilated it with the textbook material. When I began with HRE, I realized that textbooks are not everything and I stopped following textbooks religiously. HRE cannot be constrained to textbooks. So much material, examples, case studies, personal experiences, etc. are available for use in HRE. If one does not incorporate all this, HRE would turn into bookish knowledge. To make it lively, HRE needs to be taught in the light of daily life experiences that are not available in textbooks.

An unending preference for textbooks is a common feature of any education system. Teachers are either forced to follow the textbooks blindly or naturally inclined entirely to be dependent on them. To follow the textbooks does not require much effort in



teaching. It makes teaching easier by restricting the meaning of teaching to mere completion of syllabus covered in the textbooks. A small minority of teachers is able to break the prison of textbooks. Zhang is one such teacher. She gives credit to HRE for breaking away from textbook culture. In addition, it is her zeal of a learner that provoked her to go beyond the textbooks. Zhang's continuously growing reading habit and readiness to access other sources of information has provided a sound knowledge foundation. This has also helped in enriching the textbooks by substantiating its content with other available matter.

Zhang does not believe in dominating the teaching learning process. She denounces the traditional role of a teacher as an instructor. She provides with the required basic facts and information regarding the theme that is being discussed in the classroom. After that she raises questions and doubts in front of students. They carry forward the discussion with answers, opinions, explanations, new questions and doubts. While students are playing with ideas, issues, questions and doubts, Zhang is persistently observing them. If there is a clash of opinions or the classroom environment gets undemocratic, she intervenes as a mediator and in the end she takes the responsibility to conclude the discussion by assuming the role of a moderator.

#### **4.11.8 Zhang with Students**

Zhang believes that a successful pedagogy of HRE depends on the nature of interaction between the teacher and the students. Elementary school children are in the stage of adolescence and live in a self made shell. They do not allow others to intrude in their lives. If there is no interaction between the teacher and the students or students and their parents there is a possibility that students might go on the wrong track. It is their right as human beings to live a healthy social and psychological life. The students spend a significant amount of time with their teachers. Adolescent students are more likely willing, and feel comfortable, to share their experiences and secrets with their teachers instead of their parents. It depends on the teachers to win students' trust. To win students' confidence is the first stage in HRE. Zhang was very well aware of this fact. She introduced a new concept of Daily Diary Writing Project in her class. The daily diary project was an attempt to kill two birds with one stone. First, the diary was to bridge the gap between the teacher and students and second to improve their writing skills. Students were given freedom to write anything or everything in their dairies. The protocol was that the teacher would read students' dairies and write comments, opinions, and alternate solutions to the problem if given in the dairies.

For some teachers the daily dairy writing could be an extra burden over and above the teaching load. But for HR educators it is a mechanism to understand the students. Without a sound understanding of adolescent students' psyche, a teacher cannot incorporate aspects of individualized HRE. HRE is not a mass education. It has to take into account the individual too. If s/he knows how to work on certain individuals who

need special attention, HRE will certainly be a success. Zhang is working in the same direction with the help of diary writing projects. She discovered many interesting as well as disturbing facts about her students. One student wrote that her/his parents claimed that by the virtue of being her/his parents they had a right to read her/his diary. So, they could keep the track of what s/he was doing, what kind of friends s/he was having friendship with. Zhang knew that it was not a peculiar case and most Taiwanese parents were of the opinion that children did not have private lives. They believed it was a western concept meant only for western people. Their progeny did not require privacy. To change the mind of parents' was not an easy task but Zhang took it as a challenge and in class she discussed the issue with her students and tried to find out solutions at the level of students. The second thing she did was to talk with the parents during parent teacher meet and whenever they visited her in the school. She never lost an opportunity to discuss the theme of children's right to privacy with parents, the importance of privacy from the perspective of HR and respect for privacy as a vital concern for parents-child relationship.

#### **4.11.9 Zhang and Information Technology**

Every segment of contemporary society is directly or indirectly influenced by information technology. The advancement in information technology particularly in the area of Internet has revolutionized the institution of education. It is shaping the pedagogy of teachers' in a dynamic way. It has flooded the information that teachers require for teaching. It is also helping them to clarify their doubts. Zhang is thrilled how Internet has changed and made her teaching easy, interesting and challenging than ever before. She

says students are “Internet Bugs”, they spent lot of time on surfing the Internet. They come up with various questions and we “teachers” have to respond to them. For that we need to update ourselves. For HRE, the Internet proved a blessing. There is no dearth of material on HRE and experiences of teachers of different societies apart from Taiwanese teachers. Intel provides online guidelines and lesson plans to the teachers free of cost. The problem of dealing with abundant information available on the Internet has to be settled. If the teachers or students are not selective they will be lost in the sea of information. The second important issue is to determine the quality and accuracy of information available online. If these issues of relevance and quality are efficiently taken care of, teaching can be improved enormously.

Zhang’s HRE pedagogy is always in the process of making. She visits websites of the UN, HREA and Amnesty International to seek material for HRE. She also reads blogs on HRE experiences written by educators, activists and scholars of HRE. These blogs give Zhang new insights for implementing HRE in various innovative ways or to deal with a peculiar problem arising due to violation of HR within and outside the classroom. Zhang always prepares in advance the power point presentation for every class. The power point directs her teaching. It is a means to make her teaching interesting and structured. It does not undermine her agency at all because there were occasions when classroom discussions led to different issues and directions and power point was put at the background and once the discussion was over it came to the fore again. Zhang’s

experiment and experience with information technology proved very fruitful for her pedagogy of HRE.

#### **4.11.10 Pedagogy of HRE: Problems and Challenges**

On the question of problems and challenges of the pedagogy of HRE, Zhang showed utmost concern over the issue of the teacher as HR violator. A significant number of teachers in Taiwan are— knowingly or unknowingly— HR violators. They are violating HR in various ways. They are imbued with a sense of authority over students. They expect their students to follow them without questioning their authority. In 2003, a Chinese Literature teacher asked her students to write a composition about her using only “good words” (Lin, 2007). In other words, she used her authority over students so that they eulogized her. Though there is a heated debate over students’ right on school campus, and there are legislations to protect students’ rights violation can be seen to be happening with some regularity.

Zhang sees the Taiwanese examination system as the greatest violator of HR, especially children’s rights. To quote Zhang:

The perception of Taiwanese people towards examination is changing but at a very slow pace. This is really very difficult to change because we all know grades are still very important. In Taiwan, grades are important not only at the level of school but in all walks of life. Everybody wants to stand first. My student gets 97 or 98 percent and still laments that the mother craves for more, 100 out of 100. To score good grades, students are compelled to read all three publications’

books. Their titles might be different but the subject material is almost the same. The concepts are similar in all three publications, only examples and order of contents might be different. It may be East Asian culture that Taiwanese, Vietnamese, and Japanese parents like cram schools very much. This trend among parents is doing no good to the students. It is making students unhappy and dejected. I think if students work hard at the school that is more than enough. Moreover, after studying at the cram school, students pay no attention in the classroom because they have already covered the topic. Thus, they become very noisy and restless in the classroom because no charm or suspense or the feeling to learn something new is left.

Education psychology has reached its zenith but it is still unable to convince people that every individual is different and has special abilities. If those abilities are recognized at the right time and developed in the right direction, individual can attain greater success. On the contrary, every parent wants her/his child to become not less than a doctor, engineer or scientist. To attain these goals hurdles of examination are to be crossed. The realization of these dreams depends on how efficiently and ruthlessly the examinations have to be passed by the students. For parents, failure in examinations means end of the world. To avoid this situation parents heavily rely on cram schools. Students hardly get time for themselves. They spent the whole day in the school and then go to cram schools. This condition of students' is quite inhuman from the perspective of HR.

Another problem in implementing HRE is availability of subject matter of HR in the Mandarin language. The official language of Taiwan is Mandarin and so is the medium of instruction. HRE is an emerging area in Taiwan and not everything is being translated in Mandarin. This is an obstacle in the way of smooth implementation of HRE. There are institutions like CLREJRF, TAHR, and JRF involved in translation work. After translation a bigger challenge is how to adapt it to the local conditions so that students could relate to it. Zhang shared her experience about the tiresome process of adaption. She had to find similar characters, situations, incidents, stories and many more such things from the Taiwanese context to make HR ideas more familiar to the students.

Insufficient training of teachers in the area of HRE is another big impediment in Taiwan. HRE in Taiwan is in its infancy. There are various areas to be worked upon, for example incorporation of HRE in teacher education programs, in-service teacher education program, and organization of workshops, seminars, and lectures for teachers on a massive scale. Zhang puts the problem in a complaint:

Before implementing HRE in our school, an introductory symposium was organized to familiarize teachers with the concept of HR and HRE and how to put it into practice. There were experts of HR who participated in the symposium. They were using a very technical language. There were also many international legal terminologies frequently used in their presentations. For us it was a tortuous experience. It seemed HRE is a very difficult subject to teach. After the symposium, we did not have any intention to introduce HRE in our classes let alone the school.

HR concepts are not alien to teachers but how to teach them to elementary students is altogether a different story unless they are thoroughly trained in it. Zhang suggests the government to do two things. First, there should be some workshops on introduction to law and relationship between law and HR or legal or Constitutional status of HR. Second, experts should be invited to such workshops but their presentations should be lucid and comprehensible. The teachers do not have sufficient background knowledge of law and the experts are needed to dilute their subject matter if they honestly want HRE to succeed. After all, the purpose of a workshop is not to overawe the teachers with expert knowledge but to make them understand the basic concepts, importance and nature of HR meticulously.

#### **4.12 Ma, Ai-Mei: An Introduction**

Ma is in her mid-fifties. She has already taught for 24 years. She recently finished a Master's degree in Education and wrote a thesis on "Teaching Social Science and Identity Formation in Elementary Students". She is also an activist. She is a member of an NGO called Zhong Hua. She takes keen interest in philosophy. She regularly reads books on philosophy and feels that reading philosophy helps her to think about various issues related to life, human nature, and education in depth and in diverse ways. Her parents were not traditional and gave her freedom to decide upon the profession she wanted to go into. Her husband is also in the field of education. He is in administration section of an elementary school. When asked whether she gets any support from her husband in her teaching endeavors Ma says, "We think differently and that created many



problems in the beginning but gradually through communication we have settled our differences. We stopped hurting each other. Now, we do not create obstacles for each other. We do things in our own way without interference from each other. Now we both have peace of mind.” Unlike Zhang, Ma does not get any academic support from her husband. Both of them are into education (one in teaching and the other in administration) they could be of great help to each other. Apart from differences in the way of thinking between the two, Ma did not reflect on other possible factors that were preventing the two to collaborate.

#### **4.12.1 Ma on Teaching**

There is an ongoing debate among scholars whether teachers are born or nurtured through training (nature versus nurture debate). Ma claimed herself a born teacher who is constantly evolving. She considers the teaching profession an integral part of her existence. There are multiple factors that determine whether an occupation can be considered a profession or not, such as training, salary, nature of work in terms of contribution in increasing profit of the firm, level of mental or physical labor involved, and the perception of the society. The perception of a society towards a certain work plays a critical role in determining the status of a profession. Teachers are paid professionals, expected in law to act as a thoughtful parent might, to be *in loco parentis* (Wragg, 1999, p. 5). Wragg’s point of view regarding teaching as a profession and teachers as parents is partially applicable to Taiwan’s context where elementary school teaching is not considered a profession by society but parenting. To take care of children

is considered more important and it is like any other household task that does not required much expertise. Ma says, “Taiwanese parents think that teaching is not a profession. It is just to take care of young children and for that teachers are being paid.”

For this situation Ma has held teachers responsible.

Taiwanese teachers need to do extra effort so that teaching can be established as a profession. It is some teachers’ unprofessional attitude towards teaching that has ruined the image of teaching as a profession. The irony is that those teachers who are very professional at their workplace are generally unnoticed or overlooked.

For Ma, teaching is a profession that requires tremendous flow of “high emotions”. She used the expression “high emotions” to denote impassionate attitude and involvement on the part of a teacher. A teacher minus passion or positive energy is a teacher minus soul. “High emotions” render life to teaching otherwise it would become a mechanical process. If teaching is lively it leaves a lasting impact on students. Ma believes that teaching is a lifelong learning process. In teaching, every day is a new day in terms of unexpected incidents, challenges, and beautiful experiences. In a nutshell, teaching for Ma is a profession filled up with “high emotions”.

#### **4.12.2 Ma’s Perception of HR and HRE**

Ma says, “HR is for human dignity what oxygen is for human existence”. HR are necessary for survival of any democratic society. HRE plays a significant role in

establishing and ensuring HR at grassroots level. HRE creates a culture of respect for not only those who come from the same culture but to those also who are from other cultures, ethnicities, societies, or countries. It also destroys misconceptions which the students form at home and bring them to the school as matter of fact. Ma says:

The biggest problem is that children carry some concepts to school which they imbibe from their parents. Students always defend these notions and concepts by saying that their parents had said this or that. For instance, they are not very clear about the concept of equality. In their understanding black men and women are not equal with white men and women because black men and women do menial or labor intensive work. This kind of understanding is based on partially understood American history. This leads to the formation of half-baked ideas such as blacks and whites are not equal. Most of the time, these notions of students are directly coming from their parents. When I told them about Abraham Lincoln, they were surprised to know that a white man was struggling for the rights of black people.

It seems that there is a tendency among Taiwanese parents to teach American history to their students. It is apparent that they interpret issue of black and white from the window of their own notions instead of a historical perspective. It shows their shallow understanding of American history in general and race relations in particular. This opinion is further strengthen by Ma's second example:

The similar trend is visible regarding the issue of gender. There is a general misconception that men and women are not equal. It is man who is capable of doing big things not

woman. We read one book on environment protection in which a woman discovered that DDT was used in the fields and which caused deaths of a lot of birds and animals in the surrounding areas. She continued her fight for environmental protection. My students were surprised to know that a woman took up such a big challenge and succeeded too. The literature they read not only broke down their preconceived notions but also entertained them.

Ma's observation that parents pass their notions on to their progeny is valid. It seems that a significant number of parents foster gender stereotypes. It gets reflected in their desired profession for their children. With a few exceptions, the Taiwanese society endorses certain thoughts, ideas, opinions, stereotypes, prejudices and ideologies unconsciously or by preaching them to their offspring. Interestingly these preconceived notions are too rigid for them to give up and adolescents have been seen reacting strongly whenever these are contested or debated. This brings the role of the teacher in sharper focus. If the teacher critically presents facts and concepts and her own position, it is possible to weaken or abrogate irrational tradition. It is also applicable to as well as crucial for HRE. One of the purposes of HRE is to discourage the traditional thinking that creates barriers in the way of achieving gender equality and eradicating other inequalities.

Ma believes that the introduction of issues of HR, its violations and teaching about them in the classroom requires tremendous passion in a teacher. HRE can only happen when an impassionate teacher who is truly a believer and practitioner of HR takes the responsibility of it. She says:

HRE is rooted in practice. If a teacher preaches one thing and practices another, students get a sense of it. They can judge the teacher's behavior very well. For instance if I asked them not to come late and myself not punctual they would certainly see the discrepancy between what I said and what I practiced. If I say to my students that one should respect all human beings and my own conduct towards a school peon is disrespectful, how can I expect my students to take me seriously and sincerely?

For young children the teacher is someone who knows everything, who is always right, who is adorable and ideal to follow. It does not mean that they do not have the sense of what is right and wrong. They are very judicious in their approach. They can see the contradiction in the theory and praxis of a teacher and gradually the charisma of the teacher fades away. A teacher has to be very careful and sensitive about what s/he says and practices. HRE is not merely the transfer of information and knowledge to the students. It also brings changes in their affective domain that leads to the next stage of activism. In this way, the possibilities for social and political action as a means to advance the cause of HR can be introduced.

#### **4.12.3 Pedagogy of HRE: Ma's Praxis**

Ma's pedagogy of HRE developed in phases. She started with environmental education. While discussing the case of DDT mentioned above she became conscious of the concept of rights and HR for the first time. She started discussing HR in the classroom within the framework of environmental education. Gradually, she discovered

the importance of HR in general and started looking at them independently of environmental education. In the second phase, HR concepts were brought into the classroom within the social studies' context. Later, she realized that social studies' classes are not enough to deal with HRE. To fill this gulf she integrated HRE into her whole curriculum. After the integration there was no specific time or subject when HRE was given. In her own words:

To make students able to understand and relate with HR concepts on a daily basis, I do not have a certain time for HRE. The time before starting the class in the morning or the gap between two classes, I use all these occasions for HRE. During this time they identify issues, brush up the previous ones or bring new questions or ideas in front of the class. I also try to integrate HRE into other classes whenever there is a suitable context. The concept of HR is fabulous if one thinks imaginatively: one can integrate it even into the mathematics class. I always give them word problem underlying one or the other HR concept. Now, I have become so habitual that I see almost all educational, social, political, economic, cultural, and even religious issues, situations and problems from the window of HR. I expect my students to develop the same habit.

Ma's description suggests that she is deeply involved in HRE. It seems that HR are running into her curriculum from bottom up and top down as blood in the veins. HRE has become a part and parcel of her curriculum, teaching and lifestyle. Everybody has her/his own ideology and Ma claims HR as her ideology. To see various problems rampant in the education system, society, polity, economy or culture from HR framework offers a different perspective to understand them. If this kind of perception can be

developed among students where they put human beings in the center and then try to analyze the problem at hand and find solutions. This kind of attitude among the future generation will certainly help in making the society more humane.

In the pursuit of HRE Ma considers collaboration to be a very important pedagogical practice. She has formed a kind of community of teachers outside the school. The members of this community belong to different schools. They share their experiences, discoveries, experiments, and problems related to teaching and other different issues with other members of the community. This community, Ma says, “brought in diversity to her pedagogy and made it more easy and enjoyable. There is always a desire to do something new and share it with the community. It is a constant source of motivation for my teaching and me. It had helped me a lot to grow as a person as well as a teacher.”

An important feature of Ma’s pedagogy of HRE is her theory of communication. HR need to be communicated. It is very difficult to translate HR if a sound communication does not take place between teacher and students. The level of communication of students would determine the future of HR. It will help them to prepare a strong and effective case to convince and compel the authorities to ensure HR to all. Ma asserts that if one has grievances towards the teacher or anyone and the student cannot express her/his feelings to the teacher or the concerned person, it is a failure on the part of the teacher and the whole education system. The following example explains how inability to express one’s grievance creates huge emotional problem for the victim:

Once, one of my students shared with me that such and such teacher always scolds her. She is never happy with any of her work. She always complains that she can never do things properly. I asked her what she thinks can be done about it? She said, she could not speak to the teacher because she was scared of her. It would be impossible for her to utter a single word let alone the whole story. I gave her a suggestion. “Why don’t you write a letter to her?” She agreed to write a letter. She wrote, “Dear Teacher, I know I have not written this letter very well but I wanted to tell you that the way you speak to me makes me feel very bad about myself. So, kindly do not talk to me in this manner. You can find a better way of telling me about my mistakes. Thank you.” After the letter was written she was scared to hand it over to the teacher. I encouraged her to go and give the letter to the teacher. Somehow, she delivered it to the teacher. After the next class with the same teacher, she told me, the teacher was very good with her. The problem was easily solved with better communication.

Any kind of humiliation to anyone is against the spirit of HR. One can put forward one’s view or opinion without humiliating the other person. This is possible only with effective communication. The present education system does not teach young students how to communicate their state of mind without offending the teacher. Also it does not train the teachers on how to communicate with students without insulting or hurting them. Young minds get hurt on a daily basis intentionally or unintentionally. Their hearts are burdened with a heavy feeling of dishonor, disgrace and embarrassment. It is a traumatic experience. In such a scenario, how would one expect a wholesome



development of these children whose delicate self is inflicted with emotional injuries by none other than their own teachers?

In some societies (especially Asian), it is considered impolite if a student differs with a teacher. Her/his behavior would be interpreted as disrespect towards the teacher. This tradition has to be changed and there should be a relationship of mutual respect between the two. This mutual respect can be maintained by correct and graceful ways of communication. This is a key to successful HRE that Ma is applying. She tells the students that by telling the teacher how they feel about certain things or behavior they are actually exercising their HR. Further to communicate one's feelings to the teacher is in no way showing disrespect towards her/him.

On the basis of twenty-four years' experience of teaching elementary class students, Ma believes that the students of sixth grade are quite capable of grasping abstract ideas and things. But she also discovered that if a teacher gives abstract ideas some concrete shape, the understanding of these abstract concepts last longer in comparison to those that are not concretized at all. She practices this theory in her pedagogy. She uses drawing as a device to concretize abstract concepts such as privacy, freedom, responsibility, justice, etc. She organized a public hearing on students' privacy in school campus. The issue was that the school had decided to install invisible cameras everywhere including toilets to keep a watch on the students.<sup>49</sup> She gave instructions to

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<sup>49</sup> It was not a fictitious situation. Some schools in Taiwan have indeed installed invisible cameras in toilets to check whether students were smoking, etc..

her students on how the proceedings of public hearing would take place. She also showed them a video of public hearing on a different theme in progress. Five groups were formed representing the principal of the school, students, parents, HR activists, and members of NGOs.

Before the public hearing took place, Ma asked all students to draw their point of view or standing on the issue from the perspective of the group they represent in public hearing. Students explained their position by drawing pictures. The group representing the principal came up with a drawing showing how easy and effective it became for him to administer the school. The school became safer for students after invisible cameras were introduced because now there were no incidents of fights and smoking in the toilets or at the basement of the school. The HR group showed how students' right to privacy was violated and how it was against their integrity and dignity. In a similar way other groups also presented their viewpoints on the pros and cons of the new law.

The impact of this activity was apparent on the day of public hearing. Everybody knew what s/he was up to. They were very much clear about their positions. They were supporting their position with convincing and valid arguments. They were presenting their plea with clarity and conviction. There was a debate where many issues were raised and all the groups were able to defend their stance effectively.

#### **4.12.4 Ma and her Students**

In my class, the tempo of the students is different from the whole school. They study a lot and they do a lot of things.

They do things faster and with greater accuracy. They can write six hundred words in ten minutes.<sup>50</sup> They have a wide reading base. Their reading capacity is very good. They like to read, and feel relaxed while reading. For them, reading is not a burden. They know study means self study. I do not need to direct them. They know what they need to do. They do not even wait for instructions. They like to help each other. To help is a kind of ability. They collaborate, for example students who are good at mathematics teach those who are weak and in turn get help in language from others. They are so efficient that their eyes can read who needs help.

Ma's description of her students matches with the classroom observations too. This practice of collaboration is the soul of classroom activities. It is not only helping each other in understanding different subjects but to understand each other well. They share their ideas and opinions about books or literature they are currently reading. Ma's students are quite responsible. The classroom was always filled with noises but these consisted of discussions about work in progress or planning of the work to be done or the arrival of a new book in their classroom library or their recent drawing or something relevant. The class has an intellectual environment and intellectuals are none other than sixth graders. The qualities such as good writing skill, good reading habits, readiness to take responsibilities, inclination to work in a group, independent thinking, and sensitive to other's needs are essential for the realization of HR and a culture founded on it. These students are not just learning these skills and abilities but also practicing them in their everyday life.

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<sup>50</sup> Writing six hundred Chinese characters in ten minutes is quite fast.

#### **4.12.5 Pedagogy of HRE: Problems and Challenges**

Ma says that in Taiwanese elementary schools students do not have HR. Teachers, parents and elders on regular basis infringe upon their rights as a human being. Teaching of HR encourages students to raise their voice for their rights. Parents complain that their child not only talks about her/his rights but also demands fulfillment. They interpret it as a threat to their authority. This orthodox mind-set of Taiwanese parents is an obstacle for HRE. Ma asserts that it generates discrepancy between what she discusses in the class and what takes place in children's home. Taiwanese parents bear all kinds of responsibilities of their children. Children do not have to do any work except study. As a result children become dependent on their parents for everything. This somehow develops a fear of failure among Taiwanese students. They are inclined to think if they take any responsibility they might not be able to fulfill it. This is due to their inexperience in performing responsibilities. This sense of inability to take responsibilities on the part of students is a serious problem for HRE. There is an urgent need to change the way parents think about children's rights and children as responsible individuals.

#### **4.12.6 Taiwanese Society**

Ma is not very happy with whatever progress Taiwanese society has made. Improvement in economic arena has raised living standards but failed to bring ethical, moral, humane, judicious, and equality based standards to the society. It had filled the income gap among the masses but could not narrow down the gulf of gender inequality,

class, race (aborigines vs. Hakka, Hoklo and Han), and color. These are purely HR issues and should be dealt with in HRE. On the one hand HRE is raising voice against these issues. On the other hand, the society is legitimizing them by endorsing them in various subtle ways. Ma says that teaching HR is like waging war against the whole society's mentality that is weakening the ground for HRE. HRE is not meant to work only within the walls of the school campus. It needs to be channelized from school to the society and vice versa. It is a two way process. The society has to be proactive and break the age-old notions that are against HR culture. One such example is the Taiwanese obsession with family. Family-centricism goes to that extent where one starts thinking that if one's family is safe then there is no need to worry about others. This tendency of saving one's family at the cost of the rest of the world is a dangerous thought for HR ideology. Ma says that the right to life is an entitlement of all human beings and not for just one family. The family oriented attitude deludes the idea that HR are meant for others, and the whole world. HR are for all families if one sees beyond the myopic lens of family. Ma urges that it is today's need that every individual, community, institutions, organizations, and government work together and relentlessly to break such societal notions that are harmful for the spread of HR.

#### **4.12.7 Taiwanese Education System**

Ma sees the Taiwanese education system as an eyesore for HR and HRE. She thinks that it is not in accordance with HR at all. First of all it is a teacher centric system where teachers speak and students listen. Second, there is no scope for innovation; a

teacher has to follow the curriculum mechanically. HRE is all about innovation. It is not a subject to mug up facts and regurgitate in the exams. It is a culture that questions the education system itself for not being HR friendly. The pressure of examination on students is increasing at an unprecedented speed. All parents want their children to get the highest grades. It is an unrealistic demand parents impose on their wards as well as on teachers. Ma says that when she talks about freedom and rights in her class she feels bad because pressurizing students to attain higher grades is against their right to healthy emotional life. So, teaching rights on the one hand and violating on the other is a great danger to her pedagogy of HRE because she tends to lose the faith her students repose in her as their teacher, mentor and friend. They become afraid to confide in her. This could be the biggest setback for a teacher of HRE.

Another impediment is the absence of a comprehensive evaluation system of elementary school teachers in Taiwan. Ma says, “In Taiwan, lots of teachers do not teach properly and nobody goes and check on them but they know what they are doing and still go on with that. When the general evaluation system is so feeble one can imagine what could be the situation of evaluation of HRE. There are two things that let this situation continue. First there is no proper evaluation and second teachers have lost their conscience.” After discussing with Ma, it was clear that teachers are predominantly lacking the passion required for teaching in general and teaching HRE in particular. On the issue of evaluation Ma opinioned that evaluation of HRE is also necessary. Ma says, “Proper evaluation can bring out the best in the teachers.” It is established that in the

case of HRE it takes time to produce substantial results because outcomes are related to changes in attitudes, skills, and behaviors. The changes in these areas do not take place in a day, week or month. The transformation starts taking place from the inception of HRE but begins to get visible only after a period of time. Ma comes up with a solution to the problem which sounds ideal but could be nonetheless effective. She says a teacher needs to be ethical and responsible. These two qualities or values present in teachers are the main determinants for the success of education as well as of HRE.

#### **4.12.8 Knowledge base of HR**

Ma considers the HR knowledge base in Taiwan to be meager specifically in Chinese. Unavailability of material in Chinese is proved to be the biggest put off factor for HRE. Taiwanese teachers either cannot read in English or do not want to read in English. They look for material in Chinese. HRE is in a nascent stage and there are piles of material waiting to be translated into Chinese. Unless Taiwanese teachers take it as a challenge to read HR material in English, the problem cannot be sorted out. Ma shows her library filled with all kinds of storybooks, illustrated books, scholarly books, reports, case studies, journals, and UN's documents on HR and HRE. She shares how she was too scared of reading in English. It used to take four times more time to read in English than in Chinese. But gradually she conquered over her problem. Now, she can read faster than few years ago. She says her reading habit had opened a new vista in the field of HRE which she constantly passing on to her students as well. It seems that unavailability of material in Chinese on HRE is not a big problem and can be solved by encouraging

teachers to read in English. This will help them to avoid the situation where meaning is lost in translation.

#### **4.13 Xie, Mei-Zhen: An Introduction**

Xie is a very soft spoken, calm and composed person. She is in her early fifties. She comes from a traditional Han family that migrated from China in the 1949. She says, “My parents were very conservative and strict. There were well defined rules which we sisters had to follow without fail.” She is in the teaching profession because her parents<sup>51</sup> thought it was the right option for her and her future family. Xie recollects that sadly she was not allowed to go outside with her classmates or friends no matter how important the outing was for her. She was not permitted to participate in educational trips either. She recalls:

During my education years, I was only studying. I seldom went out with my friends. It was strictly prohibited and it somehow made me an introvert person. I developed indoor hobbies such as listening to music and gardening and my mother compelled me to learn stitching and knitting. I do enjoy them now but at that time it was quite boring.

Xie’s family background and experience is very similar to Zhang’s. Xie’s experience also reinforces the idea that in the sixties and seventies the Taiwanese society especially middle class was deeply patriarchal. Taiwanese daughters were allowed to

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<sup>51</sup> It was her father who was instrumental in the decision, not her mother.



study but the decision on what they should study or do in the future was the prerogative of the father. And it seems that Taiwanese mothers were assigned to perform a special duty of inculcating the quality of ideal daughter, mother, wife and sister in their daughters. To put it differently, girls were trained so that they can take responsibilities of wife, mother and daughter-in-law and perform all household work efficiently in the future.

#### **4.13.1 Xie on Teaching Profession**

Xie is trained for teaching social studies to the elementary students. She finds a sharp dichotomy between teacher education program and real teaching. In her opinion the two are different worlds. She thinks her teacher-training program did not provide a sound footing for her to launch her teaching career smoothly. The teacher education programs in her time were very conventional in their approach. The program failed to equip student teachers with required skills. The skills that could be applied by them to find out solutions to many teaching-learning process related problems likely to arise in the beginning of their career were completely missing in them.

Xie once again experienced the incompatibility between in-service training and real teaching while participating in a workshop held in 2004 on HRE in her school to introduce HRE to the teachers. She complains that during the workshop, the subject matter of HRE and its presentation by workshop organizers were too theoretical to understand. The presenters were more interested in showing off their scholarship and fineness on the topic. They entirely ignored the fact that teachers were not there to

applaud or to get mesmerized by their expertise on the subject but to get conceptual clarity and understanding of the subject. If after the workshop, teachers are still apprehensive of implementing HRE in their teaching the very purpose of the workshop gets defeated. Xie stated that it was only after she and her colleagues discussed the concept and issues of HRE and worked out a plan to implement it into their classrooms that the idea got into their heads. It is interesting that they kept on discovering various facets, aspects, problems, and challenges pertaining to HRE. This exercise of discovering of the concept of HR has helped them to continue with the project of HRE otherwise there was a possibility of closure of the whole endeavor in the absence of clarity on what to do next.

For Xie, the teacher education program and later a workshop on HRE did not prove to be very effective for the classroom teaching and learning situations. Since the day Xie began teaching she had to build from the scratch as far as her teaching skills, practices, and educational philosophy were concerned. She was thinking about her actions and experiences from a long-term perspective, i.e. their impact on her teaching practices as well as on her students' cognitive, affective and behavioral aspects in depth. She says, "The field of teaching is like a sea—deep and wide—where every day with students is a beginning of new explorations or challenges for a teacher." Teaching for Xie is a way of finding meanings in life. She does it by thinking about her acts and processes involved in teaching. She says, "Its teaching which defines me and is the foundation of my existence."

In the process of carving out a niche for her pedagogical practices, Xie felt that collaboration with her colleagues played a vital role. She recalls how collaboration between her colleagues and herself first took place and became an integral part of their pedagogy since then. Xie says:

My three colleagues and I were teaching Social Studies. We started collaborating when we were teaching a theme on “Know Your Surroundings, Community and City”. One day we were sitting together and one of us started talking about the theme and necessity of fieldwork to comprehend the topic. I don’t remember now who made this suggestion. Anyway, all of us agreed. We decided that we would start with a visit to the district court near the school. Four of us took all our students to the district court. A kind employee of the court guided us through the court. We all came to know about the nature of the work done by the various employees of the court apart from judges and lawyers. Students got an opportunity to watch a live proceeding of the court though only for twenty minutes. It was for a short period of time but it left tremendous impact on the children. The aim was to let students observe the proceeding and have a firsthand experience. For us too it was a very extraordinary and special experience. After the district court we also visited a police station and a post office situated in our locality. That was the beginning of our collaboration and since then we never looked back.

There are many themes in Social Studies that required hands on experiences. If these themes are taught without practical experiences, it becomes mere transfer of knowledge. It proved an obstacle in the way of comprehending these concepts in their

wholeness and became difficult for the young students to associate with and implement them in their daily life. This situation is not specific to this group of teachers only. Any conscious teacher would be bothered by this problem. It was this consciousness that led these teachers not only to confront the problem but to find a solution too. The decision to take hundred students to the various legal and civic institutions of their community was not easy. It could become feasible due to their determination to collaborate with each other and share responsibilities. This was a unique learning experience to the teachers as well. The success of the first attempt in collaboration had opened a new door for a long-term commitment to collaborate in order to make teaching-learning process effective and meaningful. They did not restrain themselves to only Social Studies. They ventured into mathematics, science, languages, and HRE too. With the help of collaboration, they improvised their pedagogic practices and rescued each other from tricky situations during the course of teaching. It was also an excellent example of human resource management.

Xie thinks that collaboration benefited her personality a lot. It gave her an opportunity to express herself because everybody in the group had to contribute. She had to shed off her shyness which she developed in the early years of her life. Another big leap was that she has started travelling—to which she was not allowed when she was studying in school and college—with her colleagues. Often, they traveled together. The group proved a blessing for Xie in her professional as well as personal development.

#### **4.13.2 Xie on HR and HRE**

Xie stated she has experienced the denial of HR during her childhood and later also when she was an adult. She says, “It is not rational to blame my parents for denying us (she and her siblings) HR. They were not aware of the concept of HR let alone their practice or denial.” It was only after she started teaching HR in HRE class that she realized that it was violation of her rights as a child and as a human being when she was denied the opportunities and experiences many a time by none other than her parents. Xie says:

HR are vital to human existence and always come with responsibilities. In those societies where there is no culture of HR, education and educational institutions play a crucial role in the promotion and teaching of HR, their importance and relevance to an individual and also to the society. In Taiwan we put so much focus on responsibilities that the issue of rights gets completely ignored. The concept of HR is being discovered and developed by the West. But it does not mean that it is irrelevant for the East. It is indispensable for the Taiwanese society. The concept of HR may sound banal but it is not. The teaching of HR especially for the very first time was the most difficult task. I was discussing HR in my class and when my students raised doubts or questions about any concept or issue of HR, frankly speaking I found myself confused on many occasions. There was a feeling whether I understood the concept or not. I realized that learning HR for teachers as well as students is a long-term process. One needs time to comprehend HR. And it is a never-ending process.

For Xie HR are fundamental to the existence of any human being and they do come with responsibilities. One cannot claim rights and disregard responsibilities to other

fellow beings. It is also not a mechanical process. It is a life style and a culture. Not every society has imbibed the culture of HR yet. Xie believes that education can serve as an instrument to societies that are willing to adopt and practice HR culture. She also points out how Taiwanese society is particular when it comes to rights and responsibilities. It seemed that it is essentially a responsibility-oriented society. On the question of whether it is possible to change the mindset of the society Xie reflects:

We can take example of parents to analyze the problem at the micro level. It is difficult to convince parents that their children have rights, but it is not impossible. For that, a teacher has to talk to parents and make them understand the situation. They can be told about the dangers posed to the child's development if her/his rights are infringed upon. They need to realize that recognition of children's rights is good for them too because they do want their child to achieve success in life. And overall development is the key to that success. It is also important to clarify that these rights will also ensure that their child will be a responsible person because ultimately rights come with responsibilities. I have done this exercise with many of my students' parents. It took me a lot of time and effort to talk to them. I kept on meeting them and talked to them about rights from the perspective of development and in tune with responsibilities. It changed the attitude and outlook of a few parents and others I am still working with. These parents represent the whole society and if some of them are willing to change it indicates there is a possibility for change in the society as well. But it should be kept in mind that the task is in no way an easy one and patient is a pre-requisite.

Xie is extremely positive and optimistic about enculturation of HR in a society. It is understandable—for a society where responsibilities were given priority and talk of rights was shunned for ages—that to promote HR culture in Taiwan or any other society for that matter is a difficult and sustained process. Xie employed a strategy which had the potential to bring change in the parents’ thinking and attitude. A teacher is in a position where parents just cannot overlook or ignore her/him. After all it is a matter that concerned their child. This position of parents’ interestingly makes the environment more conducive for HR talks between them and the teacher.

#### **4.13.3 Xie’s Pedagogy of HRE**

This section demonstrates how Xie has developed her pedagogy of HRE. She does believe in doing philosophy that reflects in her pedagogic experiments as well. Here she brings in child psychology to develop few of her pedagogic practices.

#### **4.13.4 “Alien” Becoming Local**

HRE is fairly a recent phenomenon in the Taiwanese educational arena. Being in its initial stage, HRE is bound to be dependent on the outside world for various things ranging from subject material on HR for teaching to how to teach them in a classroom situation. Without undermining the importance of HR and HRE, Xie calls it “alien subject” and she is very conscious about the “alien nature” of HR. Xie further delves on the expression she uses for the problem:

There is very little material on HR teaching available in Chinese. Almost everything on HR is in English. This makes HR very “alien” to Taiwanese teachers. There are two reasons to call it “alien”. First it was never a part of Taiwanese culture and born in western societies. Second, the literature pertaining to it is primarily available in English and European languages. There are a few attempts to translate the available content into Chinese. Some authors are writing on HR in Chinese but it is not enough. I think if adequate material on HR can be made available in Chinese to the teachers this problem can be solved. As it comes down to us from the West, the examples, events, situations, and incidents mentioned in the literature are alien to us. I also try to correlate and contextualize HR concepts, issues, and incidents to Taiwanese conditions. It is difficult but a challenging enterprise.

The “alien nature” of HR has shaped Xie’s pedagogy. The concept of HR is a foreign idea and what makes it more difficult to a Taiwanese teacher is the language in which the whole genre of HR literature is available, i.e. English. The generation of teachers who are in their fifties were not taught English during their schooling or teacher education programs. For their whole life they studied and taught in Mandarin. Now they have to read English and also teach in it. It is not an easy task for them and requires tremendous effort. Many teachers in Taiwan told me “it was very tiresome to read in English”. Every now and then they have to look into the English-Chinese dictionary for difficult words which breaks the momentum of their reading. But Xie is trying very hard to overcome her problem of language. She constantly tried to speak to me in English. She was also translating difficult Chinese words into English for me. She kept on saying, “Oh!



My English is very poor.” But the zeal to learn and practice English was there in her which was reflected during the discussions with her. She is also encouraging her students to read in English. She has a tiny but rich library in her classroom. It has English storybooks, children’s encyclopedia, magazines, and dictionaries. Xie was not rattled by the problem of English. Instead she took it as a challenge. She made changes in her pedagogic practices, i.e. began reading material in English, encouraged her students to read in English, developed a good library, and practiced her spoken English whenever she got an opportunity. She proved the saying that the teacher is a learner first.

In my opinion if a balance can be struck between translation and publication of HR content in Chinese and to encourage teachers to read in English as well the problem of “alien nature” of HR can be sorted out to a certain extent. Reading English material would also widen the horizon of Taiwanese teachers. They would be capable of comparing different foreign examples with Taiwanese situations. It would certainly offer them insights to perceive and deal with the same problem in many different ways.

#### **4.13.5 Multimedia: Concretization of HRE**

Xie argued that the use of audio and visual technology could make HRE more effective. The audio-visual mediums—especially feature films and documentaries—immediately strike the children’s imagination. Xie recalls:

It was my first experience to teach HR to sixth graders. I had anticipated that my students would have problems. This was because I had already experienced some while I was studying HR. I was constantly thinking what kind of problems could emerge and what could be the possible remedies to these hindrances. The first among these obstacles was how to make abstract nature of HR more concrete. I was looking through references and materials which could be used for teaching HR. I came across Anne Frank’s diary on which a film called *The Diary of Anne Frank* was made. I first read the diary. My eyes were full of tears throughout the reading. I decided to show the movie to my students. After the screening of the film my students were charged. The discussion continued not for days but months. They wanted to know more about Anne Frank. I decided to buy five copies of Anne Frank’s diary for our library. Gradually, Anne Frank became a reference point for our discussion on HR. This experience got repeated when I screened *The Color Purple* for my students. The girls of my class were so overwhelmed by the movie that they were crying during and after the movie. They got disturbed but they were thinking deeply about the issue of gender. They discussed the status of Taiwanese women vis-à-vis Afro-American women.

The audio-visual medium is not only an interesting but also an effective device. It leaves a long lasting impact on children. Educational psychologists strongly recommend the use of audio-visual aids in teaching all kinds of subjects. Xie very rightly said that the issue of the abstract nature of HR can be dealt with the help of movies and other such

agencies where eyes and ears along with other senses of students are fully engaged. After experiencing the positive outcome of application of multimedia in HRE classroom, Xie made it a regular feature of her pedagogy.

#### **4.13.6 Critical Thinking: A Vehicle of HRE**

The purpose of HRE is to bring vital transformation in students' cognitive sphere, attitude, behavior, and skills in tune with the inherent aims and principles of HR. To achieve the purpose of HRE, critical thinking is a prerequisite. Lot of critical thinking and wondering about HR issues and their recurrent violations are required in teaching and learning of HRE. What, why, and how are needed to be posed by students again and again. Some social malpractices prevalent in families and society are taken as granted by students. For instance attitude toward Indonesian domestic help or progeny of foreign brides are a few examples where a significant number of Taiwanese families have shown prejudice and passed it on consciously or unconsciously to the children. It is not an easy task to question the validity of such prejudices, because its roots go back to parents, unless an individual thinks critically about them. Only a critical mind is capable of questioning such inhuman and irrational practices even at the risk of offending the family. Thus, Xie strongly argues in favor of critical thinking. She says, "It took me a long time to see beyond the regular picture. The reality is that we Taiwanese as parents and sometimes even as teachers endorse all kinds of prejudices before our future generation."

Xie made an important observation that teachers and parents are key agencies in promoting and supporting certain notions that give birth to prejudices among children. To combat misconceptions it is crucial to equip children with a kind of thinking tool that helps them to take the right decision or stand on contentious issues on the basis of reason rather than some obscure and unreasonable notions instilled by their parents or society.

Xie uses stories and situations that pose complex situation in front of students. They have to think about these issues critically and come up with solutions supported with reason and logic. Xie told a story called “A Secret that can Fly” in her classroom. The gist of the story was that once a secret is out it would reach everyone. This act can harm a person or spoil her/his image whose secret it is. Thus, it is very important to think about consequences before someone’s secret is revealed. After the story was told a discussion took place. Xie’s encouraged her students to question and think about every possible aspect of the story.

The discussion began with the meaning of privacy and how for some people privacy is very important and for some there is no harm in sharing their secrets. The students raised a question why some people want to keep something private. Some students brought out the moral aspect that one should not disclose secrets of their friends. They considered it unethical and against the norms of friendship. Some opinioned it was a breach of trust. One student suggested that it was better to keep ones secret to oneself. It will avert the possibility of leaking. On this one student reacted strongly that it is quite natural to share secrets with friends because that’s what friends are for. Someone made a

reference to HR stating privacy is also a HR and one should respect this right like any other HR.

The discussion was very intense. All students were actively and willingly participating in it which made it diverse in both arguments and opinions. There was a train of questions beginning with “why”. They were thinking hard to answer those many “whys”. Meanwhile, Xie was summarizing and explaining the arguments, view, and opinions. She was also mediating between the groups to reach upon a consensus.

#### **4.13.7 Xie with her Students**

Critical thinking can never be developed unless the relationship between the teacher and the student is not only cordial but also democratic. Xie gives plenty of latitude to her students in classroom discussions. Their opinions and arguments are critically examined by each other and accepted if only found logical and rational. Xie delves on her relationship with her students as follows:

Adolescence is the most difficult and challenging stage to deal with. Adolescents are temperamental as well as sensitive. Their body is changing and hormones are controlling everything. A teacher has to handle them very delicately. I try to give them time, attention, and comfort in distress. It helps in gaining their trust. If a teacher can attain trust of her students' things become much easier. Trust encourages them to confide in the teacher. It certainly stops many unseen tragedies to occur. A student if facing any problem or crisis would first come to the teacher to share it with her instead of taking any big step. It happened a few years ago when one of my students was depressed. He was having problems at home.

His parents were heading towards separation to which he was not able to reconcile. He was thinking of committing suicide. One day he wrote it in his diary and gave it to me for a routine check. The moment I read his entry I started planning how to handle this situation. If my student did not trust me he would never have mentioned his psychological condition and a disaster could have happened. There are many more examples where my students have shared their secrets, personal or family problems with me. Sometimes I cherish this feeling that my students trust me so much and find a trusted friend in me.

A friendly, democratic, and trustworthy relationship between the teacher and the student is the need of the time. It is beyond doubt that the role of a teacher is critical in the well being of students. To win the trust of students is easier said than done. One can visualize how difficult it must have been for Xie to win her students' confidence. The story rather begins here because after winning the confidence of students, the teacher has to show and sometimes prove that she is worthy of being trusted. Everyday there are many cases registered all over the world where students have attempted or committed suicide or started taking drugs or indulged in unsuitable and illegal activities. There are various reasons for these students to go on the wrong path. One helping hand of a teacher could become a decisive factor in preventing them from going in the wrong direction or brining those back who mistakenly chose a path that led to disaster.

If this process of gaining confidence of one's students' is difficult for a teacher then it is also rewarding for them especially in psychological terms. It was visible from

Xie's face how satisfied she felt when her students showed the signs of trust in her. Xie heavily relied on diary writing project to establish a rapport with her students. She says, "Diary writing brings teachers and students closer. In the process of writing they are heading toward a friendship where trust is the foundation stone." The diary-writing project proved to be a very effective mechanism to further develop the teacher-student relationship.

#### **4.13.8 HRE: Problems and Challenges**

Xie mentioned a few dilemmas that she faced during teaching HR. She talked about over protective Taiwanese parents, "alien" nature of HR and difficulties in practicing HR especially in the transitional phase.

#### **4.13.9 Overprotective Taiwanese Parents**

Xie feels that Taiwanese parents are over protective of their children. This tendency affects the development of children in many ways. Taiwanese children are highly dependent on their parents for every small or big thing. It's their parents who take decisions for them regarding all matters. Xie says, "Taiwanese parents are even worried about their kid's friend circle. They keep an eye on who their child is having friendship with. They keep a record of their phone calls. They also read the child's personal diary, by no means a good practice." Xie opinioned that the over protective behavior of Taiwanese parents does not go well with the idea of HR. When students learn about HR

they complain their rights have been encroached upon and by none other than their parents. Xie gives an account of it:

I discovered this over protective nature of Taiwanese parents' during the daily diary-writing project. I came across various remarks and incidents mentioned by students about their parents' possessive behavior that infringed upon their privacy. Some students wrote that their parents insisted on reading their personal diaries. Some complained that their parents imposed their opinion regarding who their friends could be. Some very sadly wrote they had to learn the piano or calligraphy to please their parents. This over protective and possessive attitude of parents is against the idea of privacy. Students said that they read and learnt about privacy but they did not have any privacy at home.

Xie's account indicates that in the name of protection parents justify their behavior. They go to an extent where the child does not have the right to have friends. In such a context, the school is talking about HR in general and privacy in particular. It is reasonable on the part of the students to question or doubt the very relevance of HR to them. Now the issue to address is the discrepancy between the theoretical and practical aspects of HR. Xie is dealing with this problem at individual level where she always has a word about HR with the parents. She does not preach the principles of HR to the parents but tries to convey that the practice of HR on their part is a must for their child's sound and overall development. Xie pointed out that this strategy has yielded rich results. She has managed to convince a few parents of her students to treat their children with greater latitude than before.



#### 4.13.10 “Alien” Nature of HR

It is likely that the ideas and concepts that are talked about frequently in a society are easy to be familiarized with or practiced. The very idea of HR in Taiwanese society is nascent. Apart from being new, there is a paucity of literature in Chinese on HR. To Xie, these two factors are the biggest challenges that HRE in Taiwan is currently facing. She opinioned that if these two problems are handled effectively and immediately, the plantation of HR culture in Taiwan is possible through HRE.

It can be inferred from Xie’s point of view that public awareness about HR is indispensable for the development of HR based culture within school premises as well as the outside world. Though some NGOs are working in that direction by involving and training common people much more is required to be done. In the beginning Chen’s government dedicated itself to the cause of HR but gradually all initiatives pertaining to HR and HRE lost their momentum due to negligence on the part of the government.

## **Chapter Five**

### **Pedagogy of Human Rights Education and Social Science Teacher in the Elementary School of New Delhi**

This chapter introduces India including its geography, demography, and history together with a discussion of educational developments in different eras. The second part of the Chapter examines the current status of HRE in the elementary schools of India with special reference to New Delhi.

#### **5.1 Landscape and People**

India is located in South Asia with a total area of 3, 287,782 sq km. It has the Indian Ocean on three sides while the north is dominated by the Himalayas. With over 1.2 billion population, India ranks second after China. India is a multi-religious country. Hindus are in a majority with 80.3 percent, whereas minority groups constitute Muslims at 13.4 percent, Christians at 2.3 percent, Buddhists at 0.8 percent and Jains at 0.4 percent. Over a long period of time, India attracted various groups of foreigners who intermingled with the local people and introduced cultural diversity. The geographical, demographic, cultural, and religious disparities posed challenges to peaceful coexistence.

## **5.2 Literacy, Education and Knowledge in India: A Historical Overview**

This section is divided into four periods covering the history of literacy, education and knowledge in India since 3000 (BCE)<sup>52</sup> to 2010 (CE)<sup>53</sup>. The four periods of Indian history namely ancient, medieval, colonial and contemporary can be discussed with reference to developments in the field of education.

### **5.3 Education in Ancient India**

The history of civilization in India goes back to 3000 BCE when the Indus Civilization developed in the northwestern part of India. The people of this civilization had a script which is yet to be deciphered. Nothing much can be said about education but there can be little doubt that it was a literate society with the knowledge of technology, such as weights and measures, pottery and metal work (Basham, 2004; Sharma, 2005; Singh, 2009; Thapar, 2002).

In the Vedic period (c. 1500 BCE), in contrast to the Indus civilization, writing was absent. The main source for this period is text of the Vedas, orally transmitted and written down later, which does not make any reference to the tradition of writing (Scharfe, 2002). Scharfe mentioned that the outstanding feature of education in this period was orality. The oral tradition was used to transfer knowledge from one generation to the next. Scholars have come up with many reasons to account for the absence of writing in the

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<sup>52</sup> BCE is Before Common Era.

<sup>53</sup> CE is Common Era.

Vedic age. Altekar suggested that knowledge contained in the Vedas was considered sacred and hence kept away from the people of the lower strata who could pollute it (1957). During the Vedic period only three upper *varṇas* (social groups) were allowed to study. The fourth *varṇa* did not have the right to education especially to study the Vedas. Scharfe argued that instruction in the Vedic lore had always been conducted in this way, a holdover from the time when script was completely unknown in India (2002, pp. 8-9). Hence, there are different opinions about why the oral tradition was an inalienable feature of Vedic education system.

The oral tradition encouraged rote learning based on memory from an early age. Students were required to memorize all the texts prescribed by the teacher. The reminiscences of this tradition can still be seen in Indian schools where students are advised and compelled to memorize answers written in the textbooks or dictated by the teacher. Those who are good at committing everything to memory get full marks and those who are not blessed with this ability are destined to get lower marks or grades.

The ultimate goal of education in the Vedic age was to attain *mokṣa* (liberation). Seen from this perspective, the education was primarily religious in nature. The content consisted of hymns, chanting, compositions in praise of God, and formulae for performing rituals. It does not mean that no other subject was taught but attention given to religion was proportionally very high. There were other subjects too, for instance philosophy, grammar, metrics, medicine, statecraft, law, literature, aesthetics, architecture, sculpture, painting and music. Education was imparted in *Gurukul* or *Ashram*, later to be

known as *patshala* or school. Educational institutions were not many and often attached to temples. Pawar (2004) has argued that education was not institutionalized. It may not have been institutionalized in a way that it is now but it was organized. Everything rested with the teacher who was called *guru*. The *guru* was generally a Brahman. Only Brahmans could become a teacher and teach Vedas. Other than teachers of religious subjects, there were those who provided vocational training, especially in handicrafts. The teachers were craftsmen themselves who had their own workshop where they provided apprenticeship. For instance, a sculptor would have students who helped him in his work and simultaneously got trained. This system of learning is still in vogue in villages. In the urban setting the practice has been institutionalized in the form of vocational schools where teachers are into the same craft profession which they teach in the school.

In reaction and opposition to Brahman supremacy, Buddhism came into existence in six hundred BCE. Similarly Buddhist education emerged in contrast to *Brahmanic* education. Buddhist education was open to all including women and low born men who were denied education for ages. The Buddhist *sangha* (monastery) was the place where education and learning took place. Two kinds of education were in practice. First, training of monks and nuns, and second for common people who found education useful for livelihood or intellectual gratification. The medium of instruction was either *Pali* or *Prakrit* (as opposed to Vedic Sanskrit), the languages of the masses. This was an indication of a non-elitist education system. Sharma (2006) drew a picture of Buddhist

teachers leading a very simple life with limited needs. Being learned men of high character, knowing themselves and having self-control, they put the same ideals before their disciples (p. 56). The teachers-monks were celibates with austere lifestyle in contrast to the Brahman teachers who had to think about their family. The nature of education remained religious and oral but the lessons were in Buddhism instead of Vedas. The purpose of education was to attain *nirvaṇa* (freedom from the cycle of rebirth). The centers of education in this period were monasteries and Buddhist monks were the teachers.

After the age of the Buddha, writing emerged in the reign of Asoka in the third century BCE, readable unlike Indus script. The instances of writing came from Panini's book on grammar called *Ashtadhyayi* (Winter, 2004) and rock edicts issued by Asoka.<sup>54</sup> Asoka wanted to educate his people in *dhamma*.<sup>55</sup> Asoka's *dhamma* was not a religion or law of conduct as in Brahmanism, but a set of moral principles, like paying respect to

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<sup>54</sup> Panini's grammar was in Sanskrit and Asoka's edicts were in *Brahmi* and *Kharoshti* scripts. It is interesting that Sanskrit was meant for the elites and the ruling class, and local people could not read Sanskrit so, *Brahmi* and *Kharoshti* were developed.

<sup>55</sup> Asoka mentioned *dhamma* in his 13<sup>th</sup>: "When he had been consecrated eight years the Beloved of the Gods, the king Piyadassi, conquered Kaliṅga was annexed, the Beloved of the Gods very earnestly practiced *Dhamma*, desired *Dhamma*, and taught *Dhamma* ...the Beloved of the Gods considers victory by *Dhamma* to be the foremost victory... what is obtained by this is victory everywhere, and everywhere victory is pleasant. This pleasure has been obtained through victory by *Dhamma*—yet it is by a slight pleasure, for the Beloved of the Gods only looks upon that as important in its results which pertains to the next world. This inscription of *Dhamma* has been engraved so that any sons or great grandsons that I may have should not think of gaining new conquests, and in whatever victories they may gain should be satisfied with patience and light punishment. They should only consider conquest by *Dhamma* to be satisfied with patience and light punishment. They should only consider conquest by *Dhamma* to be a true conquest, and delight in *Dhamma* should be their whole delight, for this is of value in both this world and the next (cited in Thapar, 2001, pp. 255-257)."

parents, liberality to friends and Brahmans and *Sramas*, kindness to servants and slaves, non-killing, moderate expenses, tolerance toward other religions, etc. Asoka also prohibited useless sacrifices and certain forms of gatherings which led to indiscipline and superstition. In order to implement these policies he recruited a new cadre of officials called *Dhammamahamattas*. Part of this group's duties was to see to it that people of various sects were treated fairly. They were also asked to look after the welfare of prisoners. Asoka also started *Dhamma yatra*s. He and his high officials were to tour the country in order to propagate *Dhamma* and establish direct contact with his subjects.

The Rock Edict XII can be considered the first document on HR in India. It talks about humanness, non-violence, respect and tolerance for others. He sent his daughter and son abroad in tandem with *Dhammamahamattas* (teachers and preachers of *dhamma*) to promote the concept of *dhamma*. Asoka's period was followed by Gupta rulers. Not surprisingly, by the Gupta period *dhamma* was already gone and forgotten. This period is famous for its development of literature pertaining to art, music, science and medicine. The similar features and characteristics were present in later period as well. Asokan brand of *dhamma* was not present in later period but religion or religious teaching had its presence in education system in some form. To summarize, ancient Indian education was always a medley of other worldly and temporal goals.

## 5.4 Medieval Indian Education

The medieval period represent the coming of Islam in India in the thirteenth century. The advent of Islam in India marked the beginning of momentous changes in the domain of education and learning (Law, 1916). Knowledge or *ilm* in Islam was always held in a very high esteem. Islam attached enormous importance to both acquisition and promotion of knowledge (Ahmad, 1987). Berkey wrote that Islam is a religion of the book and of learning (1992, p. 6). This is evident from the fact that almost all medieval rulers had libraries decorated with books representing not only Islamic knowledge but non-Islamic literature as well. Knowledge was loved, respected and revered in Islam (Rosenthal, 1970). Islam encourages the believers to acquire knowledge. Sikand (2005) wrote that the very first revelation to Muhammad stressed the importance of knowledge and the written word (p. 3). It is believed that Muhammad said that ‘Knowledge is the life of Islam and a pillar of faith’ (cited in Sikand, 2005). Another quotation ascribed to Prophet Muhammad is ‘Seek knowledge from cradle to grave and search for it even if you are to go to China’.

In medieval India, Islamic education was open to all Indians irrespective of what their religion was although it is also true that those who acquired it were mostly Muslims. Hindus<sup>56</sup> also joined Islamic institutions because that was necessary for getting government jobs. In the beginning, Islamic education was given in mosques and tutors’

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<sup>56</sup> There were *pathshalas* (primary school) also run by individuals or communities in the medieval period where Hindu students used to study. Upward professional mobility was easier to attain through Islamic education.



house. Gradually, formal institutions were developed namely, *maktab* and *madrasa* often attached to mosques. *Maktab*s were elementary schools. Teachers were called Maulavis. The students were taught the alphabets and numbers first. During these early years the focus was mainly on correct pronunciation (Jaffar, 1936). After memorizing the alphabets, writing had to be introduced. Hence, reading, writing and basic arithmetic were the main components of curriculum at the elementary level. From the age of seven, the study of Quran began (Jaffar, 1936). Persian was the official language, and the medium of instruction in *maktab* and *madrasas* was also Persian. Arabic was taught so that students could read the Quran.

*Madrasas* were secondary or higher education institutions like colleges and universities. At this level, the curriculum included advance knowledge of ethics, divinity, astronomy, art of administration, arithmetic, algebra, geometry, physics, medicine, natural philosophy, rhetoric, law, ritual, accounts, agriculture, economics, and history (Jaffar, 1936, p. 21).

Edwardes (1967) argued that the state—as distinct from individual rulers—accepted no responsibility for education (p. 110). Some of the rulers in medieval India took interest in promotion of education in their territory and had shown special enthusiasm and contributed significantly to the development of education. One such ruler was the Mughal Emperor, Akbar (1556 to 1605), who introduced a new curriculum oriented towards the study of rational sciences, and discouraged rote learning.

## 5.5 Education in Colonial India

The English East India Company started trading with India in the seventeenth century. Slowly and gradually, by fair and foul means, the EEIC took over power from the ruling Mughals in the north and regional rulers from other areas of India. In the beginning, the Company kept itself aloof from interfering in educational matters. It was only in the Charter of 1813 that education was discussed. The purpose of mentioning education in the Charter was not to carve out a proper education policy for Indians. There were two groups that had emerged with opinions on education. The one supporting and advocating western education in India was known as Anglicist. The Anglicists considered oriental learning worthless (Dodson, 2010). The other group was of the opinion that Indian education both Sanskrit and Arabic were worthy enough to be retained as a part of education. The supporters of traditional Indian education system included Orientlist like H. H. Wilson.

The debate persisted for a while and ended only in 1835 when it was decided that English should be the language of instruction in higher education and that the purpose of education should be to disseminate Western knowledge (Edwards, 1967, p. 110). The Charter of 1835 is famously known as Macaulay's Minute on Education. Macaulay ruthlessly criticized and denounced Indian education. The following is the extract from Macaulay's Minute showing intense contempt towards oriental learning:

It is said that the Sanskrit and Arabic are the languages in which the sacred books of a hundred millions of people are

written, and that they are, on that account, entitled to peculiar encouragement. Assuredly it is the duty of the British government in India to be not only tolerant, but neutral on all religious questions. But to encourage the study of a literature admitted to be of small intrinsic value only because that literature inculcated the most serious errors on the most important subjects, is a course hardly reconcilable with reason, with morality, or even with that very neutrality which ought, as we all agree, to be sacredly preserved. It is confessed that a language is barren of useful knowledge. We are told to teach it because it is fruitful of monstrous superstitions. We are to teach false history, false astronomy, false medicine, because we find them in company with a false religion (Extract from Macaulay's Minute cited in Edwardes, 1967, p. 124).

On the premise that Indian education closely associated with religion (Hinduism and Islam) and thus was irrational and worthless, Macaulay decided against supporting it. But his persistent advocacy of Evangelism was certainly contrary to his policy of neutrality in the matter of religion. It can be inferred that the main issue was not whether Indian education had any intrinsic value or not, the issue was to promote western knowledge and ideas and hence tame the Indian population to suit the interests of colonial rule: to instill pro-British feelings and create a class of Indians who were Indian in blood and color, but English in tastes, opinions, morals and intellect.

In 1854 Wood's Educational Despatch came into existence and reiterated the same old purpose of education—to produce a high standard of government servant, and to increase commercial potential (Edwardes, 1967, p. 121). Before Wood's Despatch,

primary education was not given any attention. Wood's Despatch directed the attention of the Company towards the supervision of primary education. But there were not enough provisions of finance for primary education which made supervision of primary schools infeasible (Rawat, 1970).

The Company was of the opinion that it will educate the upper strata of the Indian society and expected that this cultivated class will spread western knowledge further among the masses. This is known as the Filtration theory of education. Arthur (1926) explained that education had to reach the masses from above. Drop by drop by drop from the Himalayas of Indian life useful information was to trickle downwards, forming in time a broad and stately stream to irrigate the thirsty plains (quoted in Rawat, 1970). The Filtration theory of education could not bear the fruits of success. The hope of the Company to infiltrate education to the masses by the first trained generation never got fulfilled. The lower stratum was still illiterate and deprived of basic education while people from the upper class especially Brahmins benefited immensely from it (Edwardes, 1967). Basu (1974) argued that this policy helped to preserve and strengthen the gap between the upper class and the masses.

In 1882, the Indian Education Commission also known as Hunter Commission showed special interest in improving primary education in India. The reason behind this instant concern was the introduction of compulsory primary education back home in Britain. Similar provisions in the sphere of primary education for Indians were demanded by a group of administrators and scholars.

## 5.6 Nationalist Vision of Indian Education

In the beginning of the twentieth century, political awakening in India intensified as a result of English education and the national movement for independence. English education played a vital role in socializing and communicating political ideas (Basu, 1974). It introduced western ideas of nation, nationalism, freedom, democracy and equality among Indians. Imbued with these concepts, Indians started demanding them from the British. It was further accelerated by the Russo-Japanese war.<sup>57</sup> There was a sense that Asians were also capable of challenging European Colonial powers. The demand was overlooked by the Colonial rule as it posed a threat to its own existence. This political scenario got translated into nationalist education. The National Council of Education was established. It was led by Gurudev Rabindranath Tagore, Rash Behari Ghose and Sir Gurudas Banerjee. The Council prepared a blueprint of nationalist education from primary education to university education. By nationalist education is meant the education provided in institutions independent from the government, a curriculum framed by the institutions themselves and taught in students' mother tongue. The purpose of nationalist education was to inculcate nationalist feelings among students, to be proud of being Indian and fight against the Colonial rule for freedom. A good number of nationalist institutions sprung up but not all of them managed to survive due to scarcity of resources.

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<sup>57</sup> After the war ended, a significant number of Indian students went to Japan to study there and scholars had taken keen interest in Japanese education system. As a result, two reports were published on Japanese education in 1906.

## 5.7 Gokhale's Bill

G. K. Gokhale was a nationalist leader who was aware of the importance of free and compulsory elementary education of the Indians. He prepared a bill of free and compulsory elementary education and forwarded it to the Imperial Legislative Council which recommended:

[T]hat a beginning should be made in the direction of making elementary education free and compulsory throughout the country and that a mixed Commission of officials and non-officials be appointed at an early date to frame definite proposals (quoted in Rawat, 1970, p, 216).<sup>58</sup>

Gokhale got assurance from the government that effective measures would be taken but nothing substantial came out of it. The Department of Education was established in 1910 by the Government of India, but education remained in the hands of Provincial governments. Being a provincial matter, elementary education continued to suffer from its legal position. Gokhale was determined and he proposed a private bill on free and compulsory education in 1911. He circulated the bill among local governments, local bodies and educational institutions to mobilize the mass opinion. In spite of all his efforts, the government rejected the bill. Though Gokhale could not get the bill passed it

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<sup>58</sup> Gokhale's bill was presented on March 19, 1910. It is an irony that it took almost a hundred years to promulgate the right to education act and make compulsory elementary education into a law. The right to education law was enacted from April 1, 2010. It has made it legally binding on the state to provide free elementary education to all children up to the age of fourteen.

left a long lasting impact on the people who started realizing the importance of free and compulsory elementary education.

### **5.8 Gandhi and his Basic Education**

During a difficult period, Gandhi took the leadership of the Indian National Movement. He had a lot of faith in education and its role in life including freedom from Colonial rule. For him, education was not only of mind it was also of body and spirit. Education that could not inculcate skills among students so that they could earn their livelihood had no utility for him. He was not at all happy with the Indian education system. In 1937 a conference was held on education at Wardha (Maharashtra). In the conference Gandhi put forward his views on education. He outlined three main problems of Indian education. First, use of English that prevented the spread of education among the masses. Second, education had little to do with vocation. Third, five years of primary education was too short a period.

In 1938 a scheme for Basic Education was carved out. The scheme had cautiously taken care of curriculum, teacher education and methods of teaching. It was officially adopted in the Central Provinces, United Provinces, Bombay, Bihar and Orissa. The concept of Basic Education was inspired from Leo Tolstoy's *Farm*.<sup>59</sup> Basic Education denoted primary education. A craft, for instance spinning and weaving, carpentry or

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<sup>59</sup> In Tolstoy's *Farm*, education was imparted through the medium of a certain craft. Gandhi's children were to be educated at the Farm and he minutely observed the activities conducted there. He was very impressed by the practicality and utility of the Farm education.

leatherwork, would be at the center of basic education. The curriculum of basic education would be designed around a certain craft. If the center of education were weaving, the curriculum would include topics, such as where cotton was grown? What kind of soil was required to grow it? Gandhi was well aware of the limitations of craft centered Basic Education. So, in his scheme whenever there were themes from Natural or Social Sciences that could not be taught through a craft could still be taught separately. He maintained that first, the craft or the productive work chosen should be rich in educative possibilities, and second, it should correlate with important human activities and interests, and extend into the content of the school curriculum (quoted in Rawat, 1970, p. 288). In other words, Gandhi's philosophy was not of craft determinism. Instead he was unfolding the practical and productive aspects of the kind of education where students would be able to earn some money as well. This self-supporting kind of education was ideal and feasible for the Indian scenario where poverty was rampant and parents were not able to send their children to school. For poor parents, it was a blessing because their children got an opportunity to learn as well as earn. Nehru, the first prime minister of India, considered Basic Education to be one of the most important and far-reaching achievements (1946, p. 379). In some areas it bore excellent results but gradually it lost its rigor in the wake of the national movement for independence.



## 5.9 Education in Independent India

In every country in the world, whether occidental or oriental, which aspires to be regarded as civilized, with the exception of India, the need for a national system of education for both boys and girls which will provide the minimum preparation for citizenship has now been accepted in India (Bureau of Education, India, 1944, p. 6).

The above quote is from a report published during the British rule in India. It throws light on the education system of India in 1944 and suggests by then that India did not have a national education system.

After 200 years of colonial rule, India became independent on 15 August 1947. It was not merely transfer of power from the colonial government to the Indian. It was a new beginning, a new challenge, and a new struggle for the Indians. Every sector required an overhauling including education. Education was seen as an instrument to bring the desperately sought economic development by producing engineers, doctors, and scientists on a mass scale. Thus, the focus on higher education immediately after the independence was sharp. The intention of developing scientific and technical manpower was translated in the appointment of Radhakrishnan Commission in 1948. The purpose of the Commission was to prepare a report on the reconstruction of university education.

In 1950, India adopted a Constitution with provisions for education. The Constituent Assembly did not make education a fundamental right due to the scarcity of

resources.<sup>60</sup> The Assembly made provisions for education in section four of the Indian Constitution known as Directive Principles of State.<sup>61</sup> Despite the Constitutional provision, the right to education could not become a reality until recently.

### **5.10 Education and National Development: Education Commission 1964-1966**

In 1964, for the first time in the history of Indian education the need for a comprehensive policy on education was felt. The Education Commission (aka Kothari Commission) was appointed under the aegis of D. S. Kothari to advise Government on the national pattern of education and on the general principles and policies for the development of education at all stages and in all aspects (Report of the Education Commission, 1966, p. IX). The Commission has made a reference to the limited of the government resources and cautioned that it might become an obstacle in the way of the development of education. The Commission recommended that the Indian education needs drastic changes, of the order almost of a revolution. It was comprehensive report covering issues, such as educational system, structure, and standards, teacher status, teacher education, enrolments and manpower, equal educational opportunity, school education, curriculum, teaching method, guidance and evaluation, higher education, education for agriculture, vocational, technical and engineering education, science

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<sup>60</sup> In the case of violation or non-fulfillment of the rights mentioned in section three of the Indian Constitution, citizens can go to the court against the state.

<sup>61</sup> The provisions contained in this Part shall not be enforceable by any court, but the principles therein laid down are nevertheless fundamental in the governance of the country and it shall be the duty of the state to apply these principles in making laws (The Constitution of India, 1996, p. 13).

education and research, adult education, educational planning and administration, and last, but not the least, educational finance.

The Commission had placed teachers on a high pedestal. It urged the government to attract more able, intelligent and noble persons towards the profession. It also suggested improving the conditions of service, working conditions and raised the pay scales of teachers (Chaube and Chaube, 1997). But nothing substantial came out of these recommendations.

Kaul (1974) termed this document as “learned” and stated that the present shape of Indian education may have been different had its major recommendations been implemented successfully (p.47). Kaul is right that if the MOE had been farsighted it would not have ignored the Commission’s major recommendations. The Commission had strongly recommended to pay due attention to basic education and to guide and plan higher education on the basis of the progress in basic education system. The government paid no attention to it and the result was that higher education charted its own course.

### **5.11 National Policy on Education (1986)**

After two decades, the Indian government once again felt an urgent need for a national policy on education. It started the process of shaping the National Policy on Education (NPE). In 1986 the NPE was finalized after an intensive national debate

(Government of India, 1988, p. 1).<sup>62</sup> The NPE recognized that education had an ‘acculturating role’ which refined sensitivities and perceptions that contributed to national cohesion, a scientific temper and independence of mind and spirit (Thakur, 1998, p. 56). The NPE was proclaimed as an usher to the twenty first century. The worldwide pattern of changes in education system had ensured that the twenty first century would be a century of science and technology. Therefore, NPE focused only on scientific and technological modernization of India through education. Another world trend NPE had mechanically followed was vocationalization of education. It had introduced vocational education at higher secondary level for those students who, for various reasons, could not opt for higher education. Another feature of NPE was universal primary education. The policy had promised to provide universal education in a few years’ time but no concrete action was taken so that the dream of universal education could become a reality. The right to education is a basic HR that was denied to more than sixty percent of school going children falling into the age group of six to fourteen years.

NPE had also talked about equality of educational opportunity, preservation of cultural heritage, constitutional obligations, strengthening national identity and unity, character building and inculcation of values, a global perspective, protection of the environment and conservation of national resources, future-oriented education, education for all-round development, evolving a child-centered approach to education, facilitating

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<sup>62</sup> There is a group of scholars who accused the government of bypassing the democratic process of debate on vital issues and implementing its own agenda.

‘learning how to learn’, facilitating creative expression, inculcation of scientific temper, interface between education and the world of work, continuous and comprehensive evaluation, utilization of media and education technology (Shotton, 1998).

The NPE recommends a child centered approach to elementary education. The policy therefore, conceptualized a stage wise initiative with central assistance called ‘Operation Blackboard’ for the improvement of primary schools all over the country by providing them with (i) two reasonable large rooms that are usable in all weather; (ii) necessary toys and games material, blackboards, maps, charts and learning material, and (iii) an additional teacher, preferably a woman, wherever there is only one in a school (Government of India, 1988).

### **5.12 Institutions, Organizations and Implementation of Education Policy**

India is a federal democracy with 28 States, 6 Union Territories and a National Capital Territory of Delhi. The Constitution of India defines the powers of Center, States and Union Territories under the Union, State and Concurrent lists. Education falls into the Concurrent list. It means that both the Center and the States have shared responsibilities as far as education is concerned.

The Ministries of Education at the center and states are the apex bodies as far as framing policies is concerned. To implement education policy at both levels there are many central and state bodies.

### **5.13 Central Advisory Board of Education**

The Board was established in 1920 and reestablished in 1935. After independence its main functions were to advise Central or State Government on any issue pertaining to educational management and to call for information and circulate it with recommendations to the Government of India and to local Governments (Aggarwal, 1989). It also assessed the status of education yearly and gave suggestions.

### **5.14 National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT)**

NCERT is an autonomous institution established in 1961. It shapes the national character of education. Its role included framing national curriculum, writing textbooks, conducting research, and arranging in-service training for teachers. It exercises considerable influence in determining the nature of education at the school level. Though it is an autonomous body the government uses it to propagate its ideology. In 2000, when a Hindu right wing party came to power it changed the National Curriculum Framework and commissioned new textbooks more in line with its ideology. When the Congress party came to power, the National Curriculum Framework and textbooks were once again revised in accordance with the principles of equality, pluralism, and secularism delineated in the Indian Constitution.

### **5.15 State Council of Educational Research and Training (SCERT)**

SCERT is a state level autonomous body formed on the pattern of NCERT. It addresses local concerns in education while retaining the national character. It performs

similar functions as NCERT but at the State level. It also writes and publishes textbooks, provides in-service training to teachers, and runs the District Institute of Educational Training where future teachers are trained.

## **5.16 Educational Structure**

There are four stages of education in India—pre primary, elementary, secondary and higher education.

### **5.16.1 Pre-primary stage (3-5 years)**

Pre-primary refers to Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) or Kindergarten education. The pre-primary education as a part of the educational ladder is not compulsory (National University of Planning and Administration, 2007, p. 11). The government has institutions to look after pre-primary education but they are limited in number. These are called *Anganwadi* (literally ‘courtyard garden’). Due to paucity of institutions providing ECCE and presence of lucrative business opportunities, there is an incredible mushrooming of private kindergartens. This has proved to be a money making machine for people who are into pre-primary education sector. The biggest problem with ECCE is the unavailability of trained teachers (Aggarwal, 2001). Most of these private kindergartens has un-trained teachers who are underpaid too. Kindergarten education plays an important role in the overall development of children. Until now it is unfulfilled in India due to lackluster policy of the government, lack of resources, absence of training institutions, supervision and evaluation of contemporary kindergartens.

### **5.16.2 Elementary Stage (6-14 years)**

The Indian government has always articulated in its educational policies the intention to provide free and compulsory elementary education up to the age of fourteen. After signing the International Covenants on Children's right, it became her responsibility to ensure the rights of Children, especially the right to education. The government has started many programs to achieve the goal of universalization of elementary education. Many schemes, such as District Primary Education Program, *Lok Jumbish*, Minimum Levels of Learning, National Elementary Education Mission, and *Shiksha Karmi* Project, were started to ensure universal access—to all students despite caste, class or gender—universal retention, reduction in dropout rate, and universal achievement of minimum levels of learning by almost all children at primary level.

### **5.16.3 Minimum Levels of Learning (MLL)**

In 1991 a measure was taken to seek for well-defined standards of learning by children. All children irrespective of their background were expected to reach a MLL before they finish their schooling (Aggarwal, 2001, p. 34). It was primarily a curriculum reform. The reason to initiate this program was the inability of children—even after completing primary schooling—to perform basic skills such as reading, writing and computation. It triggered a debate that why after completing five years of education children cannot read, write or count. It led to curriculum revision, rewriting of textbooks, and improvement in teacher education program.



#### **5.16.4 Right to Education Act (RTE)**

The RTE Act is in tandem with the goal of universal elementary education. With the enforcement of RTE on April 1, 2010, elementary education has become a fundamental right of all children in 6-14 age groups. The RTE Act provides for children's right to free and compulsory admission, attendance and completion of elementary education (Sibal, 2010). The Act makes it clear that curriculum should be transacted through activities, exploration and discovery. Corporal punishment is prohibited in the Act. The RTE is an attempt to bring NPE 1986 to a full circle. It had picked up all those issues which could not become a reality in the past, such as universalization of elementary education, continuous and comprehensive evaluation system, less and fewer burdens on students, and introduction of grade system at the school level instead of marks.

#### **5.16.5 Secondary School**

After completing elementary school comes two years of high school. This can be termed general education. In high school there are five compulsory subjects, viz. English, Hindi, Mathematics, Science, and Social Science. High school exam is very important because it determines the stream (humanities, sciences, or arts) which a student can opt for higher education. High school examination creates mortal fear among students and parents. The present government has introduced reforms pertaining to examination. Instead of considering the problem in a local context and finding solutions, the government has followed the US model. Grades have been introduced instead of marks

and semester system instead of year length courses. The central problem remains much the same. Now there is struggle for good grades whereas earlier it was for marks.

#### **5.16.6 Senior Secondary School**

This is a two-year program divided into streams namely humanities, science, arts, and vocational studies. There are four elective subjects in each specialization along with at least language one language. Vocational studies have been introduced keeping the economic development in mind. India requires technically equipped personnel for industrialization. The senior secondary examination is again very crucial because admission in a good college or program depends on the result of this exam. Most of the senior secondary students spend their time either in school or in tuition centers (cram school).

#### **5.16.7 National Open School (NOS)**

NOS is an autonomous organization established in 1989 to cater to the needs of poor and disadvantaged students who cannot pursue secondary or higher education due to their economic status and compulsion of work. NOS organizes evening or weekend classes. It has its own examination board that conducts senior secondary certificate examination.

### 5.16.8 Higher Education

Higher education in India is four tiered: Bachelor (3-5 years), Master (2 years), M. Phil. (eighteen months-3years), and Ph.D. (3-7 years). After completing twelve years of schooling students are eligible for Bachelor courses. A Bachelor degree can be obtained in arts, commerce and science. There are both pass and honors courses. Pass course is simple graduation in any of the three fields with four subjects, including two languages either Hindi any other regional language and English. The honors course is more specialized in subjects, such as History, Economics, Political Science, and Sociology. These are all three-year courses.

There are some professional courses of four years such as Bachelor of Agriculture, Bachelor of Dental Science, Bachelor of Elementary Education, Bachelor of Engineering, Bachelor of Pharmacy, Bachelor of Technology and Bachelor of Veterinary medicine. The five-year courses are Bachelor of Medicine and Bachelor of Science (M.B.B.S), Bachelor of Ayurvedic Medicine and Surgery (B.A.M.S), Bachelor of Unani Medicine and Surgery (B.U.M.S). Bachelor's degree in law can either be taken as an integrated degree lasting five years or three-year course as a second degree. The professional courses have provision of internship generally in the last year of the program.

The Master's program is of two-year duration in a specific subject. After Master's a pre-doctoral program- Master of Philosophy (M. Phil)— has to be completed. It is mandatory in some universities. The requirement of the M. Phil program is both course

work and thesis. Research Methodology and Statistics are important component of course work. A Ph. D degree can be obtained between 4 and 7 years depending on the program.

### **5.17 HRE in India: Organizational and Institutional Development**

This section delineates the development of HRE in India. It throws light on governmental, NGO's, and academicians' effort in the field of HRE. The project of HRE got impetus in the year 1995 after the announcement of the UN's Decade for HRE in 1994.

#### **5.17.1 MOE and HRE**

MOE's policy on HRE can be seen in the National Curriculum prepared by the NCERT. The latest one is known as National Curriculum Framework 2005 (NCF, 2005). It is not an instrument to impose uniformity all over India. It is a mean of modernizing the system of Indian education (NCF, 2005, p. 4). It cannot be denied that it is being presented as a model for state level curriculum frameworks. The NCF, 2005 mentioned the guiding principles of education to be: a commitment to democracy and the values of equality, justice, freedom, concern for others' well-being, secularism, respect for human dignity and rights (NCF, 2005, p. 10). The NCF, 2005 accepted "human dignity and rights" as a guiding principle for curriculum framework. As a result, themes and topics of HR are included in the curriculum especially in Social Science subjects.<sup>63</sup>

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<sup>63</sup> This issue will be taken up later in the chapter.

The history of integration of HRE into curriculum goes back to the 1970s. In 1974 UNESCO came up with “Recommendation Concerning Education for International Understanding, Cooperation and Education Relating to Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms”. In 1991 on request from UNESCO, Paris, NCERT came up with a report. It gives extensive details regarding HRE curriculum at various level of schooling and higher education too. If one goes by this report, there was plenty of HRE already incorporated into the school curriculum. In this regard the report was excellent. But when one glances over the status of HR and its violation no significant change is visible. It would not be an exaggeration to say that in 1991 the instances of HR violation had increased phenomenally. All News papers of that time were full of cases of dowry related deaths, domestic violence, female infanticides, rape, caste based discrimination, untouchability, Police custodial deaths, etc.

Why can this discrepancy be explained? It is clear that inclusion of HRE in the curriculum was superficial. There was no serious attempt from institution or organization to make HR a part and parcel of daily life of students and teachers. This report is yet another addition to the pile of reports that are theoretically very well written but do not provide any insight on the practical aspects of program implementation.

#### **5.17.2 National Human Rights Commission (NHRC)**

NHRC was established in 1993 under the Human Rights Protection Act. NHRC believed that HR are not foreign to any culture but intrinsic to all (Dayal, 2000, p. 42).

Therefore, NHRC has kept itself away from the debate on the western origin of HR. The definition of HR given in the Human Rights Protection Act is: “the rights relating to life, liberty, equality and dignity of the individual guaranteed under the Constitution or embodied in the International Covenants and enforceable by courts in India (National Human Rights Commission, 2004, p. 1).” It is apparent from the definition of HR that NHRC takes cognizance of both national and international statutes that are enforceable by Indian courts. Krishnasamy (2009) opined that NHRC is a belated realization and recognition of Indian realities. In comparison with western democracies, Indian HR commission came very late. The outcome of this delay was that for many decades there was not a body to report and check HR violations in India. This does not mean that the establishment of NHRC led to complete eradication of HR violations but now at least there is a watchdog.

Apart from playing a watchdog and ombudsman’s role, NHRC is expected to spread HR literacy awareness among various sections of society, organizing seminars, workshops, and conducting research. In February 1996 NHRC in collaboration with the Canadian Human Rights Commission organized a seminar on HRE. The seminar was widely attended including by the State Human Rights Commissions (Singh, 1998). In the same year, NHRC organized one more seminar, this time on “Human Rights, terrorism and Human Rights Education”. The seminar was held to commemorate the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of ICCPR. NHRC suggested national television and radio to give a ten minutes slot for HR to spread awareness about them. This was done on the understanding

that national TV and radio would have access to the population living in remote areas. The audio-visual media could effectively be used to educate illiterate people in HR.

### **5.17.3 Justice and Peace Commission (JPC)**

JPC is a part of the Archdiocese of Mumbai. It's Documentation, Research and Training Center was asked to take up the HRE program in 1993. The purpose was to instill a proper understanding of HR among children through the [HRE] program and develop behavioral skills and attitudes that embrace equality, respect and justice (Justice and Peace Commission, 1998, p. 91). The work done by JPC in the field of HRE is limited only to Mumbai. JPC believed in sustained efforts in HRE program. It is sustained efforts in HRE that can concretize the objective of developing HR culture. JPC's general objectives set for HRE in schools are:

To strengthen respect for [HR] and fundamental freedoms; to develop a sense of individual self-respect and respect for others: a value for human dignity; to develop attitudes and behavior that will lead to respect for the rights of others; to ensure genuine gender equality and equal opportunities for women in all spheres; to promote respect, understanding and appreciation of cultural diversity, particularly towards different national, ethnic, religious, linguistic and other minorities and communities; to empower people towards more active citizenship; to promote democracy, development, social justice, communal harmony, solidarity and friendship among people and nations; to further the activities of international institutions aimed at the creation of a culture of peace, based upon universal values of [HR], international understanding, tolerance and non-violence (Justice and Peace Commission, 2007, pp. 59-60).

JPC's general objectives set for HRE in school are comprehensive in nature. They not only cover regional, national but also international issues that are crucial in the formation of a peaceful society. Keeping these objectives in view, JPC has been conducting HRE sessions with students and teachers. Though a regional and a religious society JPC hope to spread awareness of HR and take up HRE program in other parts of India (Almeida, 1999, p. 124). The work being done by JPC in Mumbai has been recognized by HR activists. It would be a positive step if JPC could spread its wings to other parts of India.

#### **5.17.4 NGOs and HRE**

NGOs in India are key players as far as protection of HR is concerned. There are many NGOs that are working for the cause of HR but not many into the field of HRE. This is a reason for the slow growth of HRE in India. However, a few of those involved in HRE are doing very well.



### 5.17.5 MelJol

MelJol is a non-profit organization based in Mumbai established in 1991 by a group of teachers, parents, educationists, and others. The group was particularly concerned about children inheriting a discriminatory value system, heightened by stereotypes, prejudices, and classism (MelJol Team, 1998, p. 82). These are serious problems India is facing for a very long time. Every generation passes on ill-conceived notions to the next generation. To break these notions the right target group should be children. MelJol rightly believes that all children, irrespective of their age, caste, class, gender, ability, or culture, have the capacity and responsibility to improve their environment (Billimoria, Damania and Ashtikar, 2001, p. 11). The goals of MelJol are as follows:

- a. [To] promote the concept of equity, especially among children through equity education;
- b. to create awareness about rights and responsibilities of children with reference to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child;
- c. to empower children to be active participants in the change process towards equity (MelJol Team, 1998, pp. 82-83).

MelJol is a unique initiative in the history of HRE. It is the very first program that has children at the center. To show confidence in and respect for children is not entirely unfamiliar in India but it was put into practice for the first time. MelJol has initiated many programs for children, teachers, development of materials, research and development of a national resource center. MelJol has started a program called the

“Twinning Program”. In this program a municipal school is linked with a nearby private school. The children of these two schools come from totally different socio-economic backgrounds. These children are paired together. The pairing program has several sessions:

- a. orientation sessions-to provide the children an understanding of the program, and lay the ground for equity education;
- b. interaction sessions-the children from the two schools meet and participate in several creative activities together. Friendship bonds are also created in this process;
- c. post-interaction sessions-to make children participate in the thinking process where they also question their previously held stereotypes and prejudices;
- d. feedback sessions-to provide children an opportunity to evaluate the program and make suggestions for developing it further (MelJol Team, 1998, p. 84).

The four stages program has yielded good results if one goes by the children’s responses in favor of “Twining Program”. What is striking about this program is an initiative to bring closer the two different worlds, namely government and private schools. This is unthinkable in India. The government schools, such as municipal corporation schools are not held in high opinion in Indian society. The intermingling of students from government and private schools is consciously or unconsciously discouraged. There is a psychological barrier working at both government and private school’s level. MelJol has attempted to break the barrier. This can really be considered a new beginning for HR culture. Though the effort deserves due appreciation it is still like a pinch of salt in a bowl

of flour. This program is based in Mumbai and nearby areas and India is far too big. If such programs are allowed to spread all over the country only then social change and HR culture can be conceived and materialized.

#### **5.17.6 Institute of Human Rights Education (IHRE)**

The IHRE was established in 1997 and based in Tamil Nadu, a State in South India. Its parent body, People's Watch Tamil Nadu, is a well-known civil society organization. Unlike MelJol, IHRE has a national agenda and it is active in promoting HRE in other states as well. IHRE is offering HRE in class VI, VII and VIII. It has developed three modules for each level. The topics the three modules deal with are: introduction to human rights, child rights, and discrimination. The pedagogy IHRE applied in HRE is radical. In the year 2007 the Chairperson of IHRE wrote:

The classroom, as it exists today, is ill suited to transact a humanizing education. Classroom relations are power relations, with the teacher wielding absolute authority over the students within its confined space, while she herself is a low level functionary in a bureaucratized, elite-driven, elite-centered education system (Devi, 2007, p. 46).

Devi has correctly pointed out that school and classroom environment essentially reinforce power relations. In an anti-HR environment, the purpose of HRE gets defeated even before its implementation begins. To tackle with school and classroom environment, IHRE personnel conduct sessions with principals, administrators and teachers of each

school. IHRE is not imposing their HRE program or randomly selecting schools. Instead, the schools that have approached IHRE, showed genuine interest in HRE and earnestness in implementing it in their school set up have been taken up by the IHRE. In this case the school is committed to implement HRE as well practice HR on a daily basis. IHRE is being approached by some NGOs and institutions from areas affected by ethnic violence or governed by states with right wing ideologies, such as Gujarat and Rajasthan (the two often overlap). IHRE is working with these NGOs to spread awareness about HR. The duo has approached schools and a few of them have agreed to implement the HRE program. For this purpose, IHRE has translated its HRE material into various regional languages of India as well as English. IHRE is making every possible effort to implement HRE in all parts of India. Though a regional organization, the IHRE has adopted national and international perspectives.

#### **5.17.7 Indian Institute for Peace, Disarmament and Environmental Protection (IIPDEP)**

IIPDEP is an NGO focusing on research and public education. It believes that HR are a prerequisite for peace, security, development and democracy (Kurvey, 1999, p. 129). It organizes seminars and workshops. It is also involved in developing and distributing HRE material to schools and other NGOs. IIPDEP suggested that schools should adopt the following goals:

Teachers should apply [HR] to school life and the curriculum;  
[HR] should be the basis of relationships in the classroom;

[HR] concepts should be taught systematically; school rules and disciplinary procedures should be based on fair treatment and due process; schools should promote equality and avoid discrimination on the basis of gender, race or disability; teachers should be encouraged to develop a global perspective (Kurvey, 1999, p. 130).

IIPDEP is actively involved with schools to promote HRE. It has found that the school administration and teachers are willing to learn about HR as well as practice and teach them. The problem lies with the bureaucracy that is not willing to take up the issue of HRE. The reason for resistance is the understanding that HRE will teach people to question bureaucratic decisions and their validity. This will eventually undermine the power of bureaucracy. Without being discouraged by the languid bureaucratic attitudes and responses, IIPDEP is constantly moving ahead with the agenda of HRE.

#### **5.18 HRE in India: A part of Social Science or an Independent Discipline or Integrated into School Curriculum?**

In India HRE is predominantly a part of Social Science. There are some NGOs promoting it as an independent subject as well for instance MelJol and IHRE. NHRC also suggested that HRE should be incorporated in the syllabus as a separate subject (Kothari, 2000). There are policy papers and reports claiming that there were initiatives in the past to incorporate HRE into the school curriculum. One such instance goes back to 1974 when India committed to implementing the recommendations of UNESCO concerning education for international understanding, cooperation and peace and education relating

to HR and fundamental freedoms. In 1988 NCERT brought out a sample curriculum titled “Education for International Understanding and Human Rights”. It took fourteen years to prepare a sample curriculum and teaching units. The sample covered six subjects, viz. Civics, History, Geography, Science and Language. Civics and History curriculum got relatively more attention and space in terms of HR content. A hasty glance of themes included in the sample is also suggestive of the same. There are nine parts and twenty seven themes. A list of themes given in the following section is illustrative of the point:

[The first chapter is] Understanding our Earth; Respecting national symbols; Climatic diversities; economic diversities; Ancient scripts; Martin Luther King (Junior); Imperialism and Fascism; Science as part of human heritage; Achievements of the Early Man; The Arab civilization; Distribution of natural resources and interdependence; Indian agriculture and industries; International institutions and economic development; United Nations and International cooperation; Cooperation among Nations; Human rights; Disarmament; New international economic order; conservation of national resources; energy resources; Environment pollution; Human resource development; International terrorism; Indian Constitution and international understanding; Non-Alignment; Role of citizens (NCERT, 1988, pp. xi-xii).

The themes covered throughout in the sample come under Social Science discipline. Science and Language had minimal representation. It seems that their presence is symbolic.

A report of the study of implementation of the UNESCO recommendation was prepared by NCERT in the year 1991. The report provides a detailed description of HR, peace, and international education curriculum into subjects like Social Science, science, and languages (NCERT, 1991). The report is completely quiet about whether after a decade and so this implementation had yielded any concrete result. It is mentioned elsewhere that between 1974 and 1991 there was no significant improvement as far as status of HR was concerned; rather there was a remarkable increase in HR violations.

The year 2000 can be considered as the darkest year in the history of Indian education. This was the time when a right wing party (Hindu) in coalition with other parties came to power. It was during this government's reign that a new NCF came into being, also known as NCF, 2004. Based on NCF 2004, the Social Science textbooks, especially History textbooks, were rewritten to accord with the right wing Hindu ideology. Devious attempts were made to refashion the Indian past. This process of change in school textbooks was commonly termed as communalization of Indian education (Dev, Sharma, and Lahiry, 2007). The imposition of Hindu ideology through textbooks was a violation of the minorities' rights of preservation of their culture that was guaranteed by the Indian Constitution. The secular-liberal scholars of India condemned NCF, 2004. It is a persuasive example of how the teaching of Social Science can be misused to propagate a certain ideology and political program that are against the HR ideology. With the fall of the short-lived government in the 2004, the NCERT was called upon to make a new curriculum framework for school education. It was called NCF, 2005.

NCF, 2005 adopted the concept of HR as an epistemological frame of reference for Social Science curriculum. The Social Science textbooks were written in this spirit. The themes and concepts pertaining to HR dealt with in sixth class Social Science textbooks are:

Respect for diversity, understanding diversity in terms of religion, language, region, social status, economic position, inequality, unity in diversity, freedom, difference and prejudice, creating stereotypes, inequality and discrimination, untouchability, right to equality, women's rights, dalits' rights, right to education, secularism, right to vote, women's struggle for right to vote, racial discrimination, language-based discrimination, social movements, equality and justice, education of girls, right to information, gender equality, sanitation, contract worker's rights, sanitation workers' right, workers' rights, right to livelihood (Social and Political Life-I, 2007).

All these HR issues covered in sixth class Social Science textbook are relevant to the contemporary Indian society. The violation of many of these HR issues is seen in everyday life. The topics included in Social Science textbook indicate that curriculum framers do believe in eleven or twelve year olds' capacity to understand complex issues of HR and harsh the realities of HR violations in Indian society. It is explicit by now that HRE is an integral part of Social Science, particularly of Civics and History.

On the other hand there is a bunch of Indian scholars who called themselves "Radical Humanists" who hold a different opinion from the education policy makers.



When HRE was taught as a subject, observed Pinto (2004), it is taught as an academic discipline like any other subject (p. 50). HRE taught as an academic discipline would never lead to the desired objective of activism on the part of the learners. Academic disciplines have a tendency to promote theoretical understanding and lack practical activism, the primary goal of HRE. Ahmad (2000) opined that HRE should be built into the teaching programs of the different disciplines rather than be introduced as a subject of study and research in itself (p. 46). Nayak (2000) stated that HRE should seek for a comprehensive curriculum. Panda (2001) proposes that HR teaching should permeate not only all school subjects but every aspect of school life (p. 94). Though inclusive and integrative opinions about HRE into school education are floating in the intellectual environment sadly it could neither make its way to the corridors of education policy makers nor trigger the imagination of school administrators and teachers.

### **5.19 Delhi Teachers and Human Rights Education**

The inclusion of [HRE] in the school curriculum has meant that the educational system is expected to promote consciousness about [HR] among students. It is naively assumed that such an inclusion would necessarily result in generating an understanding of and sensitivity towards [HR] (Jain, 2004, p. 166).

The sixth class Social Science textbooks have plenty of relevant HR material included in various units. But incorporation of HR curriculum into textbooks does not guarantee that it would yield the desired result. Tiwari (2004) stated that in the field of

[HR] the [HR] perception of teachers/trainers and their commitment to the cause would count more than any well-prepared curriculum or elaborate guidelines (p. 441). To a large extent it is the agency of the teacher that will determine proper implementation and outcome of HRE. Batra (2006) emphatically supported the agency of the teacher as the critical link between teaching learning environment and curriculum. Mirza (2000) says that it is expected that teachers themselves must demonstrate appreciation and understanding of [HR] in their interactions with the students (p. 222). It is true that improper and limited understanding or misunderstanding of HR on the part of the teachers can pose a danger to the successful implementation of HR in school setting. I would like to share a teacher's experience who was the principal of a private school and used to teach sixth class students. She was also involved with the new Social Science textbooks writing project of the NCERT. The example throws light on the importance of teacher's agency for the success of HRE or any subject for that matter.

I was teaching a unit on "Discrimination". There was a part on stereotyping. What I found was an amazing experience for me. There was an activity in that chapter that remained etched on my mind. It was on gender, i. e. boys do this and girls do this, men do this and women do this. Actually a kind of chart was put there in the textbook. In the end, the teacher had to handle that chapter. I had two young girls in my class, twins from a top Central Delhi school who had joined our school. When we were doing this chapter they told me that they had already covered that chapter. I said, "Great! Then you can contribute more to the class. We were talking about occupations and what a person does. This little girl just piped up and said, "I have done this chapter and I have got the list". I asked how you got the list. She said, "The teacher dictated

us. Girls are teachers and boys are doctors”. The whole list was there including domestic chores and cooking. The whole purpose of the lesson was defeated. The child and her whole class whom this teacher had taught had gone back to stereotyping again.

This example shows how teacher can become an obstacle in the way of gender education. The same inference can be drawn for HRE. The Social Science textbooks intend to break the deeply entrenched stereotypes prevalent in Indian society. The textbook writer had worked with clear and honest intentions but the teacher’s lack of understanding or carelessness tended to promote stereotyping. If the teacher’s agency is not working efficiently and cautiously, such incidents are bound to happen again and again.

The following section introduces three teachers who were taken as subjects for the current research. These teachers, into HRE, were observed in their classrooms and interviewed by me. I would like to provide information on their personal backgrounds, values, conviction in certain beliefs, and pedagogic style, skills and principles. The description of the teachers here includes every possible detail about their personal and professional lives because the current research holds that those aspects of their lives which shape their professional skills are important for assessing their performance.

## **5.20 Introducing Sara**

Miss Sara is in her early forties. She has taught for more than fifteen years now. Her father was an Engineer. Her father's transferrable job gave Sara an opportunity to travel to different places in India from time to time. Her father was very strict and believed in a disciplined and austere life especially for students. Her father exercised a great influence on her. Sara admires her father a lot. She considers herself a disciplined person too. 'If you want to achieve something in life, you have to be disciplined.' In case of a debate between her mother and father she always supported her father. Her mother was a teacher. She was an educated woman with a Bachelor Degree in Science and Education. Sara's mother was completely opposite of Sara's father. She believed in giving latitude to her children. Sara has a younger brother who is a Computer Engineer settled in the US. Sara got a masters degree in Economics and a trained Social Science teacher. She is married. Her husband is a Civil Engineer.

### **5.20.1 Why Teaching?**

Teaching was not Sara's first choice. She wanted to become a Civil Servant. It was only after she could not qualify for Civil Services that she decided to become a teacher. On being asked why she decided on teaching and whether she is satisfied with her present profession, She replied:

It was heart breaking when I came to know that I was not selected—though I made it to the interview—and it was my last attempt to appear in the Civil Services Examination. It seemed as if life came to an end. I was disturbed for quite a while. Gradually, I realized that it was not an end but a new beginning. I got full support from my parents especially from

my father. I decided to plan my career afresh. I thought I would become a teacher. As a Civil Servant I wanted to bring change in the society. The closest profession with this objective, in my opinion, is teaching. I sat in the entrance examination for the B. Ed. program and qualified. After completing the teacher-training program, I applied for a teaching post and got selected in the very first attempt. I was appointed in the same school where I used to be a student.<sup>64</sup> I think I am satisfied and happy with my current job, i.e. teaching. It gave me back my confidence and self-respect. It is a challenging job to deal with adolescents and contribute to their development.

Sara explained that she does not regret any longer not becoming a Civil Servant. She likes to take up challenges and believes that ‘our society needs a complete transformation’. She considers teaching a challenging but satisfying profession. The challenge lies in dealing with adolescent children who are developing at a fast pace both physically and cognitively. The adolescents are inquisitive too. Their appetite to know more and more about things and their has to be satisfied instantly. An interesting point made by Sara is that teaching rekindled her confidence in herself and brought her self-respect back. A profession is very rewarding when it becomes a source of confidence and self-respect for an individual.

Sara likes to read and the teaching profession gives her an opportunity to read. She enjoys reading regional literature translated into Bengali, Hindi, or English. Regional

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<sup>64</sup> Miss Zhang’s case is very similar to Sara’s. Zhang was also a student of the same school where she teaches now.

literature is not only entertaining but helps to understand regional cultural practices also. This further helps to deal with students who come from different regions and have their cultural specific habits. Sara observes:

If you know anything about a region's cultural practices and share it with your students, the students who come from that particular region would ask with surprise, 'teacher, how do you know about it?' And, gradually you would experience that these students are coming closer to you. They feel an affinity and identify with you. This makes communication with students easier and effective.

Sara collates it with her travelling experience that provides flesh to the images gathered from literature. With travelling she had developed a hobby of reading regional literature.

I had many opportunities of traveling in India. When you communicate with people of different places, you experience the diversity of India. The sense of being Indian comes when you travel to different places. But when you stick to a particular state or a district you start to feel this is my only home. Outside people are very different. They are not like us. The part I belong to is mine. This feeling of us and them comes when you are not exposed to other places. In my opinion to understand the diversity of India and appreciate it one has to travel. So, reading and traveling enriches my knowledge about the diversity of India and gives me an extra edge to better understand my students.

Geographically, linguistically, and culturally India is an incredibly diverse country. To understand this diversity traveling to different places could be effective. In Sara's case there was an advantage that her father was in a transferable job. It offered her many opportunities. But for those who are not in such a position to travel a lot of things have to be left to imagination. Also to travel for a week or so would not provide a deeper understanding of the place, people, and culture. The knowledge built on short travel programs would rather be touristic in nature. Thus, traveling should take place with a prepared mind to make the experience fuller and productive.

### **5.20.2 Views on HR and HRE**

For Sara, HR are nothing but a matter of common sense. She prefers to perceive HR in concrete form. In her own words:

Violation of HR is a visible act. You do not have to make an extra effort to detect it. It is a matter of common sense. Beggars at the traffic lights, young children working with their parents on construction sites or even road sides, maltreatment of a domestic help, and many more similar examples can be seen if you look around. Many a time we indulge in activities that are clear violations of HR; the way we shout at our maid without giving a thought how she would feel about it? So, we have shut down the door of our common sense and that is why we cannot make out that HR violations are taking place in front of our eyes or sometimes we are a party to it.

To a certain extent Sara is right that knowledge of HR is a matter of common sense. If we apply our common sense there is no dearth of instances of HR violations. One can get many lessons in HR from day to day experiences. To be ignorant about HR violations by no means suggests that HR violations do not take place. Sara next delves on HRE in the following words:

To me HRE is not something that can only be taught in the classrooms. It is an experience which life offers us if daily life is being keenly observed. If students are incapable of feeling anything about child laborers or child beggars of their own age, long discussions on HR within the walls of the classroom are futile. The question is how to establish the relationship between the classroom and the outside world. But what we try to do in our school or classrooms is to cover the course as soon as possible. In reality we are keeping these students away from the practical experiences of life. We do not take students to their immediate natural environment and get first hand experiences pertaining to various phenomena including HR issues.

Common sense is leads to practical wisdom that is attained from life experiences. There are no special courses particularly designed to teach common sense. If understanding of HR issues depends on common sense then it is a matter of concern. There is a large population who has become numb to social inequalities, disparities, and exploitation of downtrodden. They see HR violations but do not feel anything good or bad about them. It is being suggested by Sara to take students out of the classrooms and



let them confront the reality face to face and build their understanding on firsthand experiences.

### **5.20.3 Pedagogy of HRE: Sara's Praxis**

Sara says, "A teacher has to be very patient, tolerant, and reachable to students."

All these qualities in a teacher are required for a quality teaching and to be closer to students. To teach about HR concepts Sara employs project method. She says:

HR are not taught separately, they are part of social studies curriculum. I found project method very useful in teaching HRE. In this students select one topic and do in depth study. Their project is conducted in two stages: first is the collection of data from various sources such as books, magazines, newspapers, internet, and interviews. In the second stage they go to the field to see whether their data match with practical reality. In one of the chapters there was a story of a Rickshaw Puller. After reading that story I encouraged students to know more about Rickshaw Pullers. Students decided to do a project on "Rickshaw Pullers in our area". Children analyzed this theme from HR perspective. The project got extended from local to global when some of them went ahead comparing the local Rickshaw Pullers with their counterparts in Thailand, China, and Vietnam. They collected information from the internet and some of them interviewed their relatives who had been to these places for business or travel. One student used yahoo chat rooms to collect information. He made friends with some Chinese people and collected information about Rickshaw pullers. A Bengali student decided to do a case study on hand pulled rickshaws. She chose a Rickshaw Puller from Kolkata and interviewed him when she went on vacation with her grandparents. The students also compared various types of rickshaws, such as hand pulled, environment friendly, and studied new

innovations introduced in paddled machines by Delhi University's students and NGOs. It turned out to be a grand project and all of us learnt about the miserable conditions of Indian rickshaw pullers and their machines. The condition of Indian Rickshaw Pullers is worst than their counterparts elsewhere in the world. It was time consuming but provided a fuller picture and understanding of the problem.

The project carried out by Sara's students had interesting trajectory and findings. They employed interesting methods for data collection. They used Yahoo Chat rooms and people who had been to China or other parts of Asia as sources to get information about Rickshaw Pullers. The process involved in Project method is full of new learning experiences. Discovery of new facts gives students a sense of achievement. The most important thing is that after completing the project they become the authority on the subject. They spoke like experts because they also got firsthand experiences during the project which provided a strong foundation to their theoretical knowledge. Comparison put facts into a wider perspective. The students saw the same problem from a different perspective. They realized that the current status of Rickshaw Pullers is by no means a right thing when elsewhere changes and reforms have been introduced to improve their conditions. In Sara's words, 'during this process students become more sensitive and tried to handle these issues more carefully.'

#### 5.20.4 Sara with Students

Sara has a class of forty five students. She is friendly with her students but at the same time her students are very well acquainted with her dislike for indiscipline. Sara's class follow decorum i.e. self devised and self imposed. Sara says:

There are many adjacent classes where teaching is going on. We should not disturb them. I know when we discover something the level of excitement is very high and it is not easy for adolescents to control their emotions. But it is equally important to learn how to control one's emotions. It is important to express one's feelings, thoughts, and opinions and at the same time it is imperative to listen to others. So, in our class we practice self-control and follow self-formulated rules. Otherwise the class of forty five students could easily turn into a chaotic place.

During the classroom observation it was often noticed that many students who were loud or noisy immediately restrained themselves when they were warned by their classmates. Interestingly, it was girls who were reminding the boys that they were not following the decorum of the class. A big white chart of do's and don'ts was hanging next to the blackboard. These rules were drawn by the students and they vowed to follow them sincerely. Sara says:

There are some students who are submissive and introvert. If you do not give them an opportunity they would never get to speak or participate in the discussion. These rules help in striking a fine balance where every student shy or extrovert has an opportunity to participate in classroom discussions.

In a class of forty-five students it is a difficult task for a teacher to give opportunity to every student to participate or express opinion and at the same time keep in mind that the classes next-door do not get disturbed. To make a list of do's and don'ts and follow them sincerely is a welcome solution. It was apparent that children were serious about the rules. The reason for this was the rules being drawn by them. When an outside authority imposes the rules there might be a tendency to reject or disobey. But in the case of self-formulated and self imposed rules students are more inclined to follow them.

#### **5.20.5 Pedagogy of HRE: Problems and Challenges**

Sara thinks that as adolescents students become individualistic and face difficulties in socializing with each other. They usually have small groups and these groups fight with each other. They complain about each other on a regular basis. These things distract the whole class and tend to waste time. So, there are two issues: first to help students in socializing with each other, and second to break down the strong sense of groupism. These two developments are extreme in nature and an indicative of hardbound habits. Sara is trying to find solutions but the size of the class is making it difficult for her to establish a harmonious environment. Sara has taken up an initiative in which she makes new groups out of old groups and these new groups have to work together. Though there are complaints of non-cooperation but regardless of that they are made to

work together. Sara says, ‘this situation is not ideal because it compels them to cooperate but I am testing it and its continuation would depend on the results.’

Sara is not happy with Indian media (Television, Films and Video Games). She blames the media for inducing violence, rudeness, greed for material things, and anxiety among youngsters. She says, ‘they show such attitudes and tendencies in the school. They would imitate fight sequence of a famous actor or use indecent or inappropriate language for the sake of fun in school. In the past while involved in such activities some students have got hurt. Students learnt to smoke while emulating film characters’.

It has been felt by both scholars and common people that the media is not playing its due role. The portrayal of various things and issues in the media is far from reality. The adolescents are vulnerable when it comes to fantasy. If not guided properly they might start considering fantasy as reality. This would be a very precarious situation and adversely affect their overall development. It is a matter of great concern how to make media responsible and accountable as well as how to train the young generation the difference between right and wrong.

### **5.21 Introducing Sheila**

Sheela is fifty four years old. She is a bachelor in History and Political Science. She is a trained Social Science teacher. Her father was in government service and her mother a homemaker. Her parents supported her in all her decisions. They never imposed their will on her. She had the freedom to choose and decide on any aspect of her life

whether personal or professional. She has two daughters. She is in education for twenty-five years. Her husband died in a road accident twenty years ago. She had to take care of her daughters as a single parent. Sheela recalls:

After my husband's death initially everybody was very helpful but after a few months people started avoiding us. We became a liability even on my brothers and sisters. I had realized that I would have to bear the responsibilities on my own. To live with two daughters without a male member in the family is difficult in Indian society. People can really be mean and cruel to you. You have to be very cautious in judging people and their intentions.

The life of a single woman and mother of two is no doubt very difficult particularly in a patriarchal society like India. It is a sad state of affairs as far as gender equality is concerned. Sheela's sufferings were heightened by her gender. There was no respite. She had to put extra efforts to deal with unnecessary disruptions caused by her being a woman.

### **5.21.1 Why Teaching?**

For Sheela to become a teacher was a dream come true. She thinks it is a profession that suits her personality the most. It was not imposed on her but chosen. She says:

To me, everyday in education is a challenge. It is also the most satisfying experience. It's made me grow every day in my life having been with the students in schools, which I

chose to do. It has added multiple dimensions. I learn more from being with children.

Teaching is indeed a challenging profession. Sheela has an appetite for learning and everyday teaching gives her a new opportunity to learn, discover and explore. The children's curiosity permeates the teacher's persona. But that is only when she is willing to learn. Sheela enjoys her teaching and feels that she is filled with energy that flows out of her in abundance.

#### **5.21.2 Position on HR and HRE**

Sheela perceives HR in linguistic terms. The nature of a language used in a society is indicative of whether HR are being respected and practiced or not. She says:

HR are nothing but a language: the way language is spoken, the way people talk. There is always a hint of violation. It exists in the psyche of the society. They don't even realize what they say. There are a lot of rights that are not recognized in the Indian social context. Right to privacy is a democratic right. It's a right in modern democracies. But it's not a part of our social milieu. When you explore the Indian context it doesn't have the concept of HR. You have the concept of duties.

Language is a socio-cultural construct. It reflects the thinking of a society. The language used in communication (formal, informal), literature, textbooks, and other mediums has examples that are in clear violation of HR. This status of HR is due to a

superficial process of democratization. The democratic set up has been imposed from above. At the grassroots level undemocratic practices can still be seen. The impact of this precarious development is that Indian society is primarily undemocratic in nature and rests on duties and not on rights. As Sheela mentioned some HR such as right to privacy are not even considered right at all let alone HR. How can the Indian society reach the stage where HR are accepted, respected and integrated into the psyche of the people?

Sheela opined the solution lies in educating our future generation in HR. It is utmost important to train them to speak an HR language. They must know how to react and condemn anti-HR language. According to her:

We women and Children do accept all kinds of humiliations, and violation of our rights. It takes a very long time to break away from our inhibitions. We do not have guts to say that I don't accept this. I am sorry but this is not acceptable to me. This is hurting me. And that is what I try to tell my students very often that when you get hurt you must speak up. We do not take out whatever we feel.

The most vulnerable section of the Indian society is women and children. They suffer the most when there is a calamity, crisis or an adverse situation. They are suppressed for ages and they have forgotten how to react or how to stop the vicious acts of victimization. Sheela shares her classroom experience:

You don't get a chance to express. Till you communicate, you don't get clarity I have discovered in life. And I think it's important. Yes, personal experiences of my students are



shared with me. One or two incidents are very frightening to me about what happened in their lives. I see them lead a normal life and sit in my class having been abused at home, physically and mentally. And I was told by some of my students that what happened with so and so. I came to know about it when those students are passed out. At that time I couldn't correct it what they have gone through. I am not capable of correcting but still child should have some feeling of support that I was there to empathize with them. Somebody was there to support. But in our society you don't speak up. So, you live with your trauma.

This is a harsh reality that victims out of societal or any other compulsion or pressure choose not to speak about the injuries inflicted upon them by others. They keep their grudges to themselves and never communicate to others. This interferes with the process of natural development. To live with trauma could be the most inhuman and brutal experience for an individual and for an innocent young child. For a teacher like Sheela it was very sad and depressing to know that one of her students was being abused repeatedly and she could not help her/him. The saddest part of the story is that the perpetrators were none other than the child's parents. It is urgent to take notice of severity of the situation and act upon it. Sheela further reflects:

Once you start communicating your feelings and come out, you are respected. You have been continuously victimized or at least being pushed on. There are some kinds of denial taking place. For example, when you face bullying you don't know how to cope with it. If you don't express, you cry you go back to your shell. But what has happened that you did not express your need. And it's because when we are young we

are not being taught how to express oneself. Today I see the logic of it but if I were a child I wouldn't be able to handle it. so that the child would have freedom to think and freedom to express and not to be pushed on ever in society. But that's what happens to most people. You always have somebody else who is controlling. So, you are not in control of yourself.

It is quite clear that Indian children are not taught to speak about their problems or abuses and exploitations faced by relatives or classmates. It is because their self is controlled and gets directions from outside. It does not mean that they have no feelings or consciousness. They certainly do feel but they never get a chance or deliberately not given an opportunity to express themselves.

### **5.21.3 Pedagogy of HRE: Sheela's Praxis**

A teacher leaves a long lasting impact on pupils. The teacher's code of conduct plays a major role in shaping many ideas of students. Sheela keeps this in her mind and makes an integral component of her pedagogic praxis. Sheela:

What happens in classroom is that you make a passing statement and you never know the impact it has on a child. For example, if a student says or does something a teacher does not consider appropriate she slaps or rebukes or criticizes or humiliates the student, that teacher may not realize what she has done. The damage she has done to that child consists in stopping the child's expression of opinion. The child feels violated totally. A very narrow approach has been shown of understanding education. I can name many things that may have gone wrong in a particular incident. I am also sure that the teacher can't even recollect that incident.

And obviously the child is never going to forget that. I think the role of a teacher and her practices are exceedingly important.

A teacher has to understand that what she does in a classroom can be forgotten by her but her the action can leave an imprint on the child's psyche. They are not going to forget and would build an image of a teacher on the basis of her actions, statements, opinions and other practices. Sheela believes that attitudes cannot be created. A teacher has to transform her attitude and this would determine the positive relationship between the teacher and her students.

There is an ongoing debate over how to dilute the abstractness of HR so that young children can easily understand it. For Sheela it is HR perspective which shapes her pedagogic creed and a solution to this abstract nature of HR. She says:

For junior school children the concepts of HR could be a bit abstract. It is necessary to give these concepts a concrete form. This can be done by associating it with their daily life and also by using audio-visual aids. If the topic is child labor you can ask them whether they have seen young kids working as domestic help in a family. There can be found lots of pictures and videos on the harsh life of child laborers. These can be shown to them. It would certainly leave an instant impact on them and they would be able to correlate it with the law against child labor.

To know all laws that protect HR by heart is one thing and see the correlation with the daily life is another. Until there is a deliberate effort from the teacher's side to establish the relationship between the theoretical framework of HR and HR violation happening around the child's life the content teaching of HR is futile.

Sheela considers case study method as most appropriate to transmit HRE. Case studies are based on real life experiences that offer a picture of what goes on in peoples' lives. It has potentials to move the students' inner self to do something concrete to improve social conditions and contribute towards social transformation. Sheela throws further light on it:

There is no doubt that case studies produce an impact. There is no dearth of case studies in India or elsewhere. We have studied many cases: the big ones are Narmada Dam and displacement it caused, Bhopal Gas tragedy and its impact, Hiroshima and Nagasaki after the bombing; and also case studies of domestic violence, female feticide, child trafficking and child labor. Let's not expect them to go to the point where they criticize it or analyze it. It is sufficient to know in the beginning whether the child has understood it or not. But the child is exposed to it. Tomorrow she/he may find the correlation with life. Their perspective as a student must have been very different. But these case studies provide a foundation which can be used for further building over in the classroom.

The case studies provide a blow-by-blow account of how HR are being violated in a democratic country like India. Sheela states that for young children it could be difficult

to comprehend the intricacies of case studies but at least they are exposed to the real world. She puts a lot of emphasis on exposure. It is the very first stage in initiation of HRE. Exposure to the world of HR is the key which would determine the direction and ensure the success of it.

#### **5.21.4 Sheela's Students**

Students come first in Sheela's priority list. They are a constant source of learning as well liveliness. She places her students in the category of educators because they have their own perspectives on various issues which could be new and can be far exceeding with adult's viewpoint. She says:

Children I believe are the same everywhere. It depends upon what exposures or experiences they are getting in their lives. Environment plays a major role, particularly the experiences of school life. Children are more rational than adults. Children are open to understanding, accepting and also logically accepting. They are not blindly accepting anything.

Sheela belongs to nurture school where environment, culture, and social upbringing are the major factors that determine physical, cognitive, emotional development, and the worldview of children. It is true that children are rational beings and capable of employing logics of their own. If they find something illogical with their understanding they are ready to change and accept the other interpretation. Unlike adults, children are far more receptive to new ideas and quick in updating the old ones. And,

these characteristics of children are not culture or country specific. Children are alike all over the world. It is the socio-economic, cultural, political circumstances that place children on different pathways and mold them accordingly.

Students are never a problem. It is the teacher who has drawn a conclusion that they have some problems. Teachers say, 'we have given up, we tried everything, every method, we were willing to do everything but do not get response from students.' We have mind sets. We go to the classroom with our mind sets. If you leave your baggage at the door and then walk into the classroom it would be better for you and your students. If you try it, you know it's a huge load that I believe in this and I believe in that, I will not accept this. I mean leave that and accept everything. You would feel more relaxed and so would your students. This openness of yours is going to give you a whole lot of new ideas.

Sheela rightly points out that it is not students who have problems but the teachers who could not understand them. Teachers like any other professionals carry their belief, values, opinions, and stereotypes into the classroom. They do not realize that this baggage interferes and sometimes guides their pedagogic practices. When things do not work according to this baggage they get disturbed and annoyed. And then they release their frustration on students by blaming them of not doing anything and in extreme cases term them problem children. It is a good suggestion that they should shed this baggage off and then enter into the classroom. In this new Avatar they would be in a better position to understand the so called "problem children" because now they are more receptive, open, and amenable to students.

### 5.21.5 Pedagogy of HRE: Problems and Challenges

The greatest problem in the way of HRE is lack of infrastructure. The government schools are not equipped with even basic amenities such as desks, charts, globes, electricity, and hygienic toilets let alone high tech gadgets. Sheela recalls:

When I announced the screening of a movie called the Diary of Anne Frank the whole class was excited because it was the first time they were going to watch a movie in the school. I brought the CD and gave it to the assistant to set up everything. I was shocked to know that there was a projector that was never used and the assistant had problems setting it up. The remote was also missing. The result was that we could not screen the movie and I had to postpone the date. It was so depressing to see the children's disappointed faces. I took down all the details of the projector and learnt how to use it. I also bought a remote. Finally, we managed to watch the movie. It is not the only example and many more could be cited. Sometimes there are no equipments, and if the equipments are available either some part is missing or not working.

It is right that government schools in India are always short of hardware and software facilities. Teachers who are curious to make their teaching interesting can easily lose interest due to a glitch. In such a scenario, it is the student community that suffers. It is their right to have all these facilities in the school. If seen from HR perspective their Right to Education is being violated by the lack of basic amenities.

A big challenge for pedagogy of HRE in India is how to make it an integral part of social milieu. Sheela is worried about the trend in HRE i.e. to teach it as a subject or content like any other subject where facts and figures are memorized and the story ends there. She says:

There are plenty of themes and issues which can be taught from the perspective of HR. There is curriculum which can be matched to the declaration of HR. But it is content that is being taught in schools. HRE is a part and parcel of all subjects taught in the classroom. One can correlate HR issues to newspaper items as well. Correlation will make the understanding of that concept clearer. Simply teaching it as a text will not happen. It's up to the teacher to just pick it off. When you start teaching a lesson, you can't teach everything from HR perspective. But there is a lot about which you can sensitize the children through the lesson not simply treating that as literary text. Unfortunately many teachers are not practicing it and that is why HRE is not yielding positive results on a large scale.

The dilemma of teaching HRE content or teach every subject from a HR perspective is being faced by many educational system all over the world. Sheela is correct that teaching HRE as content teaching had not delivered any significant results in the context of India. It is a widely practiced methodology of teaching HR in India. This type of pedagogical practice poses a big problem in the way of creating a culture of HR.



## 5.22 Introducing Maya

Miss Maya is a single woman in her early thirties. She is teaching for almost ten years. After graduating from senior secondary school, she did Bachelor of Elementary Education program. She is the first person to graduate in her family. She has also done an M.A. in Political Science through distant learning. Her father is a farmer and mother is a homemaker and helps her husband in his agricultural work. Her father had some education but the mother is illiterate. They are five brothers and sisters. Maya is the eldest. After completing the teacher education program, she began to teach in a private school and within a year she got permanent position in a government school. She recalls her early days:

It was a very hard life. My siblings and I had to work in the field with my parents and attend school. Sometimes I had to take leave from the school to work in the field especially during the harvest. There was no one who could help me with my homework as my parents were not educated. I had to study on my own. There were frequent power cuts and we had to study in the paraffin oil lamp. The village school did not have enough teachers so sometimes seniors doubled as teachers. And when we became seniors, we played the same role. I still remember those traumatic days of my secondary school. In our secondary school, there was no mathematics teacher for the whole academic year. There was no tutor in the village. For that one had to go to the town and my father would never allow. I had realized it in my early years of schooling that I would have to study on my own and that was the only way to end the problems once and for all. I wanted a dignified life. It does not mean that I looked down upon my

parents' occupation. I wanted to do better and improve our living standard.

Unlike other teachers in the present study, Maya's life story is full of difficulties and hardships. She had to struggle at every level. Maya literally burnt midnight oil. Despite all these adversities ranging from lack of resources to familial support she did not let anything disturb her. She conquered all her obstacles and finally achieved what she dreamt of. Maya believes that education empowers the downtrodden. In her own case, it was through education that she could change the harsh realities of her life. She says, "Education enables an individual to lead a dignified life". It would not be an exaggeration to say that education helps people realize what dignified life means and how to strive for it.

#### **5.22.1 Teacher at Eleven**

Maya started teaching when she was eleven and in the fifth class. She had to teach fourth-class students because of shortage of teachers in the school.<sup>65</sup> She recalls:

It is always a very nice and special feeling to teach. To teach students of your own school is an amazing experience. To teach my juniors was a very fulfilling experience. The experience encouraged me to think seriously about choosing

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<sup>65</sup> This is a common situation in village schools where there is always a shortage of teachers and those who are appointed want to be transferred to a place nearer home. To deal with this situation the concept of Para-teacher came into existence. In Para-teaching local people are hired to teach. A shortcoming of this practice is that Para-teachers are not well qualified. Thus, teachers have been arranged at the cost of quality of education.

teaching as a profession. With every passing day, my desire to become a teacher got strengthened. And when I got admission in a four-year elementary education teacher-training program, the feeling further deepened that I took the right decision. The course not only trained me as a teacher but also groomed me as a person from the very beginning. I was introduced to many subjects including psychology, educational philosophy, educational theories and administration, linguistics and so on and so forth. I learnt about almost every subject. It was only in the teaching training program that I developed an interest in reading all kinds of literature. One of such readings was Gijubhai's Divaswapn that has left a long lasting impact on me as a teacher.<sup>66</sup>

We all in our childhood dreamt or asked about what we would like to become in future. In the case of Maya, it was her experience as a child teacher that led her to dream to become a teacher. And this dream got flesh and blood in the teacher education program.

Maya also developed an understanding of teaching profession during her teaching years. She reflected on it as follows:

Teaching is a profession that comes with the greatest responsibility. Unlike other professionals, teachers are required to invest more in their teaching endeavor in terms of time, efforts and emotions. Teachers have responsibility towards the whole society. If something goes wrong with the new generation, it is the teaching community that is going to

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<sup>66</sup> Divaswapn means day dream. It is a fictitious novel narrating a story of a teacher who is going to teach for the first time. It deals with internal anxieties and problems while teaching. The protagonist finally conquered all obstacles and got appreciation from the administration.

be blamed first. There are plenty of occasions when a child does not behave in the manner she is supposed to she is rebuked and asked: is that what your teacher taught you or is that what you have learnt in the school. So, it is ultimately the teacher and the school that are blamed for every fault of a child. If you look at this issue on a large scale, the education system as a whole including teacher is held responsible for all kinds of issues and problems even at the national level. I am not idealizing the role of a teacher. Certainly there are other crucial factors that are responsible for the child's behavior or current national situation. By being responsible I mean to perform our duties honestly and then only we can rebut the blames imposed on us. If we are not doing our job seriously we are proving valid the criticism leveled against us. That is why I think teaching requires utmost accountability.

Maya has rightly observed the politics of blame game. Whenever anything goes wrong with the nation or economy or polity, politicians or administrators search for scapegoats to get rid of their responsibility. The least powerful institution is education that makes it vulnerable and a soft target.

Maya pointed out another critical feature of the teaching profession i.e. the need to gather knowledge about specific as well as general issues prevalent in contemporary society.

I found teaching, especially elementary education, the most challenging profession. One cannot read the minds of young children. They can shoot at you any type of question or query any time. And believe me they are capable of defending their position and prove that the query is quite relevant. With the rapid development in information technology, students are

far more active and inquisitive. And that is why you have to keep yourself updated and one-step ahead of them so that you can satisfy their inquisitive mind. The update is necessary not only for students but also for teachers. As I mentioned earlier I had developed the habit of reading while I was in teacher education program. If I stopped reading about what was happening in my field or in general I felt outdated, lost and left behind. Reading keeps me going and it is courtesy teaching.

Every field requires reading for latest updates. But most reading is restricted to a particular subject in which a specialist would have to keep an eye on the literature pertaining to her/his area of research. For a teacher there is no end to this list because students can pose questions from any field be it computers, technology, science, Social Science, arts, films or any other subject or theme. It is quite challenging. And it is not easy to take this challenge. Not many teachers consider it at all. If a survey is conducted in India, there would not be many teachers who kept themselves up to date with the latest readings. The culture of reading is somehow missing in the teaching community. Maya also agrees with it. She says, “My colleagues complain that you are always reading while sitting in the staff room.” So, the culture of reading is fading there is a tendency to discourage those who read.

### 5.22.2 Perspective on HR and HRE

Maya opined that HR are fundamental for an individual to lead a respectful life. As human beings, we all deserve them. Any denial of HR to any individual is a crime. She delves into HR as follows:

I have seen my rights as a child and as a girl child getting violated time and again. I was only eight or nine when I had started working in the fields with my parents. I still have fresh memories of every incident as if it had happened yesterday. It used to be May/June when we all plucked or gathered melons from the field. We had never been anywhere in summer holidays. We spent them all in the fields. After working in the fields, we were left with no energy to do anything but sleep. But I could not afford that luxury because I had to help my mother with evening meals and later finish holidays' homework amid persistent power cuts. I was a girl that is why my father did not send me to the town for mathematics tuition. Why I say this because later my brothers were allowed to go to towns. It is not a unique story. If you go to a village, every household would have a similar story to tell.

Maya is right that child's rights are being violated on a daily basis in rural India.<sup>67</sup> Agricultural household structure sucks the child into its unending labor requirements. It utilizes child labor at various levels and degrees depending on the capacity and capability of a child. A girl child has to perform various duties ranging from household work to taking care of siblings to work in the fields. Often she has to take leave from the school

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<sup>67</sup> It does not mean that urban scenario is free from allegations of infringement of child's rights.

so that she can fulfill her mundane responsibilities. After contributing so much to the household welfare and economy, on the pretext of her being the girl child she is not allowed to go outside of the village to study. Maya sees her childhood experiences from HR perspective and says:

HR violations have become an integral part of middle and lower class families. It has become a structural problem. Caste and patriarchal practices in India and racism in America or elsewhere are explicit examples of violation of HR. To address a structural problem requires an overhauling. To my mind it is education particularly HRE that can bring about a complete transformation at the structural level. To change societal structure is to change the mindset of the people. How could you do it except by doing something concrete in education at the elementary level? This is the stage when young minds are molding. Introduce them to the world of HRE and encourage and guide them to employ HR as a vantage point to analyze explore issues and concepts of caste, inequality, discrimination, patriarchy, gender stereotyping so on and so forth.

Maya made a valid observation that in India and elsewhere, HR related problems are structural in nature. The treatment of structural problems—such as HR violations in the form of caste based discrimination or child labor—in a superficial manner would not yield any effective result. It needs complete transformation. These inhuman structures would have to be questioned and critically examined from the HR perspective and then eradicated. This has to be done at an early stage of life of children when their conceptual understanding about various social phenomena is in the process of making. The

development of social concepts must be infused with HR perspective. Maya feels that it is HRE that can bring much required social revolution in India if implemented and practiced honestly and whole-heartedly both individually and collectively.

### **5.22.3 Pedagogy of HRE: Praxis**

Pedagogy can have different meanings in different contexts for different individuals. This section would delve on Maya's principles, values and perception of teaching of HRE? What kind of teaching methodologies she applies in her classroom? How she deals with textbooks and HRE curriculum? While talking about the theory of pedagogy of HRE Maya highlighted the concept of justice and fairness:

To be just and fair with one's profession, students, and colleagues is the most important prerequisite for attaining success and satisfaction. It is also the key to harmonious relationships with students and colleagues. It is not a mere principle to talk about ideally. It has to be a part and parcel of your thinking and acts. For example when a teacher is assessing the performance of her class in a project given by her, it becomes essential for her to be fair to all students. She has to study the project thoroughly instead of superficially going through it. I have seen teachers who give more importance to exteriors. They do not read it word-by-word but merely focus on introduction, sub headings and conclusion. It gives a message to students that it is appearance that matters not the quality of the project. They would think that high scores could be obtained through shiny and colorful covers. This unjust and unfair attitude on the part of the teachers discourages students to believe in the concept of justice and fairness.



Justice and fairness are the two laws or standards that are often required to be used while taking decisions in teaching or other professions. If these two principles are ignored or overlooked, a decision cannot be considered correct and lead to grievances, conflicts and contentions on the part of those who suffer from the decision. In the case of children it could be more damaging because after working so hard it was not them who got good grades or praise from the teacher but those who packaged the project well. It is the formative period when the seeds of such concepts are in the process of being sown among children. They are taught about these concepts and their importance for smooth functioning of various socio-economic and political institutions including school. While in their immediate environment, i.e. classroom, the picture is opposite there are instances where unjust and unfair practices are prevalent either in behavior or evaluation. It is likely that children would get the feeling of injustice and unfair treatment in the classroom when an evaluation on the basis of appearance of the final product is done. In many cases appearance could be deceptive. These concepts are integrally related to HR and practice of them is an inalienable part of implementation of HRE. Maya's belief in practicing justice and fairness in the classroom situations is a constituent of her pedagogy.

Apart from application of just and fair attitude and practices, Maya does believe that HRE should be taught in a context. HRE can be made meaningful through a context that is familiar to young children. She says:

To make out meaning from a familiar situation is easier than an unfamiliar one. While talking about children's rights, the issue of child labor can be introduced in the context of

Sivakashi where young children are involved in firecracker industry or Firozabad glass bangle industry where too cheap child labor on massive scale is being used. This is not only an issue of employing child labor but a health issue too. It is extremely hazardous to the health of the children who are working there. The two examples can very well provide a meaningful context to teach children's HR including right to education. A step further is the practical part. While taking up the issue of child labor, the teacher and the class can take initiative in some ways to stop or at least scale down these inhuman activities. They can pledge not to use glass bangles and fire crackers - produced by child workers - on festivals such as Diwali [festival of lights] or on other occasions. Another dimension can be added to this context by treating firecrackers as agents of environmental pollution. I found this practice of using familiar situations for teaching HR far more effective.

Maya's effort to contextualize HRE is an effective praxis. It is indispensable to ignore existing HR examples, issues and violations in teaching HRE. If they were left out, HRE would become a theoretical preaching or moral education. The contextualization of HRE covers the third stage of it where educators and learners become activists who first bring about changes at a personal level and look forward to changing the world outside. It does not take much on teachers' part to incorporate contexts such as Sivakashi or Firozabad. There are many similar examples that can ignite the inner HR activist in children.

### **5.22.3 Teacher Student Relationship**

Teacher student relationship is an inalienable part of HRE praxis. This relationship, to a certain extent, determines the direction and impact of HRE. This section shows how Maya interacts with her students within the classroom and outside of it? Maya has established a very close relationship with her students. This closeness is clearly visible in interactions with students. Maya believes that this close relationship is a result of her respect for children.

My personal experience is that students are intellectuals too. They can see the correlation between theory and practice. They are capable of understanding the discrepancy between what teachers say and practice. They judge their teacher's behavior on the basis of the same principles taught to them, for instance fairness, equality, and justice. This quality of students to think according to a set of principles makes them almost equal to adults especially in terms of thinking. Like any other thinking creature, children also expect to be respected by adults. I follow this rule by heart. I respect them as an intellectual.

We discussed in detail that she meant by respecting children as intellectuals: respecting children's ideas, opinions, and positions on certain issues they are able to defend and justify. To respect children's point of view is a core component of HRE. The respect shown towards children's independent thinking would play a catalyst. It will encourage children to take independent and justifiable stance on HR and other issues. An important aspect of independent thinking is to be able to defend one's position. It leads towards responsible thinking because every opinion or decision has to be justified.

Maya says the ability to justify one's position comes with discussion. That is why she gives a lot of importance to discussion in the classroom. During the discussion students' viewpoints are contested by each other. It provides with an opportunity to think differently as well as deeply. An excerpt from one of the classroom observations would throw light on the nature of discussion in Maya's classroom. A theme under discussion was inequality and discrimination from the chapter "Diversity and Discrimination". The class had just finished reading Dr. Bhimrao Ambedkar's first experience of caste-based discrimination when he was ten year old and in 1901.<sup>68</sup> He was almost of the same age as the students of this class. Maya asked her students to put themselves into Ambedkar's shoes. Some students expressed shock on this incident and said this happened way back in 1901 and it cannot happen now. One student disagreed and shared an experience of her

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<sup>68</sup> Dr. Bhimrao Ambedkar was from a low caste called Mahar which was considered untouchable. He was the first person from his caste to complete graduation. He fought for the rights of the lower castes. The story goes like this: *Long did we wait, but no one turned up. An hour elapsed and the station-master came to enquire. He asked us for our tickets. We showed them to him. He asked us why we tarried. We told him that we were bound for Koregaon and that we were waiting for father or his servant to come, but that neither had turned up and that we did not know how to reach Koregaon. We were well-dressed children. From our dress or talk no one could make out that we were children of the untouchables. Indeed the station-master was quite sure we were Brahmin children and was extremely touched at the plight in which he found us. As is usual among the Hindus, the stationmaster asked us who we were. Without a moment's thought I blurted out that we were Mahars. (Mahar is one of the communities which were treated as untouchables in the Bombay Presidency) He was stunned. His face underwent a sudden change. We could see that he was overpowered by a strange gelling of repulsion. As soon as he heard my reply, he went away to his room and we stood where we were. Fifteen to twenty minutes elapsed; the sun was almost setting. Our father had not turned up nor had he sent his servant, and now the stationmaster had also left us. We were quite bewildered, and the joy and happiness, which we felt at beginning of the journey, gave way to a feeling of extreme sadness. After half an hour the stationmaster returned and asked us what we proposed to do. We said that if we could get a bullock-cart on hire we would go to Koregaon, and if it was not very far we would like to start straightway. There were many bullock-carts plying for hire. But my reply to the station master that we were Mahars had gone round among the cart men and not one of them was prepared to suffer being polluted and to demean himself carrying passengers of the untouchable classes. We were prepared to pay double the fare but we found that money did not work. The stationmaster, who was negotiating on our behalf, stood silent, not knowing what to do* (Social and Political Life-I, 2007, pp. 19-20).

own. She said, ‘the lady who cleans our bathroom is not allowed to enter the kitchen. The maid removes the garbage bag from the kitchen to the main door. Sometimes the cleaning lady comes with her daughter who does not come inside and stands at the main door of the house.’ Maya intervened and asked who asked the cleaning lady not to enter the kitchen. The student replied, ‘my grandmother’. Why? ‘Because she thinks by entering, the cleaning lady would contaminate the kitchen’. Another student added to the experience. He told that when in summer his family goes back to the village for holidays they are not allowed to play with the kids of Chamars (a community of untouchables doing leather work). This shared experience supports the fact that untouchability is still practiced in urban and rural areas in one way or the other.

A consensus was developing among the students that untouchability is not a thing of the past. It is very much present in our society in different forms and magnitude. The second part of discussion was from the perspective of child’s right. Students were delving on children of lower castes and their rights. They were recognizing that the way upper castes people treat these children is violation of their rights as children. A student raised an interesting point. She said, ‘it is our right to play with anyone but we cannot play with some children because our parents do not permit’. At this point Maya interceded and encouraged students to see this issue from the perspective of their own rights.

The discussion got intense and Maya calmed down students and encouraged them to think on other possible aspects. Children had raised questions such as why untouchability was still in practice, who benefited most from it, and how could this status

quo be changed. It was apparent that children were trying to understand why a community of children has been deprived of their basic rights. The question of social justice needs a rigorous intellectual scrutiny from the time it is raised. The textbooks are providing opportunities and the teachers have to grab them at once.

The way class was involved in the discussion on untouchability was an intense intellectual activity. The realization or the discovery by Maya of the fact that children are intellectuals and should be treated as such seems to be of vital importance for developing the skills that are necessary for the success of HRE.

#### **5.22.4 Pedagogy of HRE: Problems and Challenges**

Maya says that theoretically HRE exists in our society but in reality it is completely missing from daily life. A similar situation exists in schools where HRE is dealt in theory but nobody is bothered about application part of it.

#### **5.22.5 HRE: Lack of Integrated Approach**

Maya feels that if HRE is integrated into school curriculum it would yield rich results. In the current educational system it is primarily a part of civics and history textbooks. It does not mean that there is no HR content in other subjects. There are themes that are directly related to HR in science. For example, in the science textbook there is a chapter on food and nutrition. These two issues are much discussed these days. There is scope for issues such as food rights and malnutrition to be raised and discussed in this chapter without any extra effort. The sad part of the story is the treatment of the

chapter. It is treated purely from the perspective of science. Not even a passing reference is made on how they are related to HR issues. She says, ‘There are many themes that could be taught from the HR perspective but due to the lack of integrated approach we miss many golden opportunities to implement HRE’. Maya has a point that an integrated approach should be applied while teaching HR. Approach plays a key role in teaching HR. The content of HR is important but the approach to translate it is more significant. It is the approach that will ensure the spread of HRE both horizontally and vertically across subjects.

#### **5.22.6 Nil or Insufficient Training in HRE**

For teachers, there is very little or no training in HRE in India. Maya got two weeks in-service training in HR, environment, and computer education. She found it not very significant because the lectures on HRE were full of theoretical material on UDHR and International Covenants and other themes of environment and computer education. There was practically nothing on how to apply HR concepts and legal provisions into the school curriculum. She suggests that training and workshops should be held on a regular basis:

In our teacher education program there was no provision for HRE. Though there were concepts and approaches that work from the perspective of HR and to a great extent inculcate a pro HR ideology among teacher-students. It is necessary that both at the teacher education program as well as in-service stage there should be provision for training in HRE.

Maya has made a valid suggestion. As far as training in HRE for teachers' is concerned it is very meager. There is not a single attempt where training in HRE is organized on a large scale and sustainable basis. There are sporadic endeavors that gather pace when HRE is discussed at international levels. It is a matter of worry that teacher education programs are minus HRE and in-service trainings have only a few instances of it.

#### **5.22.7 Discouraging Collegial Environment**

Cordial, harmonious, and encouraging collegial environment at school has a positive impact on the quality of teaching. Maya shared her experience when she just joined the school:

I was very excited when I joined this school. I had many plans and I was very enthusiastic to put in all my knowledge and skills and, make all possible efforts to render my teaching effective. My passion towards teaching was visible to the school staff. I was trying to be involved in all activities ranging from prayer to cultural activities and competitions. One day the senior most teacher came to me and said, 'don't you think you are unnecessarily tiring yourself? What would you get out of it? It is not going to last very long'. There were others too who had similar feelings but could not express. They started ignoring me and did some, I would say, silly things to discourage me. It was clear that they were not happy with my impassioned attitude towards my profession. I decided to keep a low profile. So, whatever I do in my classroom I do not share it with my colleagues. I have one or two colleagues with whom I am in good terms. But they are men, so I cannot have open and regular discussions with



them. This is the decorum of the school that female and male staffs have very formal relations.

For a newly appointed young and relatively less experienced teacher it is a matter of concern that her colleagues are supportive and compassionate. There is a significant amount of time that a teacher spends with her colleagues. Maya's colleagues tried to dispirit and demoralize her. The unfriendly and obtrusive collegial environment certainly impinged upon the development of a budding teacher. The teacher has to face challenges from new teaching assignments as well as from the attitude of the colleagues.

Another noteworthy point is gender segregation at the school where Maya teaches. There are no written rules that male and female staff cannot communicate with each other. But segregation is practiced without giving it a thought. This situation is not peculiar to this school it is the case with all government schools in Delhi. There are no common staff rooms for teachers. They sit separately. Segregation on the basis of gender endorses traditional gender stereotypes. It might lead children to think that male and female teachers are different and it is not appropriate for them to converse normally. The only form of conversation that takes place between them is about examination or admission. This gender segregation at teachers' level might have reached the level of students too. It seems that segregation presents itself as an ideal for students' to follow. This is not a healthy practice for HRE. To break gender stereotypes is a foremost agenda of HRE. In a

school where gender segregation is visibly practiced can hardly be an ideal environment for HRE. It is a contradiction that has to be dealt with care and urgency.



## Chapter Six

### **Pedagogy of Human Rights Education in Taipei and New Delhi Schools: A Comparative Analysis**

This chapter examines HRE and teachers of Taipei and ND from a comparative perspective. It puts several aspects in a comparative framework, such as administration, role of NGOs, curriculum, textbooks and teachers. These aspects have already been discussed separately in Chapters four and five. The present chapter highlights similarities and contrasts found in the sphere of HRE in Taipei and ND.

To begin with, both capitals had experienced colonial rule that shaped their education system in the past and became a reference point for educational reforms. Currently both are introducing reforms in education with the purpose of competing with the outside world. To this end, both countries are looking towards the United States as a model to follow in every sector including education. The idea of imitating the American education system to reform one's own is problematical. Educationists and other scholars, some of them American, are critical of the American education system. They argue that American education system is reinforcing and legitimizing unequal power relations. It is important to note that Taiwan and India are struck and seduced by the economic performance of the US and expect their education system to produce economic miracles of a similar kind. However, they tend to ignore the other side of the picture where the

American education system has proved to be a failure. The issues of racism and gender disparity are still lingering and multicultural ethos and respect for HR are missing from the society. The presence of extreme individualism and lack of accountability on the part of the state as far as social welfare is concerned are just other examples.

It is noteworthy that educational reforms must be consistent with the ideology of HR. If educational reforms are not critiquing but endorsing the mindsets and practices that are obstacles in the way of establishing a more equal and democratic society then the program of HRE could never become a reality. To establish a democratic society that adheres to the principles of HR requires a democratic state in the first place. If the practice of HR principles does not reflect in the affairs of the state, the state cannot become effective in bringing positive changes in the society. The states in Taiwan and India, like most states, are keen on maintaining status quo as far as power relations are concerned. Unequal power relation is a major factor that goes against HR standards. In this backdrop, where the state is aspiring to maintain the power of dominant groups, education is also pressed into service. In the recent past, both Taiwanese and Indian states are discussing HR and HRE but the recently introduced educational reforms are not in complete agreement with the principles of HR. Hence, it is the responsibility of both the states to analyze their education reform from HR perspective and take concrete steps that would ensure the practice of HR principles.

Taiwan has more resources and low demographic pressure in comparison with India. This advantage of resources and controlled population has helped Taiwan to attain

almost a hundred percent literacy rate. Interestingly resource endowment has not been translated into hundred percent HR literacy rate yet. In the case of India, lack of resources has always posed a serious problem. After sixty-three years of independence, India is still struggling with the program of universal literacy, and the expectation of implementation of HRE program is highly optimistic. It can be inferred from the above situation that availability of resources is a prerequisite but not a guarantee for the success of HRE. It is the commitment or lack of it from both the states to fulfill the program of either HRE or universal literacy at all costs that matters. The lack of commitment is reflected in the programs that are half heartedly devised and implemented and above all marred with corruption even at higher levels in both the states.

### **6.1 Status of Human Rights Education**

The history of HRE in Taiwan dates back to the mid 1990s when it acknowledged and adhered to the Decade for HRE program initiated in 1994 by the UN. The process of HRE got unprecedented impetus from the UN's HRE program. In the case of India the process of HRE began in 1974 when UNESCO came up with "Recommendation Concerning Education for International Understanding, Cooperation and Education Relating to Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms". It is unfortunate that even though India started its HRE program in 1974 it could not build upon it and nothing substantial came out of this early initiative except incorporation of HR concepts into social science curriculum. In 1994 India got another opportunity to implement HRE. The process began with tremendous enthusiasm but faded away with the end of the decade for

HRE. Thus the advantage of an early initiative in the case of India was unfortunately lost. A lackluster attitude on the part of India is the greatest obstacle in the way of HRE. The result is that the status of HRE remained static until recently. On the other hand, Taiwan made rapid progress in HRE between 1996 and 2004. The process, and interest on the part of the government, has slowed down with the change of regimes in 2008. The new government has not come up with any new or vigorous program or policy pertaining to HRE. So, put together, currently at the official level there is no vigorous program or policy either in India or Taiwan. It is only at the individual level that some HRE programs have been introduced and implemented. The efforts are sporadic and no consistent and mass scale program is underway.

## **6.2 NGOs and HRE**

NGOs are active agencies that are playing a vital role in the promotion of HRE in different parts of the world. The role of NGOs becomes crucial when the state does not show the sign of total commitment to HR in both its policies and practices. The NGOs in Taiwan have a comprehensive program of HRE. The NGOs are far more concerned, active, and running different programs on a large scale pertaining to HRE compared to their Indian counterparts. A remarkable development in Taiwan is seen in the form of collaboration between NGOs and Taiwanese intelligentsia. The two are working together to promote HRE by organizing seminars, workshops and in-service training programs in HRE for teachers, publishing HRE teaching material and resource books in Chinese and

providing HR training to volunteers. These efforts are yielding positive results especially in terms of enhancing HR awareness among teachers and the common people.

In the Indian context, NGOs do not have a well worked out program pertaining to HRE. First of all, a limited number of NGOs are involved in HRE programs. Secondly, NGOs that are working for the cause of HR and HRE do not have wider networks. Their work is limited to certain specific areas. In other words, they not only lack a national program but also a vision. Without a national vision about HR and a corresponding program of HRE, the results produced by the efforts of these NGOs are also limited in scale. Thus, the need of the hour for NGOs is to carve out a national vision, and program of HRE, and implement it with vigor and commitment. In this endeavor they can also get financial, human resources, and consultancy help from the national NGOs as well as INGOs that have provisions for such programs in their constitutions. Thus, Indian NGOs would have to expand their vision as well as base to cater to the need of HRE program in other regions of the country.

### **6.3 HRE: A Part of Social Sciences or an Independent Discipline or Integrated into School Curriculum**

It has been established that there is a positive correlation between the spread of HR culture and inception of HRE. By HR culture I mean interactions between people, decision-making processes, perspectives towards various issues and problems, and opinions of people directed by the standard of HR. It is a culture in which an individual

consciously recognizes other individuals' rights and treats them with dignity, irrespective of class, race, nationality, religion, language, and citizenship. For cultivation of HR culture, there is a need to integrate the principles of HR in each and every aspects of daily life. Education is not an exception, and it has to be imbued with HR principles. It means that HRE has to be assimilated into all subjects. In Taiwan, HRE is becoming part of co-curricular activity. The implication of this is that students do not have to take exams. So, HRE is not seen as a burden either by teachers or students. But it has a downside in that it has become only a time specific activity. HRE cannot be equated with an activity. When treated as an activity, the scope of HRE gets delimited. HRE is a continuous process. Being a continuous process, HRE has to become an integral part of school curriculum. The process of integration of HRE into school curriculum in some of the schools in Taipei has already started but it is slow and on a small scale.

In India HRE is a part and parcel of social sciences. Even though it is not a separate subject, while teaching it is generally treated like any other subject by the teachers. Treating HRE as any other subject results in skewed evaluation too. The areas covered in evaluation are not attitudinal or behavioral changes, but whether students have remembered HR definition, articles, and major covenants signed by the members of the UN. The question is whether the memorization of definition, articles, or provisions serves the purpose and objectives of HRE. The answer is a firm no. In addition, the general attitude towards and treatment of HR content by some of the Indian teachers is neither proactive nor meets the general standards of HR. There are very few conscious teachers



who believe that an integrated form of HRE is vital to the inculcation of HR culture. They have shaped their pedagogic practices in a manner to ensure that any theme raised in social science subject can be taught from the HR perspective. In the Indian context, it is the sole responsibility of social science teachers to take care of HRE. Other subject teachers are least concerned about the fact that there is plenty of scope for amalgamation of HR principles into their subject areas too. The misconception that HRE is part of social sciences and not of any other subject is due to the absence of any concrete effort on the part of the government to engage all subject teachers into HRE and incorporate HR content into school curriculum.

#### **6.4 Human Rights Educators**

This section analyzes the HR educators of the two capital cities - who have been interviewed and observed by the researcher - from a comparative perspective, covering all facets of teaching. It also throws light on issues that seem to be unrelated to HR or HRE but have implications for them. For instance, the question why the teacher has joined the profession has certain implications for HRE. In most cases, it relates to the degree of commitment, passion and enjoyment a teacher has in the job. It also indicates that the job is fulfilling. Another example is of collaboration that also enhances the effectiveness and better implementation of HRE. Further, it is an interesting exercise to see how the concept of HR is being taught by the teachers who come from two different social, cultural, economic, and geographical backgrounds. The common connecting thread is democracy and adherence to HR culture.

#### **6.4.1 Teaching Profession as a Career**

Teaching is still considered a woman's profession in both Taiwan and India. In most cases teaching is adopted because it leaves them with sufficient time to look after the family. It is a convenient profession. Though this notion is changing, the middle class in Taiwan and India is still struggling with the tension between traditional values and morality on the one hand and rapidly changing role of women on the other.

All the six protagonists of the present study come from middle class families. Their parents, especially fathers, were strict disciplinarian. They had strictly defined roles for women and they considered it their responsibility to decide what was best for their daughters. Thus, it was the father who decided which profession was suitable and appropriate for these women. It is an established fact that family has a substantial impact on a child's thinking and preferences. Since childhood girl children are exposed to the idea that teaching is the best profession for girls and it is therefore natural for them to develop a liking for the profession. Also they know they will have to work much harder to compete in a male job market. Hence, the process of acculturation taking place in the family cannot be fully ignored. The socio-economic and cultural milieu of the two capital cities therefore permeates the process of preparing the young minds for the profession.

#### **6.4.2 Role of Collaboration**

Collaboration plays a vital role in the professional growth of teachers who are collaborating. It diversifies their pedagogic practices and provides many alternative

solutions to problems faced in day to day teaching. It saves a lot of time. It also gives teachers leverage in organizing field trips or other activities where more than one teacher is required.

In the present study, it was found that Taiwanese teachers were far more eager to collaborate with each other. Initially they did not fully realize the utility of collaboration. It was only after they implemented it in a planned way that they were able to recognize the utility and effectiveness of collaboration. They are collaborating for eight years now. It started with teaching social science topics and extended to almost all subjects. Recently, a collaborative effort began in the area of HRE too. These teachers unanimously voted in the favor of collaboration. The positive attitude towards collaboration has not developed at once. It is a result of collaboration of a few years that Taiwanese teachers are ardently in favor of it.

In the Indian school setting, collaboration is not preferred or welcomed. There could be many reasons for the disinterestedness towards collaboration among Indian teachers for example, lack of readiness, skepticism, fear of getting overloaded with others' work, lack of trust among colleagues, and no prior exposure to the idea of collaboration. In India collaboration can prove to be quite useful. It is a known fact that there is a lack of both financial resources and trained teachers. If teachers begin to collaborate with each other they can organize various group activities for children at a lower cost. By collaborative teaching they can provide varied teaching-learning experiences to the students. They can share their teaching material with each other that

would save a lot of time. In India teachers have to do administrative work as well, and here too collaboration can be useful. This type of collaboration will also save a lot of time that can be diverted towards more productive enterprises. It is necessary for Indian teachers to realize the importance of collaboration sooner than later.

#### **6.4.3 Role of Information Technology (IT)**

Information technology is playing a vital role in shaping all facets of our life. It is easier to get connected with anyone from any part of the world. Information is floating on web which can be accessed by anyone at anytime. The World Wide Web revolution has turned the world into a global village. It has implications for teaching in general and for HRE in particular.

The number of people who have computers and who are connected to the Internet in Taiwan is far greater than India. It is not only the availability of IT but also the readiness to use it into teaching that is also higher in Taiwanese teachers. Taiwanese teachers are willing to learn IT usage at the age of fifty or fifty five while their counterparts in India are reluctant when it comes to learning about or applying IT into teaching. It is thought that the use of computers is restricted to computer teachers and it has nothing to do with other teachers or subjects. The result of such a narrow attitude towards technology is that their teaching lacks efficiency and effectiveness which is an integral part of Taiwanese teaching practices.

There is no distinction between Taiwanese and Indian students as far as the readiness for the use of IT is concerned. If given the facility, Indian students do show eagerness to use computers and Internet. However due to the lack of resources every Indian child does not get the opportunity to use computers. On the other hand, Taiwanese children have access to all these facilities and they not only make a good use for themselves but also pose various questions to their teachers. This technology-savvy generation compels teachers to be technology friendly too. It is very important to find ways to provide basic IT facilities to the Indian students so that they could learn by themselves as their counterparts in Taiwan. Finally, the issue of bringing Indian teachers into contact with IT so that they can bring efficiency and effectiveness in their teaching-learning process like Taiwanese teachers is also quite important.

#### **6.4.4 Institutionalized Communication**

Adolescence is a transitional stage for physical, cognitive, and affective development. There are hormonal changes that also simultaneously taking place in the bodies of adolescents. Due to these changes adolescent behavior can appear to be odd to adults (especially parents) who are not aware of the reasons of this transformation. The ignorance on the part of parents led adolescent to hide, to react, to get angry, or to remain in their caves. In this scenario, the role of a teacher becomes crucial i.e. how to win the confidence of adolescents and convince them to open up and communicate without any fear. To address this serious issue, Taipei teachers, the subjects of the present research, have devised a new technique of daily diary writing project. Before this project, there was

nothing that established informal and personal communication between the teacher and the students. This innovative method of communication has targeted two things at the same time. It has not only established a close and strong bond between the teacher and the students but contributed in the development of the writing skills of the students too.

The Indian case is quite different in the sense that there is no such special attempt on teachers' part to establish a close and continuous interaction with students such as daily diary writing in the context of Taipei. In ND school there is no such institutionalized way of establishing communication with adolescent students on the part of teachers. The need of adolescent students' to communicate their feelings good or bad, personal problems, curiosities about their own body or potentials is a natural phenomenon. This need of adolescents to express must be addressed immediately and this is one of this reasons which is yielding negative outcomes, such as psychological problems, maladjustment, low self-esteem, or anti-social behavior. Thus, it is imperative to have some kind of mechanism by which suppressed feelings of the adolescents could be vent out. And, it could be achieved by establishing a channel of communication between students and the teacher.

#### **6.4.5 HR and HRE: Teachers' Perception and Praxis**

The success of any endeavor depends a lot on the attitude of endeavourer towards it. The enterprise of HRE has more to do with a positive attitude of teachers, students, school administration, and the government towards it. The agency of teachers is

crucial for HRE and hence their perception of HR becomes very significant. This section analyzes the perceptions about HR and praxis of HRE of Taiwanese and Indian teachers from a comparative perspective.

We have discussed the pedagogical praxis of all the six teachers. Each one has a peculiar focus to shape her praxis of HRE. It seems they have mutually exclusive pedagogical practices but when analyzed closely they are linked. All these pedagogical praxis are correlated with and have bearings on each other. There are core concepts which tie them all in a single garland. These core concepts are respect for HR, human dignity and children, fair, just and more equitable conditions and opportunities, and activism or practice of HR. So, at the heart of the praxis employed by any of the teachers one of the above mentioned core concepts is present.

#### **6.4.6 HR Educators and Educates**

This section elucidates how the HR educators of Taipei and ND treat their students. What kind of relationship these educators longed for or have established with their students? How teacher student relationship is important and contributes in advancement of HRE?

Zhang found out that when HR are discussed with adolescents they are prone to think about their own rights, especially the right to privacy. In Taiwan the right to privacy never existed. It is recently that some HR educators have started discussing with elementary school students. And students have come up with their grievances toward

their parents who keep a check on their activities and do not trust them. Zhang worked in the direction to win her students' confidence. She invited parents of her students and in many stages talked with them about right to privacy. She has not been successful to convince all the parents but she won over few who have committed that they would try their best to provide free environment to their children. Zhang had also established a friendly rapport with her students and ensured that their right to privacy, freedom of speech would be respected. She engaged her students in daily diary writing project to learn more about them as well as their problems, doubts, dilemmas, and emotion needs. This has developed a sense among students that their rights have been respected and protected and it is their responsibility to respect and protect the rights of others.

Ma believes that adolescents must be treated as intellectuals and independent thinkers if we want them to be responsible. They should be considered intellectuals because they have a capability and do come up with original ideas and, thus, it becomes their psychological need to be acknowledged as someone who is capable of thinking innovatively. Ma opined that when adolescents are being considered scholars or intellectuals it is easier to make them realize that they have to be responsible for their actions. Ma heeds special attention to reading because it expands and brings diversity to students' knowledge base. It also develops a curiosity among students to know more and Ma thinks that reading habit is playing an important role in HRE. Students read new things and come up with new questions or opinions or explanations regarding HR issues.



This is one of the purposes of HRE which can be fulfilled by introducing adolescents to the world of reading which Ma is implementing efficiently.

Xie finds critical thinking very crucial for the advancement of HR. She believed that critical thinking cannot be developed among students in the absence of democratic relationship between teachers and them. Xie gives plenty of latitude to her students in the classroom discussions. Their opinions and arguments are critically examined by each other and accepted if only found logical and rational. She also emphasized on establishing cordial and democratic relations with students. For that she employs daily diary writing which serves as a bridge between the two.

Sara believes in discipline in the classroom. For her it is a mechanism to give an opportunity to those students who are shy in the classroom and never dared to speak in front of their classmates. Also in the class of forty students it has become a necessity to have some kind of discipline to continue with teaching and learning process in the classroom. Sara defends that her discipline never comes in between her and her students. Due to scarcity of time and large number of students, teacher-students relationship is not very democratic.

Sheela puts her students in the category of educators. If given an opportunity to express, students can teach many new things to us teachers. Children are rational being and capable of employing logics of their own. If they find something illogical with their understanding they are ready to change and accept the other interpretation. These traits of

children discovered by Sheela are prerequisites for the advancement of HR. She tries to nurture these characteristics of her students through HRE. She developed a relationship with her students that consider them an educator too.

Maya discovered that elementary school students are capable of seeing and establishing the correlation between theory and practice. She regarded this quality in terms of capability to think like intellectuals. She also found a desire among adolescent students to be respected like their adult counterparts. She says, “Like any other thinking creature, children also expect to be respected by the adults. I follow this rule by heart. I respect them as an intellectual.” She feels until adolescents are being treated as respectable individuals, a fair and democratic discussion in the classroom is not possible. Discussion cannot take place between the intellectually unequal individuals. This is why in many cases teachers are the ones who control the so called discussion. Thus, for a democratic and productive classroom discussion it has be kept in mind that students are also active contributors and their point of view would be given due importance. So, Maya mainly a facilitator while students play the key role in classroom discussions.

Interestingly, all HR educators believe in intellectual capability of elementary school students. They also unanimously believe that HRE or any kind of learning to take place and become successful, cordial relations between teachers and students is a must. In addition to that they all recommend that adolescents must be respected like adults. Ma, Sheela and Maya had especially established a relationship with their students based on

the premise that they are intellectually capable of thinking like their teachers and thus, they should be treated like intellectuals, scholars, and educators rather than mere students.

#### **6.4.7 HRE: Problems and Challenges**

All the three Taipei teachers have expressed concern over Taiwanese society and the way it perceives HR. They think that the attitude of Taiwanese of society needs to be transformed radically if HR culture has to become a reality. They are doing their best at least in changing the attitudes of parents. They are raising HR issues in teacher parents meetings time and again and convincing parents to respect their child's right. They also explain parents that how by being practicing HR they can win over their child's confidence and that will cut down their worries because child would like to share and communicate with them. And this is what every parent desires for. So, HR is by no means going to challenge or demean their status as parents and thus there is no need to be skeptical about them.

Taipei teachers also feel that absence of HR literature in Chinese is another hurdle in the way of HRE. HRE is in its initial phase in Taiwan and due to recent introduction of it not much focus and effort have been paid to the literature in Chinese. The absence of good quality and frequent in-service teacher education programs in HRE accentuated this situation. Whatever little training in HRE they got was by no means sufficient. They also explicate that experts of HR are not very well equipped with skills. They do not know

how to train in and translate HR concepts to the teachers so they can effectively implement HRE in their classrooms.

Taipei teachers have also suggested reforms in education system. They found education system anti-HR because it is examination, teacher, and syllabus centered. It is also contradictory because on one side there is an emphasis on envisaging HR culture and on the other excessive emphasis has been given to getting good grades. To get good grades it is compulsory to finish the course on time and revise it as many times as possible. For that teacher decides to take control of everything and it is teacher who speaks and students listen to. There is no scope for quality education. Thus, education system needs to be refurbished so that HRE can be made meaningful.

The introduction of HRE in India dates back to 1974 but it did not yield any significant results until now. The ND teachers see that there is a correlation between lack of basic amenities such as infrastructure, furniture, teacher-student ratio, financial resources and failure of HRE. The availability of all these basic amenities is a prerequisite for HRE. It is students' right to have at least minimum resources. In the absence of financial and human resources HRE cannot be conceptualized or materialized. ND teachers strongly believe that the Indian elementary schools are marred with all kinds of deficiencies which constitute the greatest problem in the way of HRE and its successful implementation.

There is no regular and comprehensive program in HRE. These teachers have shared their experience of fifteen-day in-service teacher education program loaded with environment, population, and computer in education. The inclusion of HRE training into the program was nothing but symbolic. Sara opined that an in-service training program packed with many themes and issues is likely to underestimate the importance of HRE. It is strange enough that after more than three decades of introduction of HRE, there is no single steady training program initiated to provide quality training in teaching HR. Until the issue of training in HRE is seriously addressed the future of it will remain grim.

Maya raised the issue of discouraging collegial environment in the school premise. She states that HRE cannot be taught like any other subject. It requires lot of activities, extra efforts, and hard work on the part of both teacher and students. These special initiatives have been seen as a moral pressure by those who do not want or do not have an aspiration to teach HR or any other subject with a difference or improvise their ages old pedagogies. The tendency of demoralizing those teachers who are impassionedly and devotedly performing their duties is another threat which is rampantly prevalent in Indian schools not only to HRE but also to the very existence of teaching profession.

### **6.5 Concluding Remarks**

Despite the late introduction of HRE, Taipei HR teachers are progressing faster than their ND counterparts. Taipei teachers have advantage of good infrastructural

facilities. If their colleagues are not supportive at least they are not pulling them down. In the context of ND, teachers have to grapple with scarcity of resources as well as struggle against their own colleagues who do not want to be out of their comfort zone. Taipei teachers are employing every possible strategy to establish a closer relationship with their students. They believe a trust between the teacher and her students is a key to the success of HRE. If child's rights are not recognized, respected, and restored how could they perform their responsibility of protecting other's entitlements? Taipei teachers' Daily Diary Writing Project is a mile stone as far as strengthening of teacher-student relationship is concerned. While ND teachers are very well aware of the importance of establishing a closer contact with students they found many hurdles in the way of doing so. First and foremost is the teacher-student ratio i.e. 1:55 or sometimes reaching to 1:60, which is more than double or triple in comparison to a standard Taipei classroom size.

Taipei teachers are dealing with HRE as a co-curricular subject. There is no examination held for it. In ND, it is a part of social science and hence examined like any other subject. Some of the teachers of present research are trying hard to bring in the HR perspective to all subjects including language, mathematics and science. But the effort is in a nascent stage and teachers in the absence of any significant training are following a trial and error method. They are themselves not aware of what would happen to their strategy. Again, the impact of HRE cannot be evaluated by a test after completing one theme. HRE brings transformation in attitudes, skills, behavior, and affective and cognitive domains. It is a time taking process and shows results slowly and gradually.

HRE development in Taipei owes a lot to NGOs. The NGOs are working incessantly to bring a qualitative difference in all aspects of HRE including developing teaching material, providing training to the teachers, spreading awareness among the masses, training common people to work as volunteer HR worker. In ND there is no similar attempt to promote HRE by the NGOs. There are some NGOs who are working towards HRE but they are located at other places like Mumbai, Tamil Nadu, and West Bengal. It does not mean that there are no NGOs active in ND. There are NGOs in ND which are active in protection of HR and keep a vigil on it violations but they do not take up the issue of HRE. To accelerate the growth of HRE in ND, NGOs must have to play their due part. In a nutshell, the attempts to promote and expand HRE by both the capitals are contributing to the cause. The praxis employed by these capital cities' teachers is worthy of application by those who wants to be HR educators and have no practical experience at all. The praxis employed by the teachers of two capital cities' are complementary to each other and together they form a set of ideas and practices of HRE that could become more effective than they are in any one place.

## Chapter Seven

### Pedagogy of Human Rights Education and Educators: A Discussion

In this study I have identified six educators with a stated commitment to the HR and HRE. The purpose of this study is to investigate the role of teachers in promoting HRE. To conduct it, five research questions and other questions that substantiate these research questions were asked. The following questions were put to the HR educators who participated in this study and guided data analysis:

1. How the pedagogy of HRE is perceived by social science teachers of the elementary school of Taipei and ND in the context of their values, beliefs, attitudes, and ideals towards HRE (Subjective category)?
2. How is the pedagogy of HRE of social science teachers of Taipei and Delhi put into practice (Objective category)?
3. What is taught in HRE in the social science classrooms of Taipei and ND intentionally and unintentionally (Objective, subjective and normative category)?
4. What are the problems and obstacles faced by social science teachers during the process of teaching human rights (Objective and subjective category)?
5. Can there be a general pedagogy of HRE, which can be applied across different educational settings (Objective and normative category)?



The following sections answer the research questions which guided this study. These answers are a synthesis of the responses, classroom observations, and informal talks.

### **7.1 How Human Rights are Perceived by the Teachers?**

The concept of HR is universal in nature and has eightfold elements mentioned in the UDHR. The six teachers of this study have developed their own definition of HR that emphasize or focus on a certain element of the UDHR such as human dignity or equality. Zhang believes that HR should be the basic principle of the code of conduct for teachers, students, administrators and all other members of a society. Freire (1997) also expressed a similar point of view. He recommended a code of conduct which upholds every individual's dignity. Ma says, "HR is for human dignity what oxygen is for human existence". HR are necessary for survival of any democratic society. Xie thinks HR are vital to human existence and always come with responsibilities. For Sara, HR are nothing but a matter of common sense. She prefers to perceive HR in concrete form. Sheela perceives HR in linguistic terms. It is fair to argue that the nature of the language used in a society is indicative of whether HR are being respected or not. Maya opined that HR are fundamental for an individual to lead a respectful life. All the six teachers perceive HR differently according to their belief and value system so that whichever element of HR they think is crucial their definition highlights that aspect.

## 7.2 Characteristics of Human Rights Educators

The discipline of HR and HRE is in nascent stage. Claude (1996) argued that to further the discipline more and more literature needs to be generated that is founded on experiences, practices, and researches of scholars, educators, and other stakeholders, such as: government, NGOs and INGOs. Due to lack of literature there is no theory that describes the characteristics of HR educators. But there are some scholars who have pointed out a few characteristics of HR educators. Stobart (1991) argued that the effectiveness of HRE depends on the commitment, quality and skills of the individual teacher. Shiman too expressed that the establishment and furtherance of HR is largely dependent on the right temperament and commitment of the teachers (1991). This study finds that a common thread runs through the six teachers as far as characteristics are concerned. During this study the following characteristic were observed generally in all the six teachers. These are: critical thinking, commitment and belief in HR, belief in efficacy of HRE, belief in democratic communication not in giving instruction, zeal of a learner, facilitator not controller, observer, activist, ability to handle challenges, patience, and tolerance. Some of the characteristics are dominant in some teachers but all these characteristics were present in different degrees. Now the crucial question is whether these qualities are specific to HR educators or other teachers also have them. The answer to this question is a bit difficult because this kind of comparison has not been done in the present study. But my own experience as a student and a teacher at an elementary school offers some insights on the issue. Teachers who do not believe in and practice HR are not

capable of respecting children's rights as human beings. Their classes tend to be more authoritative than democratic. They will seldom allow critical thinking to be a part of their pedagogy because it curtails their power and puts a question mark on their classroom behavior. Their classes are always quiet because no discussion is required and allowed because the teacher's words are final.

### **7.3 How the Pedagogy of HRE is Perceived by Human Rights Educator?**

This is a subjective category and thus deals with the values, beliefs, attitudes, and ideals of teachers. Reardon (1995) outlined the purpose of HRE as creation of culture of HR. Zhang thinks that HRE should be started from the very beginning of schooling. It should be sown early like a seed so that it can gradually grow into a plant. To create a culture of HR in a society it is important to introduce HRE as early as possible; so Zhang had rightly pointed out towards the early inception of HRE. Flowers (2003) argued that to teach HR requires a certain level of training. Magendzo (2005) is of the opinion that many teachers not only lack the knowledge of international and national HR instruments and institutions, they are also unprepared emotionally, pedagogically and culturally to teach HR. Zhang further substantiated this argument that HRE is not only meant for students but for teachers as well. She found the concept of HR very abstract and has legal aspects attached to it that require a proper understanding which can only be attained by training. Freire (1998) argued that a teaching that does not involve rigorous reflections on the teaching practices is not correct. Teachers have to unlearn those behaviors that are against HR standards, and concept of HR requires greater clarification. They also need to

respect the rights of children. Ma believes that HRE creates a culture of respect for not only those who come from the same culture but to those also who are from other cultures, ethnicities, societies, or countries. It also destroys misconceptions the students form at home and bring to the schools as a matter of fact. Xie is extremely positive and optimistic about enculturation of HR in a society with the help of HRE. For her it is a never ending process and can change the mindset of a society. In a nutshell, HRE creates a culture that is founded on human dignity and also weakens and demolishes that culture which ignores or humiliates the dignity of an individual. Kincheloe (2005) concluded it nicely that it will expand the horizons of human possibility. It can be inferred from his statement that it is the wide horizons of human possibility that HR educators are striving for.

Magendzo (2005) urged teachers to be conscious of the manifestation and experience of HR in day to day life as well as in their personal and collective experiences. Similarly, Sara, HRE is not something that can only be taught in classrooms. It is an experience which life offers us if daily life is being keenly observed. If students are incapable of feeling anything about the child beggars of their own age, long discussions on HR within the walls of the classroom are futile. So, HRE has to establish the relationship between the classroom and the outside world. For Sheela HRE is to learn the language of HR. She thinks language is a socio-cultural construct. It reflects the thinking of a society. The language used in communication, literature, textbooks, and other mediums has examples that are in clear violation of HR. Flowers (2003) warned against the misuse of HRE by those who learn the language without embracing the vision. For

Maya, justice and fairness are the backbone of HRE; and HRE can help in solving HR related problems that are structural in nature. Maya's point of view goes back to DHRE where it was clearly mentioned that human dignity, equality, justice and fairness are the skeleton of the HRE. These principles should be the guiding force of the content of HRE.

#### **7.4 How the Pedagogy of Human Rights Education put into Practice?**

Some approaches and models of HRE have been recently developed by the scholars of HR and HRE. They believe that with the help of these approaches and models the efficacy of HRE can be enhanced. The six teachers of the present study employ various approaches and models in different degrees. Their selection of the approaches and models relies on their perception of HR and HRE and their pedagogic beliefs and practices. Zhang believes in how to think, not in what to think. She does not believe in dominating the teaching learning process. She denounces the traditional role of a teacher as an instructor. She provides with the required basic facts and information regarding the theme that is being discussed in the classroom. Her pedagogy of HRE is based on reconstructionist approach where the process of thinking is important. It perceives phenomenon from a critical perspective. In addition to that she bases her pedagogy on accountability model too. It is a model founded on legal approach. It prepares learners for dealing with HR violation legally. In practicing accountability model, Zhang's husband helps her. He is a law graduate and has a good understanding of legal aspects of HR. Sometimes, he also accompanies Zhang in her classroom and makes a presentation of law related aspects. Zhang's pedagogy also has an element of international standards and

institutions approach. In this approach, UN, UDHR, ICCPR, and ICESCR's standards are being followed. Zhang's HRE pedagogy is always in the process of making and she visits websites of the UN to seek material for teaching HR.

Ma's pedagogy of HRE has developed in phases. She started with environmental education and gradually moved to HR issues discussed in Social Studies. Later, she realized that Social Studies' classes were not enough to deal with HRE. To fill this lacuna she integrated HRE into her whole curriculum. After the integration there was no specific time or subject when HRE was given. The concepts of HR are circulating into her curriculum from bottom up and top down as blood in the veins. Ma's pedagogy of HRE is based on transformational model. This model emphasizes on activism and Ma herself is a HR activist. This activism gets reflected in her pedagogy too. She always includes such documentaries or films that depict activism of the lead character.

The "alien nature" of HR has shaped Xie's pedagogy of HRE. The concept of HR is a foreign idea. Her pedagogy of HRE heavily relies on multimedia to give HRE a concrete as well as local touch. Her pedagogy of HRE follows the historical approach. In historical approach HR are looked and taught in historical context. History becomes the foundation of HRE insofar as HR are derived from and defined out of the lived history of human beings (Reardon, 1995, p. 8). Xie screened movies such as, *The Diary of Anne Frank* and *The Color Purple*. These films have a historical background as well as lived experiences of an individual. Her pedagogy of HRE is modeled on value awareness

model. In this model teachers engage their students to inculcate interest in HR and HRE through media.

To teach HR concepts Sara employs project method. The process involved in project method is full of new learning experiences. Discovery of new facts gives students a sense of achievement. The most important thing is that after completing the project they become an authority on the subject. They speak like experts because they also get firsthand experiences during the project to provide a strong foundation to their theoretical knowledge. Comparison put facts in wider perspective. The students see the same problem from different perspectives. Sara's pedagogy of HRE is based on service learning approach. Service learning is experiential learning designed to provide a service needed by the community while allowing students to learn and apply course concepts in the real world (Eyler and Giles cited in Krain and Nurse, 2004, p. 192). Service learning is different from community service. It provides a linkage between the course work and real life experiences. Sara by employing project method tries to connect the theoretical knowledge with practical experiences.

The teacher's code of conduct plays a major role in shaping many ideas among students. Sheela keeps this in mind and makes it an integral component of her pedagogy. Sheela thinks that a teacher's actions, statements, opinions and practices matter a lot in teaching HR. Her pedagogy of HRE is based on reconstructionist approach like Zhang mentioned earlier. In this approach teachers are entrusted with huge responsibility (Reardon, 1995, p. 12). Sheela considers case study method as most appropriate to

transmit HRE. Case studies are based on real life experiences that offer a picture of what goes on in peoples' lives. It has potentials to move the students' inner self to do something concrete to improve social conditions and contribute towards social transformation. This is also in accordance with reconstructionist approach where teacher is visualized with the hope that she would bring in social change with effective implementation of HRE.

Maya's pedagogy of HRE is based on the concepts of justice and fairness. In addition to that, for her, context is very important. She does believe that HRE, taught in the right context, can be made meaningful and familiar to young children. Maya's pedagogy of HRE is based on an international standards and institutional approach. It also follows the accountability model because justice and fairness are two core concepts of legal approach that is the back bone of accountability model. Her pedagogy of HRE has also an element of service learning approach because she gives examples of HR violations from day to day life. She believes that these examples can ignite the inner HR activist in children.

The approaches and models of HRE are important for teachers and HR educators to be well versed in. The understanding of these approaches and models provide a better grounding in HRE and its implementation. But there real efficacy can only be judged by the outcome of the program of HRE. The present study has focused only on the implementation part. To include evaluation part requires another long term study in



which the cognitive and behavioral skills, attitude, and practices of students can be considered.

### **7.5 What is taught in the Human Rights Education Classrooms?**

Reardon (1995) and Flowers (2003) have come up with a curriculum of HRE for the various age groups of students. The core concepts and values they include are: law citizenship, community rights constitution, freedom, social responsibility, international law, world peace, environmental degradation, etc. In Taipei the content on HRE ranges from Social Studies textbooks to content taught in co-curricular subjects. The themes HRE deals with are: privacy, justice, democracy, authority, human world, family and raising boy and girl, society and country's responsibilities, global village culture, scientific revolution, industrial revolution, modern science and technology, science and technology management, united world, environmental problems, and international organizations such as Red Cross, UN, WTO, WHO, APEC. There were some themes in the curriculum of the school in Taipei, such as: international law, institutions and environmental issues. But the focus of the curriculum was in tune with the ideals of HRE.

In ND, HRE content is taught in Social Science textbooks. It includes themes, such as: respect for diversity, understanding diversity in terms of religion, language, region, social status, economic position, inequality, unity in diversity, freedom, difference and prejudice, creating stereotypes, inequality and discrimination, untouchability, right to equality, women's rights, dalits' rights, right to education, secularism, right to vote,

women's struggle for right to vote, racial discrimination, language-based discrimination, social movements, equality and justice, education of girls, right to information, gender equality, sanitation, contract worker's rights, sanitation workers' right, workers' rights, right to livelihood. The case of ND is very context specific. Themes were primarily burning issues in India; for example, the right to education is the fundamental human right of children. Thus, incorporation of such themes that are relevant to HR and have local relevance was the objective of the curriculum of HRE in ND.

The above are the themes that are directly taught. There is some content not prescribed in the curriculum but taught by HR educators. These are generally skills and attitudes, such as critical thinking, tolerance, patience, activism, problem solving skills and better communication skills. These are some of the skills which are very important for the practice of HR in a society.

#### **7.6 What are the Problems and Obstacles faced by Human Rights Educators during the process of teaching Human Rights?**

Lohrenscheit (2002) and Lister (1991) have come up with a list of probable challenges and problems HRE might face. They have raised certain questions to alarm HR educators and solicited response. For example, how can we learn and teach about all HR in surroundings where some of them are denied, such as women's rights or where HR are too complex for immature minds? These questions are useful for the training in HRE. Except Lohrenscheit and Lister no significant work is available. In addition there is

practically no research conducted on the teachers who are teaching HR. Therefore, there is no clear picture that in classroom settings and outside what kind of problems and obstacles are being faced by them. This study throws some light on this issue. The six teachers of the present study shared their experiences about problems and obstacles. Zhang showed utmost concern over the issue of the teacher as HR violator. A significant number of teachers in Taiwan are - knowingly or unknowingly - HR violators. They are violating HR in various ways. They are imbued with a sense of authority over students. They expect their students to follow them without questioning their authority. Zhang sees the Taiwanese examination system as the greatest violator of HR, especially children's rights. Education psychology has reached a level of maturity but it is still unable to convince people that every individual is different and has special abilities. If those abilities are recognized at the right time and developed in the right direction, individual can attain greater success. On the contrary, every parent wants her/his child to become not less than a doctor, engineer or scientist. To attain these goals, the hurdle of examination has to be crossed. The realization of these cherished dreams depends on how efficiently and ruthlessly the examinations have to be passed by the students. Another problem in implementing HRE is availability of subject matter of HR in the Mandarin language. It has been further accentuated by insufficient training of teachers in the area of HRE. Zhang says, HR concepts are not alien to teachers but how to teach them to elementary students is altogether a different story unless they are thoroughly trained in it.

Ma is not very happy with whatever progress Taiwanese society has made. Improvement in economic arena has raised living standards but failed to bring ethical, moral, humane, judicious, and equality based standards to the society. It had filled the income gap among the masses but failed to narrow down the gulf of gender inequality, class, race (aborigines vs. Hakka, Hoklo and Han), and color bar. On the other hand, the society is legitimizing them by endorsing them in various subtle ways. Ma says that teaching HR is like waging war against the whole society's mentality that is weakening the ground for HRE. Ma sees the Taiwanese education system as an eyesore for HR and HRE. She thinks that it is not in accordance with HR at all. First, of all it is a teacher centric system where teachers speak and students listen. Second, there is no scope for innovation insofar as a teacher has to follow the curriculum mechanically. HRE is all about innovation. It is not a subject to mug up facts and regurgitate in the exams. It is a culture that questions the education system itself for not being HR friendly. The pressure of examination on students is increasing at an unprecedented speed. Another impediment is the absence of a comprehensive evaluation system of elementary school teachers in Taiwan. Ma says, "In Taiwan, lots of teachers do not teach properly and nobody goes and check on them but they know what they are doing and still go on with that". When the general evaluation system is so feeble one can imagine what could be the situation of evaluation of HRE.

Xie feels that Taiwanese parents are over protective of their children. This tendency affects the development of children in many ways. Taiwanese children are

highly dependent on their parents for every small or big thing. It's the parents who take decisions for them regarding all matters. Xie opinioned that the over protective behavior of Taiwanese parents does not go well with the idea of HR. When students learn about HR they complain that none other than their parents has encroached upon their rights. Xie also feels that HRE is a fairly recent phenomenon in the Taiwanese educational arena. Being in its initial stage, HRE is bound to be dependent on the outside world for various things ranging from subject material on HR for teaching to how to teach them in a classroom situation.

Sara considered the media as a greatest obstacle in the way of HR. She blamed the media for inducing violence, rudeness, greed for material things, and anxiety among youngsters. Sheela found the lack of infrastructure in the school as the greatest problem. For Maya lack of collegial environment was an obstacle. She experienced that whenever she tried to do anything new her colleagues have discouraged her.

The problems, obstacles, and challenges mentioned by the six teachers of the present study are structural in nature. To put it differently, parents are imposing their wishes on their children by pressurizing them to work beyond their capacity or denying them the right to privacy by reading their personal diaries. There are numerous such cases. So, it is the problem of parents of a particular society who are guided by principles which are not HR friendly. The attitude is embedded in the culture of the society. How to deal with this problem is a question which HR educators have to think about. How to engage parents in a dialogue to change their mentality requires a lot of thinking. Another

example is from India where most government schools are lack basic facilities. This is a structural problem too. And, this has to be dealt by the administration and the government.

### **7.7 Can there be a General Pedagogy of Human Rights education, which can be applied across different educational settings?**

In social research the context plays an important role (Carspecken, 1996). As far as the findings of the present research are concerned, they indicate that social context is actually quite important. For instance, in Taipei teaching of HR in English is not possible and the HR content has to be translated into Mandarin. In addition, the examples used in English literature have to be reinforced with local examples because every example has a cultural and social context. Students would better understand those examples that are directly coming from their social and cultural milieu because they would be already familiar with the background. So, HRE has to become contextual in order to be successfully implemented.

The eight principles of HR are human dignity, equality, non-discrimination, universality, interdependency, indivisibility, inalienability, and responsibilities. These principles provide a ground for general pedagogy of HRE. These principles are the same everywhere and need to be practiced and upheld. For instance, the dignity of an Indian individual is not any different from that of a Taiwanese individual or from an American or European individual for that matter. So, these principles can become a beckon light for HR educators to guide their pedagogical beliefs, values, and practices. In addition to the

HR principles, UDHR is another standard that needs to be followed by every nation (Torney-Purta, 1987).

The pedagogy of HRE has certain approaches and models which present themselves as standard approaches and models. The beauty of these approaches and models is that they can be applied by any HR educator in any context because the guiding force of these models is again HR principles that have universal standards. In addition to that there are some skills and attitudes, such as critical thinking, commitment and strong belief in HR, belief in efficacy of HRE, belief in democratic communication, patience, tolerance, responsibility, and strength to fight for ones as well as others HR. These are applicable in any context because relationships are guided by power structure and here in lies a great possibility of violation of HR. Thus, it is conceivable to have a general pedagogy of HRE which can be applied in any context.

### **7.8 System Relations as Explanations of Findings**

This section explains the findings in the wider context of society. No qualitative study can be restricted to classroom or the school. Since the present study is concerned with teachers and their pedagogy of HRE, at this stage it would be relevant to ask the question how external systems support or constrain the purpose, agenda, and cause of HRE at the level of policy, content, pedagogic beliefs and practices.

### **7.8.1 Governmental Support/Constrain**

Both Taiwanese and Indian governments had opted to adhere to the UN's Decade for Human Rights Education. For India it was the pressure from the UN to accept UDHRE. In the case of Taiwan the announcement to adhere to the UNDHRE was part of an initiative to join the UN. By this act of Taiwanese government the message was being sent that Taiwan follows UN regulations and accepts the importance of this international organization and all this constituted a subtle indication of the willingness to join it as a member. It is interesting to note that it was during DPP's rule that Taiwan has organized its efforts to promote HRE. Thus, DPP's ideology is more in coherence with the idea of HR. Ever since the KMT government came to power HRE projects have either slowed down or stopped.

### **7.8.2 NGOs and INGOs Role**

INGOs are nonprofit organizations with international perspective in development, education and UHR. They generally operate from Western nations. On the other hand, NGOs or domestic organizations function within a nation. Some are truly "grassroot" organizations (Schafer, 1999, p. 70). Orlin noted that NGOs are the "Human Rights Gatekeeper" and rely on the HR theory for legitimacy (1998, p. 1). Boli and Thomas (1997) argued that INGOs form a "world culture". They identified the principles of universalism, individualism, voluntaristic authority, rational progress, and world citizenship as the central elements of "world culture" (p. 171). These principles of INGOs



are consistent with HR, HRE and HR culture. Hence, INGOs and NGOs play the role of catalysts in propagating HR culture by promoting “world culture”. The goal of HR culture is achieved especially through educational instruments and means i.e., HRE. In the case of Taiwan NGOs are supporting the cause of HR and HRE because it matches with their purpose and ideology. In India, NGOs have recently shown interest in the promotion of HRE.

### **7.8.3 Teacher’s Authority and Power Relations**

All relations are mediated by power (Foucault, 1979). The powerful always tend to assert authority over those who are subordinate. In other words, there is a hierarchy of structures bound with power relations to dominate the downtrodden. In education system the hierarchy is like this: Minister of Education, education secretary, education officer, principal, vice-principal, teacher, and student. On this ladder teachers and students are at the lowest level. The teacher has authority to show only in classroom. In turn, classrooms generally become the place for teachers to vent out their frustrations. This picture is visible almost everywhere. But, the present study found that this system relation is not reproduced in the classrooms of HR educators. HR educators have a different relationship with their students. Their relationship with the students is almost on an equal plane. HR educators of this study do not believe in exercising their authority over children. They respect students’ rights as individuals.

Zhang believes that a successful pedagogy of HRE depends on the nature of interaction between the teacher and the students. Ma treats her students as responsible individuals. Xie believes that a friendly, democratic, and trustworthy relationship between the teacher and the student is the need of the time. Sara and her students follow a code of conduct, based on respect for each other, devised by them. Students come first in Sheela's priority list. They are a constant source of learning as well liveliness. She places her students in the category of educators because they have their own perspectives on various issues which could be new and can be ahead of adult's viewpoint. Sheela belongs to nurture school where environment, culture, and social upbringing are the major factors that determine physical, cognitive, emotional development, and the worldview of children. It is true that children are rational beings and capable of employing logics of their own. If they find something illogical with their understanding they are ready to change and accept the other interpretation. Unlike adults, children are far more receptive to new ideas and quick in updating the old ones. These characteristics of children are not culture or country specific. Children are alike all over the world. It is the socio-economic, cultural, political circumstances that place children on different pathways and mold them accordingly. Maya has established a very close relationship with her students. This closeness is clearly visible in her interactions with students. Maya believes that close relationship is a result of her respect for children. To respect children's point of view is a core component of HRE. The respect shown towards children is a deviation from the hierarchical system prevalent in contemporary society. Thus, HRE and HR educators are challenging the notion of power relations and authority.



## Chapter Eight

### Conclusion and Recommendations

When it becomes a program, hopelessness paralyzes us, immobilizes us. We succumb to fatalism, and then it becomes impossible to muster the strength we absolutely need for a fierce struggle that will re-create the world. I am hopeful, not out of mere stubbornness, but out of an existential concrete imperative. I do not mean that, because I am hopeful, I attribute to this hope of mine the power to transform reality all by itself, so that I set out for the fray without taking account of concrete, material data, declaring, “My hope is enough!” No, my hope is necessary, but it is not enough. Alone, it does not win. But without it, my struggle will be weak and wobbly. We need critical hope the way a fish needs unpolluted water (Freire, 1994, p.2).

The contemporary world is scarred with HR violations. Exploitation of the downtrodden is rampant at all levels, individual, social, economic, cultural, and political. This dismal scenario may lead to hopelessness, but pedagogy of HR shows us a ray of hope reminiscent of what Freire mentioned above. It is the hope to establish an HR based culture. HRE is an instrument in achieving empowerment which prepares the ground for HR culture in a society (UDHR (1997)). To achieve this “hope”, it is required to have a properly carved out educational program and passionate efforts on the part of those persons who are involved in this program. Carter and Osler (2000) have argued that it is

only through education, both experiential and cognitive, that HR will be achieved. The community of teachers would undoubtedly play the most important role in the program of HRE. A curriculum is only as powerful as the teacher using it (Tibbitts, 2005). Thus, it is not the content of HR but the pedagogy of a teacher which will determine the efficacy of HRE and promotion of HR. This chapter concludes the present work with the “hope” shown by Freire that the reality would be transformed and the teacher community along with their students would restore degraded human dignity. The chapter also presents some recommendations to realize the hope to have an HR based culture.

### **8.1 Preconceived Notions Erased**

During the current work many notions and hypothesis have been questioned, critiqued and replaced. When I started the research I deeply believed that HRE is an integral part of Social Science. O’Brien (1999) strongly argued in favor of integration of HR into social studies. There is plenty of literature discussing and analyzing the role of social studies in implementing and promoting democratic culture in a society (Angell, 1991; Chilcoat and Ligon, 1994; Kickbusch, 1987; Longstreet, 1985; Oldendorf, 1989; Oliner, 1983; Wood, 1985). Similarly, parallels are drawn and it has been insisted to teach and promote HR through social studies (Fritzsche, 2008; Osler, 2008a). Hence, Social Science teacher is mainly responsible for HRE. During the course of the work, it has been found that the HR educator could be a Science or Language or even a Mathematics teacher. Kepenekci (2005) holds the view that effectiveness of [HRE] largely depend on its status as a separate course as well as a part of general education (p.

55-56). Council of Europe (2003) suggested it emphatically to include education in [HR] in all school curricula (p. 77). Hornberg (2002) discussed German concept and educational system of general education and integration of HRE into it. Thus, all subjects have scope for incorporation of HRE albeit in different measures. It is the HR perspective that matters not merely the content. The way a teacher deals and looks at a certain theme determines the scope of HRE. So, a Science teacher can teach a chapter on “Food Production” or on “Nutrition” from HR perspective without changing the content of the chapter. It is possible to argue that to educate in HR is nothing but to develop an HR perspective among students. This HR perspective works as a window to see problems and serves as a standard to find solutions to critical problems. A step further was suggested by Tibbitts (2004b) that a HR perspective should also be applied to the education system as a whole.

## **8.2 Teacher as an Agency of Human Rights Educations**

Best (1991) stated that defending and promoting HR is largely a matter of education and it depends on the attitudes and efforts of teachers (p.120). A HR educator must be endowed with or develop abilities, values and believes that are essential for teaching HRE. Stobart (1991) argued that effectiveness of HRE depends on the commitment of the individual teacher. Effective HRE requires committed and skilled teachers (Osler & Starkey, 1994). An HR educator must have a firm belief in the necessity and efficacy of HR for bringing social transformation. A teacher must practice HR in the classroom as well as outside of it. A HR educator must see social disparities,

inequalities, and discrepancies from a critical perspective. The critical perspective on issues prepares the ground for HR implementation. Without the critical perspective, one cannot see the rationale behind things and the way they exist. For instance, the presence of stark economic disparities is not God given but a man made situation and hence not sacrosanct. The critical perspective proposes that if it is man made it can be changed. Thus, it is imperative for an HR educator to analyze social conditions critically and instill the same ability among the students as well.

### **8.3 Institutionalization of Human Rights Education**

During the United Nations Decade for Human Rights Education, the field was institutionalized through development of an internationally framed and produced curriculum and methodology supported by various governmental and nongovernmental HR centers (Sliwinski, 2005, p. 221). Institutionalization of HR as a culture is not possible until national governments take up the issue seriously. In the beginning both Taiwanese and Indian governments showed a keen interest and devised a policy pertaining to HRE. Unfortunately both governments are now largely silent about HRE. It is extremely important to shake the indifferent attitude of the governments of Taipei and ND so that they fulfill their duties.

The UN is contributing to HRE endeavor in many ways but the process is very slow and it does not reach all countries. Taiwan is not a member of the UN and due to this she does not have access to many HR resources, experts, or emoluments. Taiwan is

working hard to curb HR violations and promotion of HRE. Keeping this into consideration, the UN should provide its assistance and expertise for furtherance of HR and HRE in Taiwan. The UN announced the Decade for HRE in 1994 which led many countries to think about introducing HRE in their school curriculum. The decade had certainly produced significant results in the realm of HRE. The UN has to urgently think about initiating another decade for HRE. This would certainly mobilize and rejuvenate the slowing down efforts in the various parts of the World.

After UN it is the INGOs and NGOs that should be looked at for reviving the spirit of promoting HRE at rapid pace. Orlin noted that NGOs are the “Human Rights Gatekeeper” and rely on the HR theory for legitimacy (1998, p. 1). It is true that whatever life HRE program has is largely due to the interest shown by INGOs and NGOs. In Taiwan these organizations are contributing to the cause of HR and HRE. By providing resource material, translating English sources into Chinese, providing assistance in HRE training for teachers, and spreading awareness among the masses, the NGOs in Taiwan are working in the direction of institutionalization of HR and HRE. This is an example which could be followed by other nations including India. NGOs have tremendous potential, a wider base, and direct contact with people and can establish one with the schools too. It is the HRE program which these organizations needed to implement. Amnesty International is working for HR zealously. It has some programs related to HRE which needed to be expanded further. It has online resource material for teaching HRE



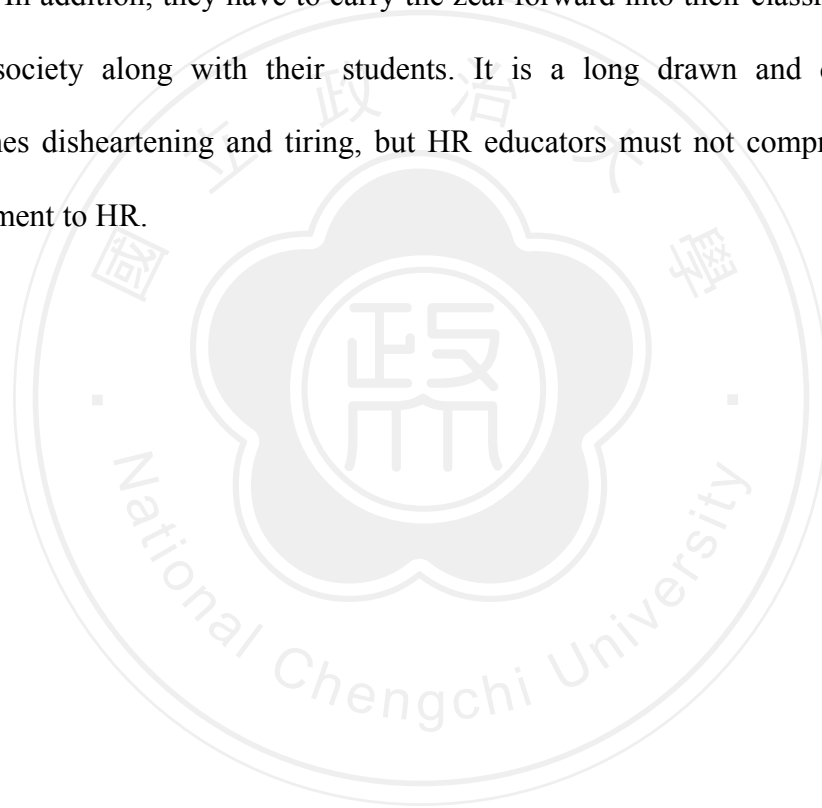
but for that one has to pay a certain amount of money. The organization would have to think about it and make at least some resources if not all available for free.

Another segment of the society that can improve the status of HRE is academicians. Academicians tend to shift the emphasis from outcomes to the values that create and inform the outcomes (Flowers, 2002, p. 8). They are contributing by expanding the knowledge base of HRE. They are working on almost every aspect of HRE from theories to teaching methodologies to approaches to models to problems to challenges, etc. Their work is very scholarly but technical. If these scholars can write their research work in a language and a style that could be understood by HR educators it would produce better results. This would ensure their work to be used smoothly in the classrooms. This would enhance their contribution to the world of HRE exponentially.

#### **8.4 Importance of Training in Human Rights Education**

Magendzo (2005) is of the opinion that many teachers not only lack the knowledge of international and national HR instruments and institutions, they are also unprepared emotionally, pedagogically and culturally to teach HR. The biggest challenge in front of HRE is to ensure proper and quality training in HRE for prospective and in-service teachers. There is no program for this. The teacher is instrumental in HRE and until she/he is trained for teaching HR successful translation of HRE is not possible. Sebaly (1987) prescribed that incorporation of HRE in teacher preparation program will certainly help the teachers in inculcating human rights perspectives and skills among their

students. Teacher education colleges and institutes have to prepare a comprehensive blueprint of training in HRE. To incorporate concepts, themes, and issues of HR into training syllabus is easier but the main challenge is to provide these trainees practical or field experience. For this the institutions can contact NGOs of their areas and arrange for fieldwork. Association with NGOs would provide future teachers an exposure and prepare them to register HR violations as well as provide comfort and justice to the victims. In addition, they have to carry the zeal forward into their classrooms and further to the society along with their students. It is a long drawn and difficult process, sometimes disheartening and tiring, but HR educators must not compromise with their commitment to HR.



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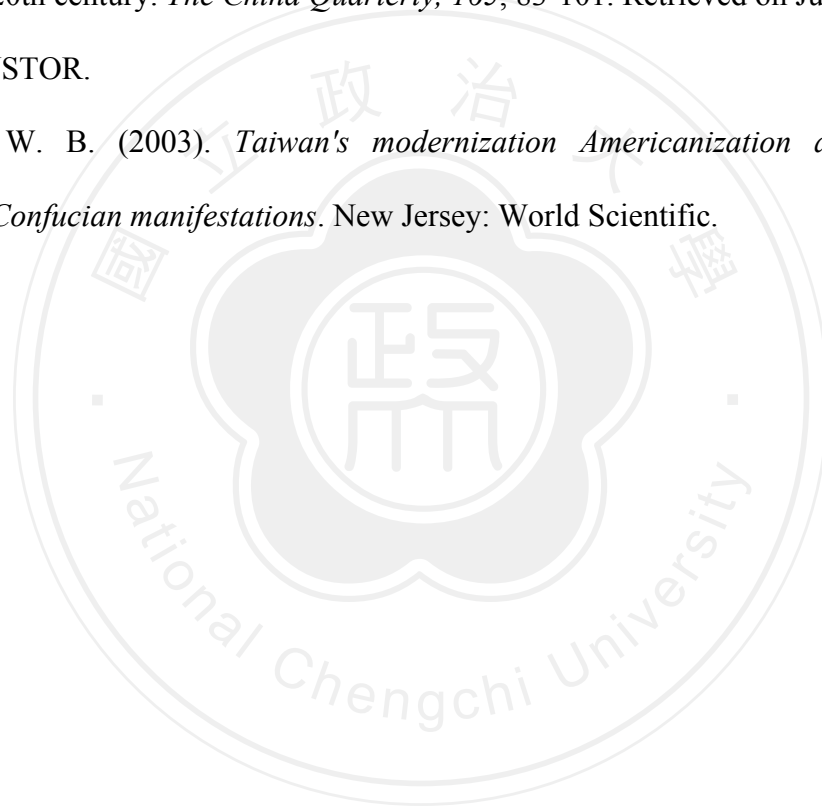
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## Appendix A

### Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights

(<http://www.udhr.org/UDHR/default.htm>)

### Universal Declaration of Human Rights

#### *PREAMBLE*

*Whereas* recognition of the inherent dignity and of the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family is the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world,

*Whereas* disregard and contempt for human rights have resulted in barbarous acts which have outraged the conscience of mankind, and the advent of a world in which human beings shall enjoy freedom of speech and belief and freedom from fear and want has been proclaimed as the highest aspiration of the common people,

*Whereas* it is essential, if man is not to be compelled to have recourse, as a last resort, to rebellion against tyranny and oppression, that human rights should be protected by the rule of law,

*Whereas* it is essential to promote the development of friendly relations between nations,

*Whereas* the peoples of the United Nations have in the Charter reaffirmed their faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person and in the equal rights of men and women and have determined to promote social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom,

*Whereas* Member States have pledged themselves to achieve, in cooperation with the United Nations, the promotion of universal respect for and observance of human rights and fundamental freedoms,

*Whereas* a common understanding of these rights and freedoms is of the greatest importance for the full realization of this pledge,

Now, therefore,  
**The General Assembly**

*proclaims*

**This Universal Declaration of Human Rights**

as a common standard of achievement for all peoples and all nations, to the end 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 and by progressive measures, national and international, to secure their universal and effective recognition and observance, both among the peoples of Member States themselves and among the peoples of territories under their jurisdiction.

***Article 1***

All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood.

***Article 2***

Everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration, without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status.

Furthermore, no distinction shall be made on the basis of the political, jurisdictional or international status of the country or territory to which a person belongs, whether it be independent, trust, non-self-governing or under any other limitation of sovereignty.

***Article 3***

Everyone has the right to life, liberty and security of person.

***Article 4***

No one shall be held in slavery or servitude; slavery and the slave trade shall be prohibited in all their forms.

***Article 5***

No one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.

***Article 6***

Everyone has the right to recognition everywhere as a person before the law.

***Article 7***

All are equal before the law and are entitled without any discrimination to equal protection of the law. All are entitled to equal protection against any discrimination in violation of this Declaration and against any incitement to such discrimination.

***Article 8***

Everyone has the right to an effective remedy by the competent national tribunals for acts violating the fundamental rights granted him by the constitution or by law.

***Article 9***

No one shall be subjected to arbitrary arrest, detention or exile.

***Article 10***

Everyone is entitled in full equality to a fair and public hearing by an independent and impartial tribunal, in the determination of his rights and obligations and of any criminal charge against him.

***Article 11***

(1) Everyone charged with a penal offence has the right to be presumed innocent until proved guilty according to law in a public trial at which he has had all the guarantees necessary for his defence.

(2) No one shall be held guilty of any penal offence on account of any act or omission which did not constitute a penal offence, under national or international law, at the time when it was committed. Nor shall a heavier penalty be imposed than the one that was applicable at the time the penal offence was committed.

***Article 12***

No one shall be subjected to arbitrary interference with his privacy, family, home or correspondence, nor to attacks upon his honour and reputation. Everyone has the right to the protection of the law against such interference or attacks.

***Article 13***

(1) Everyone has the right to freedom of movement and residence within the borders of each State.

(2) Everyone has the right to leave any country, including his own, and to return to his country.

***Article 14***

(1) Everyone has the right to seek and to enjoy in other countries asylum from persecution.

(2) This right may not be invoked in the case of prosecutions genuinely arising from non-political crimes or from acts contrary to the purposes and principles of the United Nations.

***Article 15***

(1) Everyone has the right to a nationality.

(2) No one shall be arbitrarily deprived of his nationality nor denied the right to change his nationality.

***Article 16***

(1) Men and women of full age, without any limitation due to race, nationality or religion, have the right to marry and to found a family. They are entitled to equal rights as to marriage, during marriage and at its dissolution.

(2) Marriage shall be entered into only with the free and full consent of the intending spouses.

(3) The family is the natural and fundamental group unit of society and is entitled to protection by society and the State.

***Article 17***

(1) Everyone has the right to own property alone as well as in association with others.

(2) No one shall be arbitrarily deprived of his property.

#### ***Article 18***

Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion; this right includes freedom to change his religion or belief, and freedom, either alone or in community with others and in public or private, to manifest his religion or belief in teaching, practice, worship and observance.

#### ***Article 19***

Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers.

#### ***Article 20***

(1) Everyone has the right to freedom of peaceful assembly and association.

(2) No one may be compelled to belong to an association.

#### ***Article 21***

(1) Everyone has the right to take part in the government of his country, directly or through freely chosen representatives.

(2) Everyone has the right to equal access to public service in his country.

(3) The will of the people shall be the basis of the authority of government; this will shall be expressed in periodic and genuine elections which shall be by universal and equal suffrage and shall be held by secret vote or by equivalent free voting procedures.

#### ***Article 22***

Everyone, as a member of society, has the right to social security and is entitled to realization, through national effort and international co-operation and in accordance with the organization and resources of each State, of the economic, social and cultural rights indispensable for his dignity and the free development of his personality.

### ***Article 23***

(1) Everyone has the right to work, to free choice of employment, to just and favourable conditions of work and to protection against unemployment.

(2) Everyone, without any discrimination, has the right to equal pay for equal work.

(3) Everyone who works has the right to just and favourable remuneration ensuring for himself and his family an existence worthy of human dignity, and supplemented, if necessary, by other means of social protection.

(4) Everyone has the right to form and to join trade unions for the protection of his interests.

### ***Article 24***

Everyone has the right to rest and leisure, including reasonable limitation of working hours and periodic holidays with pay.

### ***Article 25***

(1) Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and of his family, including food, clothing, housing and medical care and necessary social services, and the right to security in the event of unemployment, sickness, disability, widowhood, old age or other lack of livelihood in circumstances beyond his control.

(2) Motherhood and childhood are entitled to special care and assistance. All children, whether born in or out of wedlock, shall enjoy the same social protection.

### ***Article 26***

(1) Everyone has the right to education. Education shall be free, at least in the elementary and fundamental stages. Elementary education shall be compulsory. Technical and professional education shall be made generally available and higher education shall be equally accessible to all on the basis of merit.

(2) 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.

(3) Parents have a prior right to choose the kind of education that shall be given to their children.

***Article 27***

(1) Everyone has the right freely to participate in the cultural life of the community, to enjoy the arts and to share in scientific advancement and its benefits.

(2) Everyone has the right to the protection of the moral and material interests resulting from any scientific, literary or artistic production of which he is the author.

***Article 28***

Everyone is entitled to a social and international order in which the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration can be fully realized.

***Article 29***

(1) Everyone has duties to the community in which alone the free and full development of his personality is possible.

(2) In the exercise of his rights and freedoms, everyone shall be subject only to such limitations as are determined by law solely for the purpose of securing due recognition and respect for the rights and freedoms of others and of meeting the just requirements of morality, public order and the general welfare in a democratic society.

(3) These rights and freedoms may in no case be exercised contrary to the purposes and principles of the United Nations.

***Article 30***

Nothing in this Declaration may be interpreted as implying for any State, group or person any right to engage in any activity or to perform any act aimed at the destruction of any of the rights and freedoms set forth herein.

**G.A. res. 217A (III), U.N. Doc A/810 at 71 (1948)**

*Adopted on December 10, 1948  
by the General Assembly of the United Nations (without dissent)*



## Appendix B

Developmental Sequence for Core Concepts and Content (Reardon, 1995, p. 14)

Developmental Level	Core Concepts and Values	Human Rights Standards and Instruments	Issues and Problems
Childhood Early grades Ages 5-8 K-grade 3	Rules Order Respect Fairness Diversity Cooperation Personal-responsibility	Classroom rules, Declaration of the Rights of the Child	Inequality Unfairness Harm
Later childhood Middle grades Ages 9-11 Grades 4-6	Law Citizenship Community rights Charter Constitution Freedom Declaration Social responsibility	Community standards, Declaration of Independence, African Freedom Charter, U.S. Bill of Rights, Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Convention on the Rights of the Child	Prejudice Discrimination Poverty Injustice
Adolescence Junior high school Ages 12-14 Grades 7-9	Justice Equality Equity Conventions Covenants Global responsibility International law	Regional human rights conventions UN covenants & conventions: Elimination of Racism; Discrimination Against Women; Civil & Political Rights; Economic, Social & Cultural Rights	Ethnocentrism Racism Sexism Authoritarianism Colonialism Hunger

## Appendix C

Methodologies: Developmental and Conceptual Framework for HRE by Nancy

Flowers (<http://www1.umn.edu/humanrts/edumat/hreduseries/hereandnow/Part-2/framework.htm>)

	Early Childhood	Later Childhood	Adolescence	Older Adolescents and Adults
LEVELS	Preschool & lower primary school Ages 3 to 7	Upper primary school Ages 8 to 11	Lower secondary school Ages 12 to 14	Upper secondary school and adult groups Ages 15 and up
GOALS	Respect for self Respect for parents and teachers Respect for others	Social Responsibility Citizenship Distinguishing wants from needs from rights	Knowledge of specific human rights	Knowledge of human rights standards Integration of human rights into personal awareness and behaviors
KEY CONCEPTS	Self Community Responsibility	Individual rights Group rights Freedom Equality Justice Rule of law Government Security Democracy	International law World Peace World Development World Political Economy World Ecology Legal Rights	Moral inclusion/exclusion Moral responsibility/literacy

			Moral Rights	
PRACTICES	Fairness Self-expression Listening	Valuing diversity Fairness Distinguishing between fact and opinion Performing school or community service Civic participation	Understanding other points of view Citing evidence in support of ideas Doing research/gathering information Sharing information Community service and action	Participation in civic organizations Fulfilling civic responsibilities Civic disobedience Community services and action
SPECIFIC HUMAN RIGHTS PROBLEMS	Racism Sexism Unfairness Hurting people (emotionally, physically)	Discrimination/prejudice Poverty/hunger Injustice Ethnocentrism Passivity	Ignorance Apathy Cynicism Political repression Colonialism/imperialism Economic globalization Environmental degradation	Genocide Torture