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The Performing Arts: Building a Culture of Human Rights through Education Projects for Children

A Micro-Ethnography on Dance and Human Rights Lessons in Kathmandu, Nepal

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Clarissa Crawford, BA

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Mag. Dr. Patricia Hladschik (Ludwig Boltzmann Institut)

List of Abbreviations:

AWIH	Association for the Welfare of Intellectual Handicapped
CCH	Common Children's Home
COE	Council of Europe
CRC	Convention on the Rights of the Child
CRPD	Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
HRC	Human Rights Culture
HRE	Human Rights Education
HRET	Human Rights Education and Training
HRT	Human Rights Training
HRV	Human Rights Values
ICCPR	International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights
ICESCR	International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights
JCS	Jyotidaya Co-operative School
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organizations
OHCHR	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights
SEL	Social Emotional Learning
UDHR	Universal Declaration of Human Rights
UN	United Nations
UNDHRET	United Nations Declaration on Human Rights Education and Training

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Introduction

Who do I want to be? Who and what is positive for me? How do I live practicing values such as respect, honesty, equality and kindness? These kinds of questions one is faced with when learning in the field of the Performing Arts including dance, music, theatre and visual arts. Such questions are important for Human Rights because they shape the individual awareness of a person which then reflects how they will treat themselves and others in their family and the society.

The thesis elaborates on how the Performing Arts are used to build a culture of Human Rights. The Performing Arts provide empowerment tools for students through self-expression. The human connection is strengthened through dance because our bodies remind us of our common humanness. Performing Arts Education (PAE) focuses on shaping the attitude of students reflecting their behaviour and how she or he participates with others. A value-based learning approach was used in Nepal to educate the children of qualities such as freedom, peace and understanding. It is important to teach from an experiential perspective in order for children to grasp how to live with a culture of Human Rights through their behaviour and attitude.

The thesis presents three core chapters. ‘The Theoretical Foundation’ focuses on building the framework between Human Rights Training (HRT) and the Performing Arts. This is executed through a thorough analysis of United Nations (UN) documents that reflect laws or standards pertaining to both the fields of Human Rights and the Performing Arts. ‘The Micro-Ethnography’ reveals the student groups from Nepal that the researcher observed and the interviewees. The chapter also presents the methodology that was used in order to collect data. ‘The Final Results’ chapter gives a detailed write up of the analysis from the researcher on the Dance and Human Rights lessons that were the main focus of the study.

The medium of dance was specifically chosen for the purpose of the micro ethnography because of the researcher's relationship to the instructor. The author of the thesis has two roles of researcher and instructor. The instructors background is in the field of dance therefore this was the medium from the performing arts that has been used. Free movement was implored in the Dance and Human Rights lessons to keep an open atmosphere for students to discover who they are. It welcomes any movement and is not constricting to technical forms of dance. For example, the instructor tells students that the way they walk is a dance. It is important when practicing self-expression that the student is not hindered in their style. Believing in oneself is key in empowerment. Empowering a child to stand up for her or his rights requires a strong belief in what they are doing in order to support their change.

The micro-ethnography was carried out in Kathmandu, Nepal for a period of four months. In the chapter regarding the field study you will find information on the research settings, ethnography and the methods used to conduct the data collection. There is also a timetable detailing dates, lesson names and video recording lengths from the Dance and Human Rights classes. Furthermore, the last chapter is an extensive report on the findings of the micro-ethnography. It is presented through results from each of the institutions where the lessons occurred and the corresponding Human Rights Values (HRV). Being courageous and connecting with others are values that the researcher aimed to teach in order to foster a sense of Human Rights within the children.

The Dance and Human Rights lessons focus on teaching children to confront their emotions rather than hide from them. The use of specific exercises through movement of the body help students to go inwards and understand their feelings. This fosters in students the ability to assess how a situation makes them feel before reacting prematurely. Enabling the opportunity for peaceful decision making to exist. The classes especially focus on the active element of creating a HRC from the underground. This means that instead of focusing purely on the knowledge aspect of Human Rights the major focus is on cultivating an

attitude within children that applies to standards of Human Rights. Interviewee explains to the respondent what she means with a culture of human rights.

Human Rights Education and Training (HRET) is a focal point of the theoretical foundation. The term HRET is used for the purpose of the thesis because of the practical dimension of the Performing Arts. Including training is important since it pertains to the development of the individual's behaviour. The researcher has chosen to produce a study on HRET because of the impact it can have on shaping people's attitudes and behaviours in their everyday lives.

The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) stated that 'there is growing consensus that education in and for human rights is essential and can contribute to both the reduction of human rights violations and the building of free, just and peaceful societies'.¹ The researcher agrees with the guideline for Human Rights Education that it is a means of prevention because when we train or educate children with a culture of Human Rights their behaviour is oriented towards finding a peaceful outcome. In article 13 of the *Guidelines for National Plans of Action for Human Rights Education* it suggests that Human Rights are promoted through three dimensions:

- (a) Knowledge: provision of information about human rights and mechanisms for their protection;
- (b) Values, beliefs and attitudes: promotion of a human rights culture through the development of values, beliefs and attitudes which uphold human rights;**

¹ OHCHR, 'Guidelines for National Plans of Action for Human Rights Education (1997)', [https://www.ohchr.org/EN/Issues/Education/Training/Compilation/Pages/GuidelinesforNationalPlansofActionforHumanRightsEducation\(1997\).aspx](https://www.ohchr.org/EN/Issues/Education/Training/Compilation/Pages/GuidelinesforNationalPlansofActionforHumanRightsEducation(1997).aspx).

- (c) Action: encouragement to take action to defend human rights and prevent human rights abuses.²

The second dimension (b) is in bold because of its particular importance to the overall goal of the research for the master thesis. The Dance and Human Rights lessons observed in Nepal aimed to teach and develop values that will shape attitudes in the direction of building a human rights culture. The third dimension is more easily realized once the second has been formed.

Culture develops from certain beliefs and behaviours that a collective group shares. The HRC aims to be part of lives like language, customs, and the arts. It is a culture ‘in which values of both solidarity and diversity are shared.’³ The Council of Europe states, ‘the aim of Human Rights education is to create a world with a culture of Human Rights’.⁴ The HRC the researcher practiced fostering through the performing arts takes an approach towards solidarity through shared values. This is not a culture that is political or legal in nature⁵, rather it stems from the ground up where local civilians unite. According to Professor Condé ‘a culture of Human Rights happens largely as a result of Human Rights education’.⁶ Teaching values like equality through concrete dance exercises gives the message that diversity is embraced. This small example is part of a larger process that has the potential to foster a HRC.

² *ibid.*

³ K. Nash, ‘Human Rights Culture: Solidarity, Diversity and the Right to Be Different’, *Citizenship Studies*, vol. 9, no. 4, 2005, p. 335–348, Available from Taylor & Francis Online (accessed 1 April 2020).

⁴ Council of Europe, *Compass: Manual for Human Rights Education with Young People*, Strasbourg, 2015, Ch. 1.

⁵ K. Nash, ‘Human Rights Culture: Solidarity, Diversity and the Right to Be Different’, *Citizenship Studies*, vol. 9, no. 4, 2005, p. 335–348, Available from Taylor & Francis Online (accessed 1 April 2020).

⁶ V. Condé, *A Handbook of International Human Rights Terminology*, Lincoln, University of Nebraska Press, 1999, p. 30.

The knowledge, skills and attitudes formed in HRET are defined as the tools, which allow students to ‘play their parts within a culture of Human Rights’.⁷ Therefore the term HRC goes hand in hand with HRET because the education aspect of Human Rights is what helps foster the attitudes and behaviours that form a culture of Human Rights. The United Nations Declaration on Human Rights Education and Training (UNDHRET) also makes reference in article 2(1) to developing attitudes and behaviours, to empower people to contribute to the promotion of a universal culture of Human Rights.⁸ Article 4(b) lists ‘developing a universal culture of Human Rights’ as an essential proponent of the aims of HRET.⁹ Therefore it is quintessential that as part of this research project HRET is referred to as the backbone for defining HRC.

According to the preamble of the ICESCR, ‘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’.¹⁰ Key words from this statement such as dignity, freedom, justice and peace are Human Rights values that are presented in this chapter. The students performance and interviewees responses are related to Human Rights values and how they have been enacted through the medium of dance. The 1993 World Conference on Human Rights declared HRET ‘for fostering mutual understanding, tolerance and peace’.¹¹ Understanding, tolerance and peace are also values of a Human Rights culture that the dance artist aimed to foster amongst the children through dance.

The concept of Human Rights values has been developed from the researchers experience studying and working in the field of Human Rights. She has selected these values based on

⁷ Council of Europe, Compass: Manual for Human Rights Education with Young People, Strasbourg, 2015, Ch. 1.

⁸ United Nations General Assembly Res 66/137, 19 December 2011, Article 2.

⁹ *ibid.*, Article 4.

¹⁰ International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (adopted 16 December 1966, entered into force 3 January 1976) 993 UNTS 3.

¹¹ Council of Europe, Compass: Manual for Human Rights Education with Young People, Strasbourg, 2015, Ch. 1.

specific words used in United Nations documents for Human Rights. In addition, there are other actors working in Human Rights that make reference to the concept. According to organizations like the Equality and Human Rights Commission ‘rights are based on shared values like dignity, fairness, equality, respect and independence’.¹² The notion that these values are shared and are the foundation for Human Rights is how the dance artist has founded her classes. The idea of Human Rights values has also been adopted from Betty A. Reardon, Director of the Peace Education Program, Columbia University. She discusses a ‘holistic values approach to HRET’.¹³ The values she determines as essential to HRET are human dignity and integrity. She claims these are ‘inviolable’ aspects of the human expression.¹⁴ The other values she considers as important for the development of the human being are equality, participation, freedom and sustainability.¹⁵

The Human Rights values briefly presented here in the theoretical chapter are used to organize the ‘final results’ chapter. In that chapter Human Rights values will be discussed in more detail and expanded on in relation to the findings of the Dance and Human Rights classes.

¹² Equality and Human Rights Commission, ‘What Are Human Rights?’, 19 June 2019, <https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/human-rights/what-are-human-rights>, (accessed 11 June 2020).

¹³ B. Reardon, ‘Human Rights and Values Education: Using the International Standards’, *Social Education*, vol. 58, no. 7, 1994, pp. 427–429, Available from National Council for the Social Studies (accessed 11 June 2020).

¹⁴ *ibid.*

¹⁵ *ibid.*

I. Theoretical Foundation

This chapter of the thesis creates the base built from pre-existing literature on the topics of HRET, the Performing Arts and connections between the two fields. The first section aims to define HRC which is embedded in HRET, following that section is a brief introduction to the history of HRET and its open approach to learning. Within the section on HRET is an extensive overview of the international framework that underpins the defining aspects of the field of HRET. Beyond legal standards of HRET this chapter also presents academic and grassroots definitions from different actors within the field of HRET. Then the Performing Arts are presented with examples on how they can be used as an educational tool for furthering a culture of Human Rights.

Following the variety of definitions founding the HRET movement is a section on the implementation of HRET in Nepal. Limitations in implementation are also discussed to bring awareness to the difficulties one might face when working in the field of HRET and the Performing Arts. The interlinkages between HRET and the Performing Arts are elaborated on in order to make a strong case for the purpose of using dance to teach a culture of Human Rights in Nepal. Finally, there are further pedagogical concepts presented which include social emotional learning (SEL) and embodied learning. These additional concepts are raised because they were used as part of the pedagogical process in Nepal.

I.1 HRET - Introduction

The focus on HRET as its own field began when the United Nations declared an international decade for HRET from 1995-2004.¹⁶ This was the starting point for strengthening awareness of education in Human Rights on a global scale. The key to this resolution was the focus on ‘diverse perspectives on what exactly HRET is and does’.¹⁷

¹⁶ United Nations General Assembly Res 49/184, 6 March 1995.

¹⁷ M. Bajaj, ‘Human Rights Education: Ideology, Location, and Approaches’, *Human Rights Quarterly*, vol. 33, no. 2, 2011, p. 482, Available from Jstor (accessed 25 March 2020).

Within the field of HRET there is an approach towards inclusivity for different pedagogical methods. According to Human Rights academics HRET goes ‘beyond a basic imparting of knowledge of Human Rights’.¹⁸ Sources consulted pertaining to the definition of HRET all point towards a similar understanding that the ‘mutability and adaptability of HRET are its strength’.¹⁹ In other words there is no prescribed methodology for conducting HRET, rather it is creative in its possibilities for instruction.

In the HRET movement there is a focus on an active process of learning that is shared collectively, rather than an individual process of regurgitating information that is given. Participatory methods relative to point (b) of the UNDHRET definition (p. 9) are often mentioned in literature regarding the topic. HRET is a system that cannot simply be taught, ‘but that it has to be learned through experience’.²⁰ This emphasizes the urgency of teaching Human Rights through methods, which internalizes the learning process. Not only the lesson plans in HRET should reflect qualities of Human Rights, the environment itself i.e. the space, interactions between students or teachers and students, should be created to inherently practice values like dignity and equality.²¹ HRET is not structured to possess a singular practice or approach.²² The definition is relatively loose and ideological giving room for interpretation on style of implementation.

Limitations in implementation include the national implementation angle, which may cause a loss of a Human Rights culture due to sensitization of curriculums.²³ HRET aims to teach students to take an activist-oriented approach, stand up for their rights and oppose the government when injustice occurs. States do not necessarily want to inspire a revolutionary

¹⁸ *ibid.*

¹⁹ *ibid.*, p. 481.

²⁰ Council of Europe, *Compass: Manual for Human Rights Education with Young People*, Strasbourg, 2015, Ch. 1.

²¹ *ibid.*

²² Bajaj., p. 489.

²³ *ibid.*, p. 488-489.

approach in constructing a culture of Human Rights.²⁴ Therefore it is likely if implementation is solely enacted through a state's ministry of education, the focus will be on knowledge of Human Rights without regard for skills, behaviours or attitudes, in a way 'that it loses its activist-oriented approach'.²⁵ The strengthening of grassroots efforts in HRET is vital in order to help students evolve into change makers within their communities. HRET is carried out majorly through the non-formal sector of a society in order to evolve a Human Rights culture that the state might otherwise limit.²⁶

I.2. HRET - The International Framework

Human rights education aims to achieve 'the imparting of skills and the development of attitudes and values in support of Human Rights'.²⁷

According to Compasito the Manual on Human Rights Education for Children, 'informal education refers to the unintentional lifelong process whereby everyone acquires attitudes, values, skills and knowledge from the educational influences and resources in his or her own environment'.²⁸ This is an essential goal of HRET, to empower students with Human Rights skills which they can use in their daily lives.²⁹

This section of the chapter aims to layout historically the international documents that have particular relevance to developing HRET. I will elaborate on the importance of four international documents that make reference to HRET as a human right. The agreements that will be presented were formed within the United Nations, two declarations non-legally binding, a covenant and convention both legally binding. The first important source is the

²⁴ S. Cardenas, 'Constructing Rights? Human Rights Education and the State', *International Political Science Review*, vol. 26, no. 4, 2005, p. 364, Available from Jstor (accessed 15 May 2020).

²⁵ Bajaj., p. 489.

²⁶ *ibid.*

²⁷ J. Todres and S. King, *The Oxford Handbook of Children's Rights Law*, New York, Oxford University Press, 2020, p. 699.

²⁸ N. Flowers, M. Santos, J. Claeys et al, *Compasito: Manual on Human Rights Education for Children 2nd Edition*, Budapest, Directorate of Youth and Sport of the Council of Europe, 2009, p. 28.

²⁹ Council of Europe, *Compass: Manual for Human Rights Education with Young People*, Strasbourg, 2015, Ch. 1.

Universal Declaration of Human Rights 1948, followed by the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights 1966, Convention on the Rights of the Child 1989 and the Universal Declaration on Human Rights Education and Training 2011.

Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948)

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), although not legally binding is the founding document of Human Rights. This declaration is regarded as one of the strongest in guiding principles for the responsibilities of states.³⁰ It has been signed in agreement by all 192-member states of the United Nations and is translated into over 500 languages.³¹ The declaration has also served as a starting point for international Human Rights law, for example the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and the Convention on the Rights of the Child. The UDHR has been implemented into national constitutions. The documents significance lies in its universal recognition.

The preamble of the document states that the declaration ‘shall strive by teaching and education to promote respect for these rights and freedoms’.³² Article 26 extends on the preamble and has been substantial in creating a basis for education in Human Rights:

1. Everyone has the right to education.
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.³³

³⁰ G. Andreopoulos, ‘Universal Declaration of Human Rights 1948’, *Encyclopædia Britannica*, 2 January 2020, <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Universal-Declaration-of-Human-Rights>, (accessed 5 April 2020).

³¹ OHCHR, ‘About the Universal Declaration of Human Rights Translation Project’ [webpage], 2020, <https://www.ohchr.org/EN/UDHR/Pages/Introduction.aspx>, (accessed 5 April 2020).

³² United Nations General Assembly Res 217 A, 10 December 1948.

³³ *ibid.*, Article 26.

The article focuses on the right to education for all and the second paragraph of the article defines the constitution of education. This is important to mention in that HRET stems from the general right to education. The article makes explicit that within a person's education she or he have the right to be educated in Human Rights and their fundamental freedoms. There is not a specific right to HRET in the declaration however it is regarded as an essential part of the right to education. Therefore when defining HRET we must perceive it with respect to the overarching right to education in which it falls under in the international framework.

International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (1966)

The second key document from the United Nations I would like to emphasize fundamental to the research topic is the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR). The rights enshrined in the UDHR were translated into legally binding documents. The rights were organized into two individual covenants: civil and political rights and economic, social and cultural rights.³⁴ The ICESCR promotes social equality and fairness in various aspects of society. The right to work, the right to health, the right to education and the right to cultural life are examples of the focus of the covenant.³⁵

The preamble of the ICESCR recognizes that Human Rights 'derive from the inherent dignity of the human person'.³⁶ In other words Human Rights are not a new concept developed external to the human being. Rather these rights stem directly from the internal essence of being human. This is the basis for starting a Human Rights culture. Where it is recognized that within the child, adult or elderly Human Rights are part of who they are. In the preamble it is also realized that the individual has responsibilities to him or herself and

³⁴ International Network for Economic, Social & Cultural Rights, 'Background Information on the ICESCR', [webpage], <https://www.escr-net.org/resources/section-5-background-information-icescr>, (accessed 7 april 2020).

³⁵ International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (adopted 16 December 1966, entered into force 3 January 1976) 993 UNTS 3.

³⁶ *ibid.*, preamble.

to other individuals in the community to which he or she belongs.³⁷ This realization in the preamble is an essential lesson in HRET. Teaching a child his or her responsibility to themselves and the community is key in creating the attitude wanted for a universal culture of Human Rights.

Article 13 in the ICESCR is particularly relevant in shaping and fostering the discussion surrounding HRET. Similar to the UDHR the right of everyone to education is the starting point in which the idea of HRET falls under.

1. The states parties agree that education shall be directed to the full development of the human personality and the sense of its dignity, and shall strengthen the respect for Human Rights and fundamental freedoms. They further agree that education shall enable all persons to participate effectively in a free society, promote understanding, tolerance and friendship among all nations and all racial, ethnic or religious groups.³⁸

The full development of the human personality and dignity are key principles that were used to foster a culture of Human Rights amongst the students in Nepal (see data analysis and findings). Promoting understanding, tolerance and friendship are benchmarks in HRET for effectively developing a HRC. The right to education in the ICESCR strongly focuses on values of Human Rights that are experiential based rather than knowledge based. Without explicitly mentioning Human Rights education the description of the right to education clearly points toward fostering a culture of Human Rights through education.

Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989)

The third key document in the international framework for forming the field of HRET is the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC). A strong document, the most ratified in the

³⁷ *ibid.*

³⁸ *ibid.*, Article 13.

world, has a legally binding status to protect the rights of children in every society.³⁹ The CRC applies to all children below the age of 18. The convention was built upon the United Nations Declaration of the Rights of the Child 1959. The CRC was the first legally binding document addressing child rights.⁴⁰ The preamble of the convention states that the child ‘should be fully prepared to live an individual life in society’.⁴¹ Reference to preparedness could be understood as a remark to teaching and that education serves a greater purpose in teaching children to be able to function in society. Similar to the UDHR and ICESCR, the CRC makes reference to Human Rights under the right to education of the child. Article 28 of the convention lays the foundation for the right to education:

1. the right of the child to education...and on the basis of equal opportunity.
2. school discipline is administered in a manner consistent with the child’s human dignity.⁴²

Article 29 signifies the approach in which the right to education should take:

1. The education of the child shall be directed to:
 - (a) the development of the child’s personality, talents and mental and physical abilities to their fullest potential;
 - (b) the development of the respect for Human Rights and fundamental freedoms.
 - (c) the development of respect for the child’s parents, his or her own cultural identity, language and values...and for civilizations different from his or her own.

³⁹ Encyclopedia.Com, ‘United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child’, [webpage], 22 March 2020, <https://www.encyclopedia.com/children/encyclopedias-almanacs-transcripts-and-maps/un-convention-rights-child>, (accessed 7 april 2020).

⁴⁰ *ibid.*

⁴¹ Convention on the Rights of the Child, (adopted 20 November 1989, entered into force 2 September 1990) 1577 UNTS 3.

⁴² *ibid.*, Article 28.

- (d) the preparation of the child for responsible life in a free society, in the spirit of understanding, peace, tolerance, equality of sexes, and friendship among all peoples.
- (e) the development of respect for the natural environment.⁴³

From article 28 mentioned above it is clear that a child's right to education should be in accordance with Human Rights standards: equal opportunity and human dignity. Article 29 arranges the goals of the right to education. These five elements of the article are all Human Rights oriented. They are especially useful as directives or aims in Human Rights training programs.

United Nations Declaration on Human Rights Education and Training (2011)

The fourth international agreement for the theoretical foundation is the United UNDHRET. This document is important because it is the first of its kind created specifically for the field of HRT. The UNDHRET lays out the foundation for guiding United Nations agencies, states, NGOs, individuals and the private sector in defining and presenting the aims and goals of HRET. The preamble of the declaration reaffirms:

that everyone has the right to education, and that education shall be directed to the full development of the human personality and the sense of its dignity...and further the activities of the United Nations for the maintenance of peace, security, and the promotion of development and Human Rights.⁴⁴

This section of the preamble suggests that the promotion of Human Rights is an essential part of the right to education. The emphasis on the 'full development of the human personality' gives room for interpretation. That not only is education knowledge based it focuses on the physical, mental, emotional and spiritual being of a person. The preamble

⁴³ *ibid.*, Article 29.

⁴⁴ United Nations General Assembly Res 66/137, 19 December 2011.

further goes on to acknowledge ‘the fundamental importance of Human Rights education and training in contributing to the promotion, protection and effective realization of all Human Rights’.⁴⁵ This is a strong statement regarding the significance of HRET for disseminating Human Rights skills and knowledge therefore fostering a culture of Human Rights.

The 2005 World Summit Outcome is mentioned in the preamble because of the international support, which HRET received from Heads of State, and government in its promotion. The declaration continues to present 14 articles which layout the basis for which the right to HRET shall be applied. Article 1 implies that everyone has the right to access HRET.⁴⁶ This statement is vital in that it places the importance of HRET as equal to any other human right. Article 4 of the declaration pertains to the basis in which HRET should be executed. Paragraph (b) stood out for the nature of the thesis because of the focus towards developing a universal culture of Human Rights. In Article 4(b) the connection is being made between HRET and the potential it has to foster a culture of Human Rights within learners.

The UNDHRET also makes reference to the arts. This is key in particular to the efforts of this study in bringing the performing arts in connection with HRT. Article 6 paragraph 2 states the following: ‘the arts should be encouraged as a means of training and raising awareness in the field of Human Rights’.⁴⁷ This article is extremely important in being the starting point for the entire project surrounding the thesis. The article empowers the idea to use a medium such as dance to teach Human Rights values.

⁴⁵ *ibid.*

⁴⁶ *ibid.*, Article 1.

⁴⁷ *ibid.*, Article 6.

I.3. HRET – Discourse

In this section are several definitions of HRET presented from notable Human Rights instruments and institutions. It is important to present multiple understandings of the term in order to gain an overview of the aims and goals of HRET.

Legal Standards

According to the United Nations Declaration on Human Rights Education and Training, HRET is directed towards:

- (a) Education *about* Human Rights, which includes providing knowledge and understanding of Human Rights norms and principles, the values that underpin them and the mechanisms for their protection;
- (b) Education *through* Human Rights, which includes learning and teaching in a way that respects the rights of both educators and learners;
- (c) Education *for* Human Rights, which includes empowering persons to enjoy and exercise their rights and to respect and uphold the rights of others.⁴⁸

In the definition the key words *about*, *through*, and *for* Human Rights are often emphasized amongst Human Rights institutions surrounding the theme of HRET. For example these three pillars are how the Council of Europe also defines HRET. Learning *about* Human Rights and the mechanisms, which protect them, is knowledge based. Learning *through* Human Rights focuses on Human Rights values and the process of learning is consciously prioritised. Learning *for* Human Rights refers to the development of skills, attitudes and values that learners can apply in their daily lives leading towards action for Human Rights.⁴⁹ The large focus of the trainings given to students in Nepal were geared towards the *through* and *for* aspects of HRET.

⁴⁸ *ibid.*, Article 2.

⁴⁹ Council of Europe, *Compass: Manual for Human Rights Education with Young People*, Strasbourg, 2015, Ch. 1.

Academic Perspective

In addition to the definitions provided by the United Nations, the researcher also presents ideas from Human Rights scholars. Scholars in the field of Human Rights education like Betty Reardon have their own angle to defining the subject. Rather than a focus on disseminating certain rights and freedoms, there is a focus on values, principles and moral standards.⁵⁰ The HRET framework is created ‘to cultivate the capacities to make moral choices’.⁵¹ This highlights the need to develop skills and attitudes within students that help them to choose morality in the decision making process.

It is important to gain an overview of HRET beyond the United Nations definitions. Human rights scholar Monisha Bajaj highlights three distinct types of HRET. HRET for Global Citizenship, Coexistence and Transformative action are detailed explanations that conceptualize different approaches to HRET. HRET for global citizenship is defined as the fostering of knowledge and skills based on universal values and standards. These values and standards put emphasis on an educational approach, which includes qualities like empathy and compassion.⁵² This approach to HRET focuses on preparing students to become international actors part of United Nations bodies per example in the fight for Human Rights.

HRET for Coexistence is based on Gordon Allport’s contact theory from *The Nature of Prejudice*. He declares that working within a group setting will help to reduce prejudice and stereotypes.⁵³ This approach is used as a method for ‘creating greater empathy and understanding’.⁵⁴ In an environment that values integration, coexisting with one another equally is possible. Education for coexistence is also elaborated on as education ‘to shape

⁵⁰ *ibid.*

⁵¹ B. Reardon, *Educating for Human Dignity: Learning about Rights and Responsibilities*, Philadelphia, University of Pennsylvania Press, 1995, p. 3.

⁵² M. Bajaj, ‘Human Rights Education: Ideology, Location, and Approaches’, *Human Rights Quarterly*, vol. 33, no. 2, 2011, pp. 489-490, Available from Jstor (accessed 25 March 2020).

⁵³ *ibid.*, p. 493.

⁵⁴ *ibid.*, p. 492.

minds, hearts, and behaviors of succeeding generations'.⁵⁵ HRET for coexistence emphasizes a hope to educate young people on principles like respecting others, friendship, non-judgment and tools for solving disputes.⁵⁶ The group dynamic in HRET serves as a practical setting for developing Human Rights attitudes and skills.

HRET for Transformative Action gives importance to agency and solidarity.⁵⁷ This refers to the self-awareness of an individual's role in the greater whole and how she or he can put their learning into action. Students are given the skills to be able to address their reality and have the intrinsic motivation or courage to act upon their reality and make change.⁵⁸ The goal of transformative action is not only to protect the rights of oneself but also the rights of others, fostering solidarity amongst divided groups.⁵⁹ This approach to HRET can be compared to the *for* aspect of the HRET definition presented earlier. In that it is similar in influencing the action-oriented approach in students to implement their learning in real life scenarios.

Grassroots Definitions

Definitions of HRET at the grassroots level are important to address because of the role of civil society organizations in disseminating knowledge and fostering a culture of Human Rights. NGOs like Amnesty International are a key intermediary for implementation of HRET on a local level. The United Nations created a declaration founding the basis for HRET. NGOs or individuals help to realize that document through practical implementation. The purpose of HRET recalled by renowned Human Rights Agency - Amnesty International:

⁵⁵ M. Minow, 'Education for Co-Existence', *Harvard Law School Scholarly Articles*, vol. 44, no. 1, 2002, p. 2, Available from DASH (accessed 26 March 2020).

⁵⁶ *ibid.*

⁵⁷ *ibid.*, p. 493.

⁵⁸ *ibid.*

⁵⁹ *ibid.*, p. 494.

Through Human Rights education you can empower yourself and others to develop the skills and attitudes that promote equality, dignity and respect in your community, society and worldwide.⁶⁰

A key word in this definition is ‘empower’ because it points to strengthening the individual to help her self and others in humanity. This is essentially the main goal of HRET to support students from the ground up to be able to acquire skills that fosters behaviours of kindness, equality, fairness and respect.

Other grassroots organizations like The People’s Movement for Human Rights Learning choose to focus on Human Rights as a way of life.⁶¹ The civil-society organization chooses to name the field as Human Rights learning instead of Human Rights education. This puts emphasis on the *through* and *for* aspects mentioned earlier, which suggest that more important than the knowledge forming Human Rights is the values and attitudes acquired in the learning process. The word learning is used instead of education to avoid a purely logical based connotation. Using the word learning recognizes the process of discovering a culture of Human Rights that can be applied to the student’s everyday life.⁶² This definition implies that learning in the field of Human Rights supplements a person’s lifestyle and therefore is like a lived culture.

I.4. HRET - The Performing Arts

Conceptualizing the connections between the formal fields of HRET and the Performing Arts formulates the core at which using artistic tools can be viable for fostering a Human Rights culture. This chapter builds the foundation for the field study conducted in Kathmandu researching how Human Rights culture can be practiced through dance

⁶⁰ Amnesty International, ‘Human Rights Education’, 2020, Available from <https://www.amnesty.org/en/human-rights-education/> (accessed 25 March 2020).

⁶¹ The People’s Movement for Human Rights Learning, ‘A Brief Introduction To Our Thinking’ [webpage], <https://www.pdHRET.org/about.html#thinking>, (accessed 2 April 2020).

⁶² Council of Europe, Compass: Manual for Human Rights Education with Young People, Strasbourg, 2015, Ch. 1.

education. The definitions of HRET are general and do not prescribe exact methods that must be used for HRET. This allows for a creative interpretation of implementation. I will use this chapter to elaborate on how techniques in the Performing Arts have been used to teach values that are central to fostering a culture of Human Rights.

Embracing the human condition is essential for HRET in that it reminds the pupil of her or his presence and connection to everyone else who is human. Central to being human and understanding what it means to be human is often explored through arts based experiences.⁶³ The book on arts education for healing, learning and wholeness highlights the ‘deeply ingrained interior journeys’ that ‘all reflect ways of observing and embracing the world of others’.⁶⁴ Through this type of learning, clarity and personal freedom can be achieved.⁶⁵

Living by a Human Rights culture requires intrinsic work combined with healing before one can apply Human Rights standards to themselves and others. In performing arts education ‘the challenge of the teacher is how to bring about first-hand experience that is connected to the transformative processes of living reality’⁶⁶. I can directly relate this statement to the definition of HRET: the implementation of knowledge and skills into real life situations.⁶⁷ The aim of HRET is to teach students skills that can be used in real life and not only in the classroom. Therefore, the Performing Arts presents a prime medium in which practical day-to-day skills can be developed.

⁶³ D. Caracciolo and C. Weida, *The Swing of the Pendulum the Urgency of Arts Education for Healing, Learning, and Wholeness*, Rotterdam, Brill | Sense Publishers, 2017, p. abstract.

⁶⁴ *ibid.*

⁶⁵ *ibid.*

⁶⁶ M. Ver Eecke, ‘Balance Arises out of Movement and Stillness’, in D. Caracciolo, and C. Weida (ed.), *The Swing of the Pendulum: The Urgency of Arts Education for Healing, Learning, and Wholeness*, Rotterdam, Brill | Sense Publishers, 2017, p. 101.

⁶⁷ Amnesty International

Nepali Perspective

In the interview with Sajna she discusses the communicative advantages of the performing arts in teaching Human Rights. She said that the performing arts are,

convenient to communicate with the students because when you talk to a child about Human Rights, they don't understand it. So, I think performing arts could be the tool that we can communicate with that child. Even with language barrier or even with the child who cannot talk.⁶⁸

The performing arts offer a child friendly alternative for understanding a complex topic such as Human Rights. Including children who are unable to speak, the performing arts offer an alternative outlet or language for communicating. The director of AWIH says in her interview,

one thing is problem language they can't express them and if we see their eyes and movement of bodies that is good. That express their expression. We understand them.⁶⁹

Meena has difficulties communicating with the students and she noticed that from these classes she could see in their eyes and from movement what they want to express. She said 'We understand them'.

Sajna suggests that the goal of SPAK is to empower students through the performing arts to know 'it's okay if you over walk that barrier and stand for yourself'.⁷⁰ This is the ultimate

⁶⁸ Interview with Sajna Jirel, Kathmandu, 19 December 2019.

⁶⁹ Interview with Meena Dhungana, Kathmandu, 02 January 2020.

⁷⁰ Interview with Sajna Jirel, Kathmandu, 19 December 2019.

goal of HRET (*through* Human Rights) to empower students to be active citizens and stand up for their rights.⁷¹

Performing arts gradually improved children's behaviour from being uninterested and 'really aggressive'⁷² to more openly communicating, choosing to attend classes and having the confidence and desire to perform.

‘Slowly, maybe it's because of the, I'm sure it's because of the classes they have been taking. They are really like, they started communicating with me, they started coming on their own to the music classes and they became really opened up, they're confident to perform in front of crowds. So those kinds of changes I have felt, and I have observed’.⁷³

This is a reflection of the power the performing arts has to change a child's behaviour intrinsically. Being expressive, communicating and engaging are all aspects of the Human Rights attitude the researcher aims to explore as part of HRET through the performing arts.

Academic Perspective

A key academic figure in the discussion on HRET and the Performing Arts is Andrea McEvoy Spero. She relies on the definition from the OHCHR to make the connection to the importance of the performing arts for HRET. She defends that ‘HRET requires a type of educational experience that empowers youth to transform their reality, and the use of performance art...achieves this aim’.⁷⁴ The ultimate goal of fostering a culture of Human Rights requires applying Human Rights principles to lived experience.⁷⁵ HRET through

⁷¹ United Nations General Assembly Res 66/137, 19 December 2011.

⁷² *ibid.*

⁷³ *ibid.*

⁷⁴ A. Spero, ‘Human Rights Education and the Performing Arts’, *Peace Review: A Journal of Social Justice*, vol. 24, no. 1, 2012, p. 28, Available from Taylor & Francis (accessed 2 September 2019).

⁷⁵ *ibid.*

performing arts is a transformational process that requires conscious awareness of the self. This is a type of critical awareness that empowers students to hone their skills for analysing the world within and around them.⁷⁶ Such a learning process ‘requires creativity, dialogue, reflection, decision-making, analysis, and synthesis skills’.⁷⁷ This is an active approach to education that is embedded in the pedagogy of the performing arts.

Music, dance, theatre and visual art are all forms of communal dialogue.⁷⁸ Performance art is a common thread in all cultures of every society. Therefore, it is an important medium for connecting people with different backgrounds. Especially for classroom environments the performing arts allows for various expressions with respect for opinions, ideas, stories other than our own. Instructing students to create their own performance pieces gives them the space to reflect their own understanding of the world through a Human Rights lens.⁷⁹ The creative process helps individuals to develop their critical consciousness through discovering themselves and the world around them.⁸⁰ In recognizing their inner power, youth may begin to create a new reality.⁸¹ This is the type of attitude needed for active change makers in the society.

Specific Examples

Teachers use different methods for incorporating use of the performing arts into HRET lessons. Some examples include using ‘the UDHR’s 30 articles as a framework for literary themes and conflicts’.⁸² This method was used to enhance creativity of the students while connecting it to an important foundational document in the field of Human Rights. The

⁷⁶ P. Freire, ‘Pedagogy of the Oppressed’, in A. Spero, ‘Human Rights Education and the Performing Arts’, *Peace Review: A Journal of Social Justice*, vol. 24, no. 1, 2012, p. 29, Available from Taylor & Francis (accessed 2 September 2019).

⁷⁷ Spero, 2012, p. 29.

⁷⁸ *ibid.*

⁷⁹ *ibid.*

⁸⁰ A. Boal, ‘Theatre of the Oppressed’, in A. Spero, ‘Human Rights Education and the Performing Arts’, *Peace Review: A Journal of Social Justice*, vol. 24, no. 1, 2012, p. 29, Available from Taylor & Francis (accessed 2 September 2019).

⁸¹ Spero, 2012, p. 29.

⁸² *ibid.*, p. 30.

context of the performing arts encourages students to use current issues in their lives as material for learning which is an important part of the transformative process of HRET.

Being able to apply Human Rights principle to an individuals' everyday life requires facing Human Rights challenges we have already experienced. The classroom provides a safe place to practice strengthening behaviours that would prevent violations and possibilities for dealing with Human Rights abuses. The performing arts give a practical space where such issues can be approached and worked on individually or as a group. Change for the community has the potential to start within education.⁸³ An English high school teacher who used performance for his lessons in HRET exclaims:

I want them to arm themselves with thinking to effectively voice out their opinions...This is what I came to teaching for; for the kids; for the youth, put out their voices when they have to. Establish their voice if they don't think they have one, give voice to the voiceless and what better way to do it than this?⁸⁴

He recalls that his lessons are purposeful because he is teaching through methods, which empower the student's voices. He implies that the performing arts are the best way to educate a child in using their own voice to make change. Making use of the performing arts to raise student's voices as opposed to passively imposing knowledge onto them. Such an active approach to teaching engages the entire human being, which is essential for a subject such as Human Rights.

Waldorf Education System

This section focuses on the artistic educational tools used in Waldorf Schools and how this form of teaching has goals similar to that of HRET. It is important to mention the Waldorf system to encourage creative learning concepts in HRET. Rudolf Steiner founded the

⁸³ *ibid.*, p. 31.

⁸⁴ *ibid.*,

education system known as Waldorf Schools in the early twentieth century.⁸⁵ The aim of the Waldorf schooling experience is to evolve the consciousness of children, ‘the intention is to educate head, heart, and hands’.⁸⁶ Central to this form of education is creativity and the arts because of their positive role in human development and well being.⁸⁷ For a Human Rights culture to be formed and people to live by it, it is important to take care of ones emotional, physical and mental health. If one is treating themselves poorly, she or he will not have the strength to treat others with dignity or respect.

HRET values the individual while learning how to respect the rights of others. The Waldorf education system including eurhythmy embraces the combination of individual creativity and social interaction.⁸⁸ Eurhythmy is the focus of rhythmical movements in the body that is used for expressive purposes.⁸⁹ Through curriculums that implement movement as a teaching technique or other art forms experiential learning is acquired. Learning through experience is practical and therefore a useful tool to foster a culture of Human Rights. Similar to the three-parted definition: *about, through* and *for* of HRET from the United Nations, the Waldorf system determines education ‘for thinking, for feeling, and for intentional, purposeful activity’.⁹⁰ In other words HRET and the Waldorf System have similar goals for their education purposes. The Waldorf System, which has already been established for 100 years, can be a useful guiding tool for the implementation of HRET.

Further Pedagogical Approaches

In this section of the theoretical foundation is an elaboration on further types of pedagogy that are used to teach HRET. These concepts discussed are social emotional learning and embodied learning. Such concepts are also promoted through HRET lessons in the

⁸⁵ *ibid.*, p.102.

⁸⁶ *ibid.*; J. Petrash, *Head, Heart, and Hands*, Beltsville, Gryphon House Inc., 2002, p. 24.

⁸⁷ *ibid.*

⁸⁸ *ibid.*, p. 102.

⁸⁹ *ibid.*

⁹⁰ Petrash, p.24.

performing arts. I have chosen to include these concepts in the theoretical foundation because of their contribution to HRET and the field study in Nepal.

Emotional empowerment is crucial ‘for the full and harmonious development of his or her personality’.⁹¹ The preamble of the CRC states that the child should grow up ‘in an atmosphere of happiness, love and understanding’.⁹² These emotions are essential to a child’s upbringing. It is important within education that the child becomes aware of their emotions in order to achieve such an atmosphere of positive feelings.

SEL is defined as the building of intrapersonal (self-awareness) and interpersonal (awareness of others) social intelligences necessary for living an effective and engaged life.⁹³ The World Programme for Human Rights Education proclaimed by the general assembly of the United Nations defines HRET as going ‘beyond cognitive learning and includes the social and emotional development of all those involved in the learning and teaching process’.⁹⁴

This type of development is essential for HRET because it teaches pupils to acquire the skills for strengthening empathic behaviour. The first internal step to making a decision to help another student being bullied on the bus or a person being persecuted for their political opinion is, caring about another person’s suffering.⁹⁵ Social emotional learning ‘helps us to understand how our actions affect others’.⁹⁶ Through emotional awareness we can foster a culture of Human Rights where respecting others is at the heart of HRET.

⁹¹ Convention on the Rights of the Child, (adopted 20 November 1989, entered into force 2 September 1990) 1577 UNTS 3.

⁹² *ibid.*

⁹³ The Advocates for Human Rights, ‘Social Emotional Learning’, April 2013, Available from https://www.theadvocatesforhumanrights.org/spring_2013_social_emotional_learning (accessed 11 April 2020).

⁹⁴ United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, ‘Plan of Action: World Programme for Human Rights Education; First Phase’ (New York and Geneva, 2006), p. 43.

⁹⁵ The Advocates for Human Rights, p. 1.

⁹⁶ *ibid.*

Similar to the goals of HRET the pedagogical approach of social emotional learning focuses on developing the necessary knowledge, skills and attitudes for emotional competence, conflict management and responsible decision-making.⁹⁷ These skills are relevant for the attitude HRET aims to foster. SEL teaches students to identify discrimination and inequality based on the comprehension of feelings (insert source). Students engaged in confidence building through SEL are less likely to participate in harmful or violent activities with their peers (insert source). A further important connection SEL has with HRET is to ‘reduce prejudice and increase appreciation for diversity’.⁹⁸ The approach to learning through emotional experience holds a transformative power where personal worth and agency are strengthened.⁹⁹ The transformative potential of SEL is desirable for HRET. Through transformation an individual can start to live by Human Rights.

⁹⁷ *ibid.*, p. 6.

⁹⁸ *ibid.*, p. 7.

⁹⁹ *ibid.*

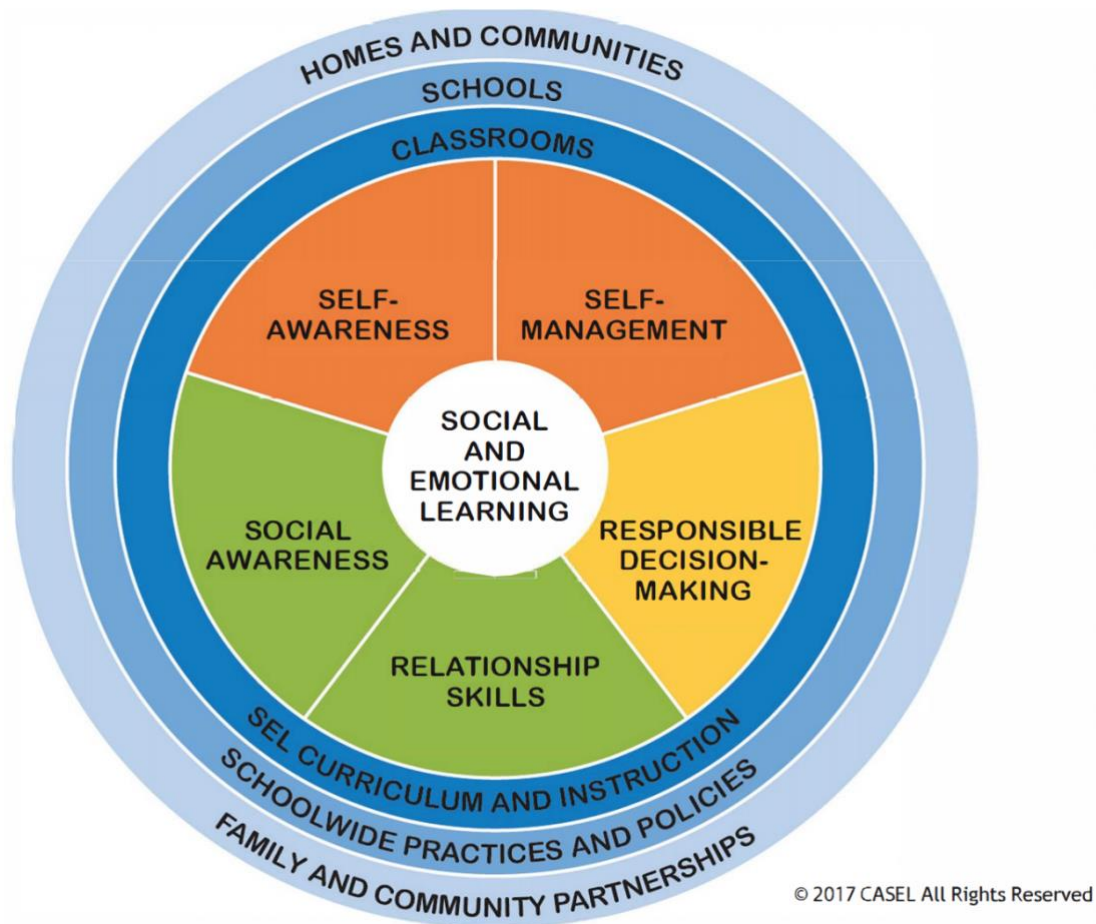


Figure 1: SEL Core Competencies

The figure above shows the core competencies of SEL.¹⁰⁰ The important part to notice in the figure is how these competencies extend beyond the classrooms and into the wider community. Self-awareness educates students to identify their emotions, values and challenges.¹⁰¹ Self-management is working on controlling emotional impulse and behaviours to achieve goals.¹⁰² Social awareness is the ability to show understanding, respect and empathy for others.¹⁰³ Relationship skills build on communication, forming

¹⁰⁰ CASEL, Core SEL Competencies, 2017, Available from <https://casel.org/core-competencies/> (accessed 15 May 2020).

¹⁰¹ *ibid.*

¹⁰² *ibid.*

¹⁰³ *ibid.*

healthy relationships and teamwork.¹⁰⁴ Responsible decision-making refers to analysing situations in order to make well-informed choices on personal and social behaviour.¹⁰⁵ These are all crucial skills in forming a culture of Human Rights through the shaping of attitudes and behaviours that lead to a positive and cohesive environment.

Embodiment is a pedagogical tool that was used during the field study on dance and HRET. Embodied learning is using the body as a part of a transformative process. This is a pedagogical approach that chooses to use the entire human being rather than focusing purely on ‘cognitive capabilities’.¹⁰⁶ The embodiment of learning concept internalizes the lesson therefore the body carries with it the attitude, skill or value derived. Embodied learning does not try to emphasize the body over the mind. It attempts to use embodied cognition, which is the dynamic connection between neural processes and bodily action.¹⁰⁷

Embodiment consists of learning through movement, perceiving the world around us in constant interaction with others and ourselves.¹⁰⁸ This pedagogical tool is also related to SEL in that it combines external experiences of the body with internal thoughts, emotions and feelings.¹⁰⁹ This is a continuous process that is also an important part of Human Rights education. The acquisition of knowledge and skills in embodied learning is considered ‘as the result of a sequential process of learning, rather than focusing on acquisition as an isolated event’.¹¹⁰ The embodied process leads towards mastery of the self, which as a result configures a person with a Human Rights attitude.

¹⁰⁴ *ibid.*

¹⁰⁵ *ibid.*

¹⁰⁶ J. van den Dool, *Move To The Music: Understanding the Relationships Between Bodily Interaction and the Acquisition of Musical Knowledge and Skills in Music Education*. Dissertation, Erasmus University Rotterdam, 2018, p. 14, Available from <https://repub.eur.nl/pub/106278/>, (accessed 12 April 2020).

¹⁰⁷ *ibid.*

¹⁰⁸ *ibid.*, p. 15.

¹⁰⁹ *ibid.*

¹¹⁰ *ibid.*, p.16.

Fostering a culture of Human Rights requires strong individuals who are willing to stand up for the rights of themselves and others. When we notice ‘within the greater rhythm, we find our own individual rhythms’,¹¹¹ we can find our own human strength in relation to the bigger picture. It is important to start with ourselves in order to form a culture of Human Rights. Movement artist and teacher Maria Ver Ecke has the idea that movement has the possibility to move us out of gravity and into levity.¹¹² This sense of gravity is a heaviness that can be related to Human Rights abuse. Levity is a state of light where peace, love and compassion unite. If people are educated to lift themselves out of the gravity (feelings of sadness, pain, tragedy) and into a state of light (feelings of happiness, joy, laughter) it is less likely for Human Rights abuses to occur. Emotional stability and positivity within human beings will decrease the number of Human Rights abusers.

The performing arts are transformative and I believe that HRET aims to do the same. To trigger students to question what they stand for, what they have been taught by society, their family and what their beliefs are. HRET is deemed as a ‘lifelong process’¹¹³, which highlights that it is part of the transformation of being human. As opposed to relying on a fixed amount of time to consume knowledge that is external and does not support the ‘human being in becoming human’.¹¹⁴

Internalizing the learning experience is important for students to be able to apply what they have learned to real-life situations. Ver Eecke involves students through eurhythmy in the educational activity to engage them with the lesson.¹¹⁵ Movement offers an alternative to involving students. You can show them an exercise and they will want to join you because it involves them using their bodies too (insert source). If we speak and treat students as empty vessels only useful for absorbing knowledge it will not humanize their educational

¹¹¹ Ver Ecke, 2017, p. 102.

¹¹² *ibid.*, p. 103.

¹¹³ United Nations General Assembly Res 59/113, 17 February 2005, preamble.

¹¹⁴ Ver Ecke., p. 103.

¹¹⁵ *ibid.*,

experiences. Movement exercises in eurhythm are not only used for physicality but involve the use of feelings and sounds. Combining these elements together creates a heightened self-awareness.¹¹⁶ Self-awareness is a key attribute to living with an attitude of Human Rights.

Conflict can be expressed artistically and dynamics in dance allow for this type of expression. For example contraction and expansion in movement shows the tension and then release of an experience.¹¹⁷ This is useful for HRET in the sense that it has the potential to teach skills of peace building. If students experience through dance the feeling of tension and release, it is a healthy way to discover how conflict can be managed on an emotional level. In other words, when faced with a Human Rights conflict the internalized learning of tension and release will help a student to make an informed decision. Negative reaction to conflict is often due to an inability to control our emotions. Having practiced tension and release in the body prepare pupils for conflict in the sense of not tensing up when they are faced with one. See chapter x (data analysis and findings) for a thorough description of an example of this type of activity used for furthering a culture of Human Rights.

The conception, visualization and embodiment are part of the creative process used in performing arts education.¹¹⁸ This is similar to the concepts of about, for and through in HRET. The core of Human Rights is unity to stand together as one (insert source). This links to PAE in that students stand together in a circle from various backgrounds and they move as one. This strengthens the idea of unity through feeling and internalizing the movement. It is vital 'to educate the whole human being, socially, physically, emotionally, intellectually; this gives wholeness'.¹¹⁹ HRET links to PAE in the sense that it encourages

¹¹⁶ *ibid.*, p. 105.

¹¹⁷ *ibid.*, p. 107.

¹¹⁸ *ibid.*, p. 109.

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 110.

‘developing the full personality of a child’ (Human Rights definition). There is a lack of awareness for human values in HRET. This type of wholesome education can be conducted through the performing arts and help change this. In order to live by Human Rights standards the values of being human must be expressed and integrated.

Grassroots Approach

Grassroots Human Rights organizations like Amnesty International emphasize participatory and interactive learning for implementation.¹²⁰ This involves use of a group dynamic to learn from each other. The performing arts assess the individual while maintaining their role as part of the group. Interaction between students allows them to learn how to overcome difficulties with their counterparts. HRET takes importance in building ‘the attitudes and behaviours’ needed to form a universal culture of Human Rights.¹²¹ The performing arts offer the possibility to engrain positive attitudes and behaviours in students. For example, through the method of embodied learning, students begin to become aware of their movements or behaviours. This shapes the attitudes, which they will then apply to real life situations.

This style of education focuses on the entire learning process from beginning to end including internal change. In other words the focus is not only on the production of knowledge but rather the integration of exercises combined with sharing of experiences. In the performing arts ‘the role of the educator is to facilitate this transformative experience and allow students to showcase their knowledge’.¹²² The performing arts offer an alternative to verbal communication that involves for example the body through movement and facial expression. Using non-verbal methods for learning is important in that it opens another pathway for expression. This helps students who struggle with verbalizing their education process to allow for other outlets.

¹²⁰ *ibid.*

¹²¹ *ibid.*

¹²² *ibid.*

Limitations of Implementation

The difficulty with PAE as a tool for implementing a culture of Human Rights in education projects is that current curricula are not structured to provide time for arts training in Nepal. Sajna says with regards to the performing arts classes that ‘we plan not to do it every day because they need to run through the education curriculum of the country’.¹²³ A major limitation of the education system is that the performing arts are not prioritized in the national curriculum. Therefore, SPAK for example does not offer classes every day in the local schools. Performing art classes are offered for two out of three terms in the year. In order to strengthen the use of the performing arts as a tool for HRET it is important to increase awareness in order to have it placed at equal importance with other subjects.

In the field of the performing arts and Human Rights Sajna makes notice to the point that ‘the lacking part is that people don’t know about it’. There has to be a stronger awareness created for the importance of teaching Human Rights through the performing arts. In order for it to be effective on a larger scale. This is an important reason for conducting research on the topic and writing the thesis, in order to have an example of the power that teaching Human Rights values through the performing arts can have.

¹²³ Interview with Sajna Jirel, Kathmandu, 19 December 2019.

II. Ethnography

The field study was facilitated through the researcher's internship with the private organization School of Performing Arts Kathmandu (SPAK). The researcher developed the idea to incorporate a specific type of micro-ethnographic research alongside the internship. It was both economical and feasible to collect empirical data during her internship with the organization. Her double role as instructor and researcher was made clear to SPAK, the students and leading figures in AWIH, JCSS and CCH (see appendix x for consent to use data). For a detailed description of the environment where empirical data was collected for the study please see the section II.1.1. titled research setting(s).

The research for the thesis was conducted during the internship semester of the Vienna Master of Arts in Human Rights (VMHR). The field study had a fixed time period of four months from October 2019 until the beginning of February 2020. She left Nepal on the 03rd of February 2020 and travelled to Vienna where she did the write up the findings of her field research. It was important to conduct a study for multiple months in order to see the learning process evolve. One or two classes would not have been enough to notice if the implementation of HRV through dance was effective amongst the student's behaviour.

Three groups of children in Kathmandu have been observed and asked questions during the Dance and Human Rights classes which were the research setting for answering the question (how the performing arts can be used as a tool to further a culture of Human Rights in children education projects in Kathmandu). The first group consists of seven children from the AWIH ages 5-14. The second group consists of 10 children from the CCH ages 6-12. The third group consists of 23 children from JCSS ages 13-16. In addition to the three children groups, six interviews were conducted, three of which are used for the findings of the thesis (see p. for a list of the interviewees).

The genders in AWIH were five males and two females. In JCSS the group consisted of eight males and 15 females. The gender of the CCH group for reasons of privacy will be kept anonymous. The JCSS and CCH groups were interreligious Hindu, Christian and Buddhist. The researcher received information from the director of AWIH that all students are from the Hindu religion with different caste groups.¹²⁴ 18 students from JCSS reported that they are Hindus. Two students reported they are Christian and two that they are Buddhist. In the CCH four students reported they are Christian, one student said they have no religion and the other four students were not sure of their religion.

Two of the groups: AWIH and JCSS were given as a study group for the researcher because of their existing contact with the internship organization SPAK. CCH was discovered on the researchers own accord who she made through meeting a civilian that worked for CCH.

The researcher also enrolled in several Nepali lessons in order to strengthen her skills in communicating with the children. Working in a foreign region made it important to learn basics in the Nepali language. This was useful for teaching classes to Nepalese students who did not all understand English. The ‘argot’ or special uses of words was especially important for connecting with the culture.¹²⁵ (See ‘Final Results’ (p.x-x) for specific Nepali words used in the context of teaching).

II.1. Methodology

Writing up ethnographic research requires writing with realism from an external and objective perspective.¹²⁶ The text of the thesis is written in the third person to give a neutral account of the researchers experiences in Kathmandu. This produces a scientific elaboration on the data collected without personal attachments that could possibly confuse analysis.¹²⁷ The method of writing up the findings of the research takes the approach of a postmodern

¹²⁴ Interview with Meena Dhungana, Kathmandu, 02 January 2020.

¹²⁵ Bryman., p. 494.

¹²⁶ *ibid.*, p. 463.

¹²⁷ *ibid.*

ethnography (insert source). In other words, the researcher is often insinuated in the writing because she was part of the process of developing the answer to the research question. The overall approach to analysing the data is reflexive and deduces the information to a deeper and meaningful account.¹²⁸ There is a focus on the words, feelings and actions recalled from the Dance and Human Rights lessons.

Qualitative Approach

This study takes a qualitative approach to data collection. Semi-structured interviews, focus groups and participant observations are tools that have been used for the study. These methods of data collection are qualitative because the aim is to assess information, which has been said or performed in their natural settings, and the social meaning that is given part of this.¹²⁹ The focus of qualitative data collection is concerned with the researchers perspective because she or he tries to make sense of or interpret the social meaning of certain environments.¹³⁰ Data analysis in qualitative research involves meaning making of the observed setting by the researcher through key terms or actions. As opposed to data analysis in quantitative research, which uses numbers or statistics, derived from surveys to reach a conclusion.

The reason for choosing the qualitative approach to research is because of the nature of the performing arts. The performing arts have structure while also being open to change and improvisation. Therefore the system of data collection should be qualitative in order to adapt to those changes for the purpose of the study. The qualitative approach to research gives the flexibility to allow for new findings to emerge that were not necessarily presupposed in lesson plans or questions during interviews.

Mixed-Methods

¹²⁸ *ibid.*, p. 463-464.

¹²⁹ S. McLeod, 'Qualitative vs. Quantitative Research', Simply Psychology, 30 July 2019, Available from <https://www.simplypsychology.org/qualitative-quantitative.html> (accessed 18 January 2020).

¹³⁰ *ibid.*

It is important to mention that the methodological approach used in research depends on 'the problem under investigation'.¹³¹ The motivation for a mixed-methods approach was the different advantages participant observation and interviewing brings to the table.

Participant observation allows close contact with people for an extended period of time.¹³² This was an important method for working with the Nepalese students over a period of four months. The mixed approach of having interviews and participant observation allowed for a deeper understanding through verbal communication while also studying a range of behaviour i.e. emotional, physical, and verbal in the natural setting.¹³³ It was also feasible to rely on the natural setting of the student's school where it made the most sense to practice forming a Human Rights culture. A place that is familiar and normal to them without the researcher making too many changes to their environment.¹³⁴ In order to give a full perspective of the field study from different angles a mixed-methods approach was employed.

Participant Observation

Participant observation often used interchangeably with ethnographic research refers to a field study. Where a researcher immerses herself or himself into a culture other than her or his own to observe, makes detailed recordings of behaviours, and actively participates in some cases.¹³⁵ Being accepted into a group that allows you to study their social behaviours is a difficult feat. Finding a group that will invite you to conduct research on their studies is often luck-based rather than carefully planned.¹³⁶ In this field study the involvement of the researcher was active participation. Her role was to educate the children of Human Rights values through the medium of dance. Rather than passively observing a group setting she was actively involved in creating the setting to be studied.

¹³¹ *ibid.*, p. 497.

¹³² Bryman, 2012. p. 494.

¹³³ *ibid.*

¹³⁴ *ibid.*

¹³⁵ Alan Bryman, *Social Research Methods 4th Edition*, New York, Oxford University Press, 2012, p. 432.

¹³⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 431.

Having the double role of instructor and researcher also influenced the style of field notes that were taken for the purpose of the research question. Mental notes are useful when it is inappropriate to do note taking.¹³⁷ During the classes the role of being a teacher made it challenging to note take. Therefore, she has used video technology to record the lessons enabling her to refer back to and write further detailed notes on the class (see section below on *Visual Ethnography*). It is also important to find the best timing for note taking, as the teacher did not want to disturb the flow of the class. Having a notebook and pen in hand, writing notes while observing the student can make them feel uncomfortable or self-conscious.¹³⁸ Mental notes saved in her memory were then written into full field notes after class. Full field notes are detailed notes made as soon as possible and are one of the main sources of data from the participant observation.¹³⁹

Personal reflections were also an important part of her field notes as the reflexive nature of these notes help with the analysis in writing of the research.¹⁴⁰ Jotted notes or scratch notes were taken during the class in a small notebook that were brief in order to summarize a moment or experience later.¹⁴¹ Scratch notes are inconspicuous therefore being less intrusive to the research environment.¹⁴² The researcher asked questions related to the class exercises and jotted the students' answers in her notebook as key words. Which she could elaborate in her full field notes post-lesson. Her notes consist of recorded observations of the student's behaviours during the Dance and Human Rights classes in relation to the practicing of Human Rights values through dance.

Semi-Structured Interview

Interviews were conducted in combination with participant observations. In addition to participant observations, interviews are commonly used to elaborate on more specified

¹³⁷ *ibid.*, p. 450.

¹³⁸ *ibid.*, p. 448.

¹³⁹ *ibid.*, p. 450.

¹⁴⁰ *ibid.*, p. 447.

¹⁴¹ *ibid.*

¹⁴² *ibid.*

concerns related to the research question.¹⁴³ For example the connection between the performing arts and the formation of a Human Rights culture amongst children in Kathmandu. Qualitative interviews were conducted because it places greater interest on the opinion of the interviewee rather than the researchers.¹⁴⁴ Qualitative interviewing allows for rich and detailed answers and embraces different perspectives on a certain topic.¹⁴⁵ Unstructured or semi-structured interviewing allows for growth in findings because follow-up questions can be spontaneously posed or the order, wording of questions can be varied.¹⁴⁶ The in-depth approach was taken to conducting the research rather than attempting to standardize answers through a quantitative approach.

Five persons have been interviewed in a semi-structured manner for this study. A total of six interviews were conducted each lasting approximately 1.5 hours. For the purpose of the study the researcher decided to use the findings from three of the interviewees. An interview guide was prepared with open-ended questions maintaining the aim of having a conversation. The semi-structured approach to interviewing was chosen because of the combination between keeping a general focus and allowing flexibility for participants to provide their insights.¹⁴⁷ The interview guide provides questions for the interviewer to monitor the process while allowing spontaneous adaptations depending on the responses of the interviewee.¹⁴⁸ After thoroughly analysing the interview transcriptions only three out of the six interviews were found to be of importance for the thesis. Those interviewees information can find be found below.

In the interview process conducted for this study there was a mixture of following the script (semi-structured) and letting new information arise through conversation (unstructured).¹⁴⁹

¹⁴³ *ibid.*, p. 469.

¹⁴⁴ *ibid.*, p. 470.

¹⁴⁵ *ibid.*

¹⁴⁶ *ibid.*

¹⁴⁷ *ibid.*, p. 471.

¹⁴⁸ *ibid.*

¹⁴⁹ *ibid.*

The reason for choosing to have an interview guide was because of the clear focus of investigation. This focus is the interrelationship between performing arts education and shaping a Human Rights culture. When researchers have a specific issue to address rather than researching a general topic, semi-structured interviews are used.¹⁵⁰ It is important that the questioning covers the researcher's interest while pertaining to the perspective of the interviewee.¹⁵¹

All of the interviews have been voice recorded. This allowed the researcher to be able to refer back to the data collected and analyse it for findings. Recordings were also made for the purpose of concentrating on the interview process and being fully involved without having to be distracted from note taking.¹⁵² Recording also overcomes the natural limitations of our memories and therefore provides us with a full account of the respondent's answers.¹⁵³ Transcribing the interviews is the written form of the recordings. This step in analysis creates an even more thorough examination of the data collected.¹⁵⁴ The transcriptions of the interviews have been submitted on a USB drive to the VMHR program. The transcriptions are not to be shared further unless the researcher gives permission.

The recordings and transcriptions also allow repeated examination of the information.¹⁵⁵ Repetition provides the opportunity for new findings to emerge when the researcher is analysing the interviewee's answers. Transcribing sections of an interview is common practice when researchers find not all answers to be fruitful.¹⁵⁶ In this study small portions of the interviews were not relevant to answering the research question and therefore left out of the transcription.

¹⁵⁰ *ibid.*, p. 472.

¹⁵¹ *ibid.*, p. 473.

¹⁵² *ibid.*, p. 482.

¹⁵³ *ibid.*

¹⁵⁴ *ibid.*

¹⁵⁵ *ibid.*

¹⁵⁶ *ibid.*, p. 486.

Interviewees:

- **Sajna Jirel:** Project Coordinator School of Performing Arts Kathmandu, Master of Arts in Sociology from Kathmandu Tribhuvan University.
- **Meena Dhungana:** Director of Learning Disability Center (AWIH), Bachelor of History and Political Science from Padmavani Arts and Science College.
- **Debbie Shrestha:** House Caretaker at Common Children's Home, Bachelor in Humanities and Social Sciences at Patan Multiple College.

SPAK is the organization, which gave the researcher the platform to find the interviewees except for Debbie that was found on the researchers own accord. The three interviewees answer questions based on their experience of participating in or observing the Dance and Human Rights lessons and how it has specifically affected the students. The decision was made to interview the school director of AWIH and caretaker of the Common Children's Home to answer key questions related to whether the Dance and Human Rights classes were used effectively. The researcher also sampled the project coordinator of SPAK because she has been involved for nine years in the field of social work and performing arts in Kathmandu.

The mission statement of SPAK is to bring performing arts into local schools, institutions and NGO's, or to those who otherwise do not have access to performing arts education.¹⁵⁷ Sajna recalls in the interview that SPAK educates children of their Human Rights because the performing arts gives them 'freedom to express themselves so that is part of Human Rights so I think we are working on the Human Rights factor of someone or an individual'.¹⁵⁸ She refers to Human Rights as part of the individual, as a factor, and this is

¹⁵⁷ School of Performing Arts Kathmandu, *SPAK in a Nutshell*, <http://www.spaknepal.com/page/about.php>.

¹⁵⁸ Interview with Sajna Jirel, Kathmandu, 19 December 2019.

the aim of building a Human Rights culture. To develop within the individual their Human Rights awareness.

The interviewees were found using the purposive sampling method. This type of sampling refers to the selection of people who have a direct relation to the research topic at hand.¹⁵⁹ This is a non-probability sampling approach because the sample is intentionally selected rather than randomly. The researcher chose to purposively sample because of the niche field, which the research question applies to. The researcher finds it important to interview people who have experience with the subject at hand. Purposive sampling was also necessary in order to interview persons with a direct relation to the students who participated in the Dance and Human Rights class.

Lesson Plans

The activities undertaken for the Dance and Human Rights classes ranged from individual to group exercises, full body integration to specific body parts and emotional awareness exercises through movement. This section will introduce the types of activities that we practiced in the class. The chapter on 'Final Results' explores in-depth how these exercises have been useful for strengthening a culture of Human Rights. The classes started with introduction circles and usually ended with a free dance lesson of approximately 10 minutes. The first part of the class was dedicated towards exercises, which helped the students to warm up and increase bodily awareness. The instructor used exercises like body shakes and stretching to release tension and bring the students into the space with clarity. Partner exercises were key to bringing attention into the space to remind the pupils that they are united. It was important for the teacher to find a balance between individual exercises and the collective consciousness of the group.

The core part of the class was dedicated towards expressing an emotion through free movement. The emotions danced were coupled with one negative and one positive. The

¹⁵⁹ A. Bryman, *Social Research Methods 4th Edition*, New York, Oxford University Press, 2012, p. 416.

students were asked to start with the negative emotion followed by the positive emotion with a break for deep breathing in between. The emotional exercise was usually practiced without music and then repeated with music with the aim of elevating their emotional awareness. Each class has lasted approximately 1-2 hours, in group 1 AWIH there were a total of 12 lessons, in group 2 JCSS there were a total of 8 lessons and in group 3 CCH there were a total of 7 lessons.

In order to create a safe space for the students where they felt comfortable expressing themselves students were asked in their first lesson to do exercises that were not difficult and helped them to become familiar with the new space, instructor and type of learning. These exercises were simple like walking around the space at different speeds and then giving high fives to classmates, which they walked past. In addition the instructor has explained to the students that if they feel an emotional exercise is ever too intense for them they should stop and speak with the instructor. She made clear to them that the space is safe for expression and she was there to help guide them through their process.

Individual Exercises

The students practiced mindfulness meditations while lying on their backs in connection with music from the Himalayas. The instructor also taught students how to use the wall and the ground for executing a handstand. As a group students were asked individually to execute the lemon and lion face exercise. This activity encompassed students imagining they were eating a lemon and producing a facial expression that represented the sourness of the fruit. They were asked to switch to the lion face, which involved them making a roaring expression.

Partner Exercises

An important exercise that was conducted repeatedly was soul gazing. Two students would stand across from each other making eye contact and they were directed not to lose the eye contact for the duration of the exercise. An additional layer to this exercise was asking the

children to begin dancing after the soul gazing has begun. They were directed to keep the eye contact with their partner while moving.

The trust fall exercise was also practiced repeatedly throughout the field study. This is an exercise where one person stands with their back facing their partner and they begin to fall. The partner stands in a strong position with both arms up to be able to smoothly assist the person falling. He or she does not necessarily catch the person falling but helps them to break their fall. Another partner exercise the students practiced was the trust walk. This is where partner's link arms or connects a hand palm to one another while one of the partner's closes their eyes. The open-eyed partner chooses to walk, stop, or run at a speed, which they choose. The partner with closed eyes relies on the their partner for guidance.

The exercise called head connectivity involved two students walking across the room in any speed, level or manner they wanted to as long as they kept at least a part of their heads connected. Another similar exercise with a different part of the body was the leg and feet connectivity where partners would dance together contacting only those parts of their bodies.

Group Exercises

The instructor asked students often at the beginning of a class to form a circle. In this circle she created an introduction exercise, which involved the students each saying their names connected to a movement. The rest of the students in the circle had to follow whoever was performing their name with a movement. A closing exercise the students practiced was all holding hands in a circle and then the instructor would help them to go under and over each others arms to tangle them up. Their task was to then untangle themselves without letting go of each other's hands.

With the children from AWIH and the CCH the instructor taught them a phrase connected to movement. The phrase went: “I am Powerful, I am Equal, I am Bold”! The movements associated with the phrase were as follows:

- I AM → both hands flat on chest on top of each other.
- POWERFUL → left foot steps forward and right fist projects up into the air with strength.
- I AM EQUAL → right foot comes forward to meet the left foot, while hand palms are joining together in front of the chest.
- I AM → left foot remains situated and right foot opens into a spread leg stance.
- BOLD → open arms wide with both hand palms facing up. look up to the sky and push chest outward.

During the classes the instructor would occasionally ask the group questions related to the lesson or the research topic. In the closing circle she asked the students to share one by one what their religion is. Another question the instructor asked at the end of a class was to describe in one word how they feel in this moment or how they feel after a specific exercise.

Specific Human Rights Exercises

Human rights articles from specific international legal instruments were presented to the students as part of their learning process. The purpose of verbally introducing these rights, which will be discussed in more detail in the next chapter, was to create a foundation in which they would later perform a related exercise in dance. For example, the right to freedom of association and freedom of peaceful assembly from the CRC article 15 was taught to the Jyotidaya group. This was the basis for an exercise, which involved performing this right. For this exercise the instructor asked students ‘What do you want in Nepal that you don’t have?’ From these answers they jointly chose the four most important

topics that they would like to portray in an act of peaceful assembly to showcase their longing for a certain quality in Nepal.

Another example is the right to education and making higher education accessible to all: articles 28 and 29 of the CRC. This right was explained to the students of the CCH in order to prepare them for an exercise, which involved expressing their concerns in relation to this right through movement. I asked the children if there is any subject they would like to learn in school, which they are not. With their answers they were able to create their own dance performances creating awareness for the lack of involvement children have in their own right to education.

II.2. Research Setting

The data for the field study was collected in three separate locations. The first setting where the research took place was in AWIH in the ground floor of a two to three story apartment building. The centre consisted of a small kitchen, bathroom, small classroom, small open space and office room. The researcher and students practiced the Dance and Human Rights lessons in the small open space. Landmarks as opposed to a physical address determine location in Nepal. The location of AWIH was in a small neighbourhood in the locality of Siphel part of Kathmandu. Siphel Grounds was the landmark next to AWIH given as a means of finding the centre.

The second setting was the Common Children's Home in Kathmandu. Due to protection concerns of the children the researcher is prohibited from disclosing the location or a detailed description of the home. The house is home to children ages 4-18. There was a small living room space in the home where we would practice. At the beginning of each class the students and I removed the furniture to create more space. Due to privacy reasons there are no pictures of this setting allowed for public use.

The third setting was in the Jyotidaya Co-operative School in a suburb of Kathmandu called Chapagaun (photo of entrance to locality in appendix). This location was the furthest about a 45-minute motorcycle ride from the researchers home in Patan (south of Kathmandu). It was also the most rural and isolated community the researcher worked in. The school was large hosting students from pre-school until twelfth grade. At the backside of the school was a multipurpose hall reconstructed by the *Support My School Campaign* supported by: Coca-Cola, United NationsHabitat, Teach for Nepal and JCSS. This was an open multi purpose room suitable for 20+ students where I taught the Dance and Human Rights class.

II.3. Micro-Ethnography

The study takes an approach of micro-ethnographic research. This type of ethnography focuses on a specific small-scale setting like a classroom.¹⁶⁰ This method is used to understand interactions between pupils and how they ‘make sense’ of the learning environment.¹⁶¹ A major tool in micro-ethnographic studies is the use of audio-visual material taken in the form of digital recordings.¹⁶² The reason for studying a culture on a micro level is when the research question is context specific.

The group setting in the classroom allows for a type of magnification into how the practice of Dance and Human Rights affects students. Observing the face-to-face interaction of students in their space reflects their attitudes and how the class is shaping them.¹⁶³ The fieldwork carried out for the thesis is a form of micro-ethnography.¹⁶⁴ Due to the scale of the project it is not a full ethnographical study. The research conducted has been carried out over a relatively short period of four months. Micro-ethnography specifies focusing on a particular aspect or question,¹⁶⁵ which is the case for this project.

¹⁶⁰ P. Garcez, ‘Microethnography in the Classroom’, in N. Hornberger (ed.), *Encyclopedia of Language and Education*, Boston, Springer, 2008, pp. 257.

¹⁶¹ *ibid.*

¹⁶² *ibid.*

¹⁶³ *ibid.*, p. 259.

¹⁶⁴ Bryman, 2012. P. 433.

¹⁶⁵ *ibid.*

Visual recordings are frequently used in order to move beyond the boundaries of subjectivism in research.¹⁶⁶ Video analysis is advised in educational settings to interpret the learning processes.¹⁶⁷ Visual ethnography is especially useful in the case of the master thesis where the researcher was also the instructor. This makes her experience highly subjective as she is directly involved in the process. The video footage adds a dimension of reflection in addition to the field notes taken during the micro-ethnographic study in Nepal. The video material is observed and analysed three to four months after departing from Kathmandu in Vienna, Austria. The observation of data post field trip in an unrelated country gives the researcher a distanced perspective allowing for more objectivity in her findings.

There have been 68 video recordings taken of the Dance and Human Rights lessons. The video recordings were taken on an iPhone 7 and positioned horizontally against a laptop to catch audio and video footage of the lessons. This was a feasible alternative to hiring or asking someone to film long hours of these classes (see the timetable on page 13 for the date and length of the recordings). The shorter video recordings have been grouped together and their total duration summed. Upon request and with confirmation from the researcher, partial video footage can be shared only of the classes in AWIH and Jyotidaya Co-operative School.

¹⁶⁶ van den Dool, p. 58.

¹⁶⁷ *ibid.*

II.4. Timetable (hours:minutes = length of video recordings)

2019/2020	Group 1 @AWIH	Group 2 @JCSS	Group 3 @CCH
October	25 th 'Introduction'		30 th 'Freedom of Movement' (00:02)
November	01 st 'Anger&Excitement' 03 rd 'Takan Tukun' (00:59) 15 th 'I AM POWERFUL' 22 nd 'can you feel the love tonight' (1:06) 29 th 'Manav Ahdikar' (00:01)	12 th 'Sadness&Happiness' (1:00) 19 th 'Can Do It' 26 th 'Freedom of Association' (1:25)	13 th 'Trust' (00:06) 20 th 'I follow you, you follow me' (00:06) 27 th 'See you again' (1:40)
December	06 th 'Loss&Love' (1:08) 13 th 'Pani ho' 20 th 'Groups of 3' (00:25)	03 rd 'Confusion&Clarity' (00:04) 17 th 'Education, Humanity, Peace, Freedom' (1:41) 31 st 'Improvisation' (00:37)	05 th 'What are you not learning?' (1:01) 11 th 'say feeling connected to movement' (1:19) 18 th 'dancing in natural elements' (1:14)
January	03 rd 'Chameleon' 10 th 'Air' 31 st 'Siphal' (00:01)	21 st 'Peace = Sathi' (1:58) 28 th 'Himalayan Meditation' (1:38)	

III. Ultimate Results

This chapter of the master thesis aims to present the most significant findings as a result of the data collection process. The data collection process involved video recordings, interviews and observation notes from the researcher. The most important findings for the purpose of the thesis have been derived from the video material and interviews. The final results discussed in this chapter highlight how the students reacted to the dance exercises, which aimed to foster a culture of Human Rights. The chapter is divided into three sections, Association for the Welfare of the Intellectual Handicapped (AWIH), Jyotidaya Co-operative Secondary School (JCSS) and Common Children's Home (CCH). Under the institution are thematic divisions based on Human Rights values encountered during the lessons. The Human Rights values presented are: understanding, tolerance, justice, respect, participation, dignity, freedom, equality, independence, integrity and peace.

The Human Rights value 'understanding' is defined for the purpose of this research as the comprehension of a person or situation including oneself. If we understand ourselves and are compassionate towards how we feel it will empower us to be able to live peacefully with ourselves and others.

The majority of the data has been collected through the reviewing of video material. 17 hours and 30 minutes of video footage has been recorded during the Dance and Human Rights lessons. The analysis was conducted through observing the video material from a neutral perspective of the researcher. The analysis was conducted through note taking of the significant points in the video with reference to the date, reason for the specific result (see addendum 1.). After the analysis of video material the researcher has used this information to write up the final results. The interviews were transcribed and then key parts annotated that were found most important for the thesis. Throughout the results you will also read excerpts from the interviewees that pertain to the relevant Human Rights value.

III.1. Association for the Welfare of the Intellectual Handicapped

Understanding

During the lessons there was a language barrier and different tools were used in order to communicate with the children. The instructor used her eyes to communicate and this requires a level of trust on both sides. She encouraged the students to understand the exercise through looking into her eyes for processing meaning. Another frequented tool to overcome the language barrier was body language. Through actions with the body it is possible to communicate meaning that can be understood without verbal exchange. This helped the students to understand how to do a certain exercise when they were unable to follow verbally.

Language barriers are a Human Rights concern, if a child is unable to communicate verbally the state shall provide education measures which develop their abilities in other manners. Relevant to the right to education in article 29(a) of the CRC: ‘the development of the child’s personality, talents and mental and physical abilities to their fullest potential’.¹⁶⁸ Mediums like dance provide an alternative to a student’s expression and communication.

Meena, the director of AWIH says in her interview,

one thing is problem language they can’t express them and if we see their eyes and movement of bodies that is good. That express their expression. We understand them.¹⁶⁹

Meena has difficulties communicating with the students and she noticed that from the Dance and Human Rights Lessons she could learn from their eyes and movement what that individual wants to express. She said 'We understand them'.

¹⁶⁸ Convention on the Rights of the Child, (adopted 20 November 1989, entered into force 2 September 1990) 1577 UNTS 3.

¹⁶⁹ Interview with Meena Dhungana, Kathmandu, 02 January 2020.

Sujan for example was not able to verbally express himself in a way that was understood. He used his body to make meaning that the instructor could understand. For example, after the class 'Siphal' she asked the students what they had learned. He replied with his hand palms facing up and connected in a curved position. The instructor felt he was giving a strong message with this symbol suggesting hope, desperation and love. Sujan uses his body as an alternative to verbal communication.

The instructor asked students to have a partner for the trust fall exercise. Due to a language barrier it was often difficult for the children to understand instructions. Usually once they saw an exercise it was easier for them to follow. Dance is a common language amongst all cultures. The instructor was giving guidance for the exercise touching both pointer fingers side by side to signal to the students to find a partner. Sujan copied this movement with his pointer fingers pressed together and he was using the body language of the instructor to understand the instructions for the exercise. He was integral in his thinking to be able to find a new way to communicate when he did not understand verbal directions.

During the lesson 'Loss&Love', the instructor blindfolds Prashant because he struggles to keep his eyes closed, preventing him from going inwards towards himself. She notices that with the blindfold he is more easily able to face himself and his energy lowers. Prashant trusts the instructor as she stays next to him and they repeat the word 'haraieko' (loss) together. As he gets comfortable with being blindfolded, he begins to shout the word 'haraieko' and his energy rises from a feeling of anger. The instructor remains close to him while he is blindfolded and experiencing the feeling of loss because she knows from her experience it can be a very intense feeling. This is an example of understanding oneself and in order to live with a HRC it is necessary to meet ourselves foremost.

Aarav is honest in the way he expresses 'haraieko' through his facial movements. His face is scrunched as he exclaims 'waaaaah' and he shows sadness while dropping to the floor.

Taking the time to understand our emotions is an important skill in building a culture of Human Rights where Human Rights violations are prevented. Becoming aware of our feelings is necessary in order to determine a fair, rational and calm behaviour.

After the expression of the feeling loss the instructor asks the students to let go of that feeling and feel 'maya' (love) from within. The instructor says, 'maya is how we can overcome haraieko'. The researcher notices the growth in the students because of their emotional understanding. They are easily able to transition their moods through movement from loss into love. She reminds the students that 'everywhere is maya'. Sabar has his eyes closed and is expressing love through a smile on his face while he wraps his arms around his body and rocks from side to side. The instructor also notices that Aarav during the expression of love is able to focus on the feeling. He is usually full of energy and unable to be still. During the feeling of love, he shows a calm expression on his face.

Participation

In the lesson 'Takan Tukun', Prashant performed an arm stretching exercise differently than the teacher wanted him to experience. She assisted him to rearrange his arms to feel the full stretch and the instructor could see him connecting more with his body. Before she helped he was not fully engaged and when she brought the attention to his arms he showed an increased awareness of himself. His willingness to accept her assistance made it possible to foster this heightened body awareness.

In the lesson 'can you feel the love tonight', Sabar was accepting of the exercise which he often hesitated to take part in. He saw the instructor helping Prashant to feel grounded through firmly pressing his feet into the ground. Sabar followed this instruction and grounded his feet while saying 'balio' (strength) and putting his fisted hands into the air. It is important for a child to learn to ground themselves in order to have a strong foundation in which they can practice their freedom of expression.

Meena makes reference to the trust fall exercise where one person falls backwards and the partner stands behind to catch them from their fall and said ‘sometimes they are suddenly falling and we can help them’.¹⁷⁰ The respondent describes the lessons as useful because of the enabling of trust in their partner through movement exercises. She also commented on the trust fall exercise that when the person falls, ‘we can help them’. This lesson is important in acting towards one another in the spirit of brotherhood, mentioned in article 1 of the UDHR.¹⁷¹ If we learn in a practical sense how to literally catch a person when they fall, we internalize this type of behaviour. That translates into a Human Rights culture where people not only stand up for their own rights but also uphold the rights of others.

In the lesson ‘can you feel the love tonight’, the students during the exercise ‘I am Powerful, I am Equal, and I am Bold were all participating. Prashant was more grounded as he did the exercise and empowered. For the ‘I am Powerful’ phrase he struck his hand into the air and ran forward with force. They were all attentive and showing their independence in the exercise. That it was being practiced for themselves and it was not only a repetition of the instructor.

Dignity

Sujan stands in the circle and puts his hands on each of his shoulders creating a triangle shape and swaying his body from side to side. He expresses a smile on his face while everyone says his name and copies the movement. This exercise is strengthening for self-identity and connecting with who you are.

In the lesson ‘can you feel the love tonight’, courage was practiced as a feeling to express through free movement. The students were struggling to show courage instead it seemed as if they were still in a state of fear. The students and counsellors were holding on to each other through the exercise as if they feared to be alone. The instructor was teaching Sujan

¹⁷⁰ *ibid.*

¹⁷¹ United Nations General Assembly Res 217 A, 10 December 1948.

who was trying to stand on her feet that he can stand on his own two feet, that he can be courageous on his own.

In the lesson 'Love&Loss' the instructor gives a demonstration of the feeling loss and during the demo Aarav is exclaiming loudly 'ahhhh, ahhhh' as if he is in pain. He connects to the movement of the instructor and adds to her performance by vocalizing the pain. When she stopped dancing 'loss' the student also stopped making noise. The instructor asked the students what they saw from the demonstration and Prashant said 'Jungle, Jungle'. In Nepali they told Meena it seemed like the instructor was in a jungle. It was important to ask the students what they saw in the dance in order to give their interpretations meaning. Through asking their interpretation the instructor helps to empower the student's opinions. The performing arts are not only for the performer to express but the reflection of the viewer is equally as important. This response also shows the power of movement to communicate a story or feeling. The instructor agrees with the students that the feelings of loss and love are metaphorically like exploring through a jungle.

The director of AWIH who also participated in the Dance and Human Rights lessons noticed that the students have undergone intrinsic changes. She states 'Nowadays I have seen them; they have lots of energy and they believe in their inner power. They feel it themselves'.¹⁷² During the interview with Meena there was discussion on the topic of empowerment within the children. She describes a clear change in the children that they are being empowered internally from the Dance and Human Rights lessons.

Freedom

During the lesson 'Loss&Love', Sujun although he has difficulties to speak, he embodies the exercise 'I am powerful, equal and bold'. The embodiment of the words gives a similar effect to empowering Sujun without vocally expressing the words. He expresses freedom,

¹⁷² Interview with Meena Dhungana, Kathmandu, 02 January 2020.

joy, and bravery while he holds his arms wide to the side with an open chest and his head held high. The voices of his classmates around him saying the words ‘I am Bold’! It was important for the instructor to use the body in connection with words to strengthen the impact of the exercise. Through connecting movement with words our bodies are able to internalize the feeling of power, equality, and bold.

Equality

Meena suggests that in the Dance and Human Rights lessons there was a ‘focus on emotion, eyes and just our inner exercises are very open at that time’.¹⁷³ She makes reference to the soul gazing exercise which involves peering into the eyes of another human. This allows for a deeper connection between two people. The aim of the exercise is that it allows you to see beyond the surface of a person, shedding their ego and what they appear to be. Looking deeply into the eyes of another person reminds us of the oneness that we share, that we are all human. Such exercises are valuable for building a HRC because it has the power to remove discriminatory labels, we associate to minority groups such as race, gender, nationality, etc.

In the lesson ‘Loss&Love’ the instructor introduces ‘Manav Ahdikar’ (Human Rights). She speaks to the students about a specific right from the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD). The instructor said the following ‘in this convention there is article 24, the right to education. You should not be excluded and not left out from the education system. You can use this for your own power, this applies to all of you.’ The instructor decided to share this with the students because they are not being included in the mainstream education system. They receive limited education in AWIH and most children with disabilities in Nepal have no form of education.

¹⁷³ Interview with Meena Dhungana, Kathmandu, 02 January 2020.

In the interview with Meena she said she asked the children, 'how do you feel now, what is your feeling in dance class? And they all said We are Bold! We are equal!'.¹⁷⁴ The exercise 'I am powerful, I am equal, I am bold' had a lasting effect on the students. This emphasizes the effect of the Dance and Human Rights class and the student's ability to internalize the teaching. This empowering internal growth is the goal of fostering a HRC.

Peace

In the interview with Meena the researcher asks her what she learned from the lessons on Human Rights and Dance. Her answer was as follows: 'I learned that love is very important to all human beings in one word'.¹⁷⁵ This statement points out the basic standard for Human Rights to function and the essential aim of the Dance and Human Rights lesson; to love one another unconditionally. Fostering peace in the world starts on a small level where each person actively learns to love their neighbour.

In the lesson 'Takan Tukun', we practice their first mindfulness meditation and there was a lack of concentration and focus especially from Prashant and Sabar. It was difficult for them to achieve quiet during the meditation. After a few minutes they became quiet and the researcher noticed Aarav who struggles to be still also became quiet and meditative. The instructor had respect for the environment to let it be how it is and this way the students decided on their own if they want to reach a meditative state without being forced. Peace was achieved in the space after patience and time allowing the students to settle.

III.2. Jyotidaya Co-operative Secondary School

Understanding

In the lesson 'Education, Humanity, Peace, Freedom', the students practice feeling peace after feeling anger and they show that they are more easily able to trust themselves feeling peace instead of anger. The instructor helps the students to trust their feelings when she

¹⁷⁴ *ibid.*

¹⁷⁵ Interview with Meena Dhungana, Kathmandu, 02 January 2020.

creates a safe environment. She says to them ‘if we ever do any practices and you feel uncomfortable or not well then please come and talk to me. I want you all to feel like you have a safe space here’. During the expression of peace Sanjeev is moving his body and head in a calming manner. He reflects peace from his entire being, he turns his head as peace is guiding him to look into the direction which he wants to be going in.

In the lesson ‘Freedom of Association’, the students practice the head connection exercise where the aim is to discover the way to reach the other side of the room while connecting their heads and not losing touch. It teaches them to have patience for themselves and their partner. This exercise requires understanding of their partners needs and their own in order to successfully reach the other side of the room. This is relatable to Human Rights in the sense that different cultures have their own behaviour and we must learn to understand each other’s behaviour in order to find a common ground.

Respect

The girls and boys have been separating from each other on different sides of the room during exercises. The researcher believes they do this out of consideration to one another because of Nepali cultural expectations. That only boys and girls should be in close contact if they are married. It was important to pair boys with girls for this reason that they were hesitant together. Creating harmony between opposed groups like boy and girl can foster a sense of respect and equal treatment within students. Through doing exercises that bring the opposite genders together it prepares them for living in harmony once they are no longer in school and actively participating in the society.

Peace

The instructor helps the students transition between the feelings of fear and courage. She says to them ‘feel the power of the universe come into your body and give you so much strength that anything your scared of goes away. Because in your heart you have the courage to overcome any fear’. Shift the feeling of fear into courage and use this ‘baliyo’ (strength) to overcome the fear, to give you strength. ‘ask yourself, who am I, where is my

courage?’ ‘in the face of danger or fear you have to be strong’. Aastha is opening during the courage exercise slowly, she moves her body while the others are still and begins lifting her hands above her head making herself big. The instructor assists the students to feel courageous by gently and firmly pushing their feet into the floor to practice grounding. She explains this grounding to feel as if their feet are roots of a tree.

During the expression of peace the teacher guides the students through the feeling in connection with the nature. ‘peace is like nature, maybe you move your body like a tree, like a flower, you embody something which reminds you of peace.’ (extend on this)

In the lesson ‘Freedom of Association’, the students reported they have had basic education in Human Rights at their school. The instructor gives them a small lesson on the CRC, she makes particular reference to article 15, that children have the right to ‘freedom of association and to freedom of peaceful assembly’.¹⁷⁶ She gives them the example of a protest where people hold signs and march peacefully together for what they believe in. She asks them if there is something, they want that they don’t have in Nepal. Raj replies that he wants peace. The instructor explains that as a group they could assemble and through dance show to the government of Nepal that they want peace. Two lessons later the the students agreed on four values they would like to have in Nepal which they feel are missing or lacking. The four they chose are education, peace, freedom and humanity.

Participation

The students have chosen to perform dances based on education, peace, freedom and humanity. These are standards the students voiced they would like to have strengthened in Nepal. The students collaborate on choosing a song together that is related to their group’s standard. This helps to build teamwork through negotiation for the goal of a shared performance. The education group chose the song ‘Katha’ which means story and one of

¹⁷⁶ Convention on the Rights of the Child, (adopted 20 November 1989, entered into force 2 September 1990) 1577 UNTS 3.

the students said the song is based on 'how you represent your dreams. To complete your dream there must be education'. The freedom group chose the song 'Manmagan' which the students translated as 'to do what you want to do'. They chose this song because it reflects the freedom one should have to make their own choices. The humanity group chose the song 'Junko Sathi Tara', literally translated meaning moon, friends, star. The students told that in the song is a story of a girl who can't speak, and the friend helps her by singing for her. The peace group chose the song 'Sathi' meaning friend and they tell the story of the song is about friends who go abroad and share that song with each other for memories.

Dignity

During the warmups of the lesson 'Education, Humanity, Peace, Freedom' the instructor notices that Bijeta is becoming more confident in her ability to do the movements while she adds her own style to the movement she copies. Norinsha was more easily able to reach the emotion of 'ries' (anger). It was noticeable in her facial expression that she had a serious look like she was about to explode with anger. She had her hands in her pockets like she was trying to hold back her anger. The instructor encouraged Norinsha to let the anger out of her body and make tight fists. Meanwhile, Ritik begins stomping with full force, jumping and swinging his fists to release his anger.

Equality

In the lesson 'Freedom of Association', students practiced expressing the emotions fear and courage. Towards the end of the lesson Ritik says loudly 'come here, don't fear' as they are making a circle and the instructor asks the students to come closer together. This shows the researcher that the exercise on fear and courage was having an effect on Ritik. After practicing courage, he was able to say aloud to his classmates 'don't fear'. This shows the internalizing of the exercise and how it can be applied to his everyday life. The students also reminded the instructor of something she wanted to add about fear. She said to the students in that moment 'that fear is an illusion it is just in your head, don't let it limit you when you fear something, always remember the courage.'

III.3. Common Children's Home

Understanding

During the lesson 'See you again' the students practice soul gazing and the instructor says 'look your partner in the eyes and feel a connection to them. Try to understand your partners soul, show them your soul. Open yourself to them, trust them, love them.' The researcher notices especially Sharing*, Almighty* and Sunshine* making a strong connection through eye contact, looking sincerely into their partners eyes showing compassion to each other for whatever struggles they may have already encountered in their lives.

In the lesson 'What are you not learning?' the instructor asked the students to do a body connectivity exercise in partners where only the legs and feet touch while moving. The exercise is difficult to remain in balance when you are standing on one leg while touching your foot to your partners leg. This encourages patience in finding the balance within yourself and the instructor empowered the students by saying 'if you fall it doesn't matter, you just keep trying.' This was a lesson on patience for the students because if they are limited in their forms of contact, how can they find ways to connect? Patience for yourself is a virtue required for this exercise and especially patience for your partner not to give up on them. It was possible to see Renegade* and Success* discovering their balance through the exercise. Renegade lifts both of her arms out to the side while having one leg bent in the air connecting to Success. Her arms in a flying position help her to achieve balance while connecting with her partner.

Dance is an alternative to verbal expression for children. In the interview with the CCH caretaker Debbie comments on her observations of Renegade 'that she could also express if she will be given the chance like I saw through your art class'.¹⁷⁷ Renegade has difficulties

¹⁷⁷ Interview with Debbie Shrestha, Kathmandu, 09 January 2020.

expressing herself verbally and Debbie noticed that if she is given the chance through a medium like dance she is able to express herself more strongly. Dance allows Renegade to strengthen an understanding of herself. Debbie saw that Renegade was more confident and showing who she is when she had the opportunity to express herself through dance.

Participation

During the lesson 'freedom of movement' the group practices the trust walk exercise where one participant has their eyes closed and the other participant guides them with their eyes opened. Knowledge* caresses her partners head who has her eyes closed into her shoulder as they walk together. The researcher observed this as an act of protection to make her

*Pseudo names are used to replace actual names for protective measures because it teaches students to help each other when they are in need.

In the lesson 'I follow you, you follow me', Sharing dives into her feeling of fear and accepts the way she feels rather than blocking it. It is noticeable in her facial expression, how she closes her eyes and expresses a scared face as if someone or something dangerous is standing in front of her. She accepts the feeling and quickly backs away into an introverted position crouched down with her hands covering her face.

The students dance in partners to the Nepali song 'Oh Maicha' by Brijesh Shrestha and Barsha Karmacharya. In this exercise they practice finding ways to cooperate and work together with their partners. For example, in partners Renegade leads Success and the researcher notices that Success decides to follow her movements. This is participatory from Success's side because she allows Renegade to lead and learns from her movements. Using the Nepali music also highlights the willingness of the instructor to teach with music from the student's own culture. Integrating the students with a new philosophy of education while maintaining familiarity with music from their own culture.

Dignity

In the lesson 'Freedom of Movement', Almighty expresses sadness through her facial expressions with both hands on her head moving to cover her face and then abruptly throwing her hands down resembling anger.

In the lesson 'I follow you, you follow me', Sharing is struggling with her fear and she shows while standing on one knee a quick throwing movement with her arms to get rid of the fear that she is experiencing. In her face she expresses 'I don't want this anymore'. Through the throwing away movement she dignifies herself.

In the lesson 'See you again', Kansas danced through clarity and her movements showed her picking something up carefully. She looks gently at what she picked up in her hands with a clear focus and she brings it to her heart. She is connecting naturally with her heart through movement.

In the interview with Debbie she reported that she has seen changes in especially Renegade and Sunshine,

In Renegade, she is expressing, she can just move like that. The most changes I've seen is in Sunshine. Her health is not good so through your art class I observed that she is a bit able to move her body, which was congested before, and it was jammed but after you were teaching her classes, I was happy she can move and she likes to dance'.¹⁷⁸

The caretaker of the CCH says that she has seen changes in Renegade that she is able to express herself through movement. She has also seen dramatic changes in Sunshine, that it has improved her physical health and she found something which she enjoys doing.

III.3.4. Freedom

¹⁷⁸ Interview with Debbie Shrestha, Kathmandu, 09 January 2020.

In the lesson ‘What are you not learning?’, the researcher noticed in the warmups of the class that Sunshine was spinning her arms, smiling and enjoying. She expressed in this moment a feeling of freedom. Sharing has been smiling and Knowledge laughing during the warmups. This positive expression shows a freedom from the children. In the lesson, ‘I follow you, you follow me’ the openness Aspire* shares during her meditation with her arms by her side and hand palms facing up towards the sky resembles her gratitude for the Earth. She is fully present and aware of herself in the meditation. In the same lesson Almighty shows her strength in overcoming fear through a quick movement where she stands up from the ground and opens both arms to the side, her hands in fists pushing away whatever made her fearful. While the instructor says, ‘no more fear, goodbye fear’.

In the lesson ‘Trust’, Kansas* with her eyes closed expresses anger through a standing position both hands grabbing her hair and scrunching her face. This is an honest example of the student expressing how she feels in the space. Article 19 of the UDHR states that ‘everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression’.¹⁷⁹ This article of the declaration supports important mediums like dance because it is a form of expression. Students are taught to exercise their freedom through movement, and this creates the foundation for building a HRC. Students can use this feeling of freedom in the outside world. Giving students the initial platform to express through dance gives the students a basis and understanding of how they can apply themselves in their everyday lives.

In the lesson ‘What are you not learning?’ there was a meditation lesson practiced with the focus of going inward. The instructor encouraged the students to focus on the meditation and not to let anything distract them. The researcher saw in the video that Sunshine was struggling to lie still and to find peace or calm within. Kansas and Sunshine were fighting during the meditation and had to be separated. After about five minutes into the meditation the researcher notices a change in the atmosphere. The students start to settle and a calm

¹⁷⁹ United Nations General Assembly Res 217 A (III), 10 December 1948.

energy is present and therefore the students are more easily able to find peace. After the meditation lesson the students reflected their feelings. Their answers were ‘nice, thankful, peaceful, joy, better, peace, freedom and playful’. Kansas said ‘for me it started with peace and then when I opened my eyes it was freedom’. This is a powerful statement that reflects the growth of the student from the meditation exercise.

Equality

In the class, ‘See you again’ the teacher comments to the students after an emotional awareness exercise how she is learning very much from them. The instructor made this comment after she performed an improvised dance reflecting confusion and clarity, she asked the students what they saw or felt. Almighty answered peace, Secure* answered free, Aspire said happy, Sharing said it was dark, and this showed the teacher more about herself and how dance reflects her state of being. She praised the students for willing to contribute their wisdom to the class. This is part of the goals of HRET to include both teacher and student equally in the learning process. It removes the preconception that adults are the bearers of knowledge.

In the lesson ‘What are you not learning?’, the students were given the opportunity to write down the names of songs they would like to hear during the class. They chose especially Hindi and Nepali songs as well as English. The instructor wanted to give the students the opportunity to also express themselves through their choice of music. Therefore, the lessons became more of a shared process between students and teacher. The instructor was their example of leading with an attitude of equality. This strengthens a person’s possibility to live by the human right that ‘all human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights’.¹⁸⁰ As stated in the manual for HRET from the Council of Europe ‘the interactions between teachers and students, should be created to inherently practice values like equality’.¹⁸¹ The instructors initiative to ask the students for their input in the lesson plan

¹⁸⁰ United Nations General Assembly Res 217 A (III), 10 December 1948.

¹⁸¹ Council of Europe, Compass: Manual for Human Rights Education with Young People, Strasbourg, 2015, Ch. 1.

creates an equal atmosphere. When the students hear their music choices used in the lessons this empowers them to feel like ideas are equally valuable.

In the interview with Debbie she was asked which types of values are being taught in the Dance and Human rights lessons. Her response was ‘respect for everyone’.¹⁸² Respect is an essential Human Rights value because in order to achieve peace it is important to have respect for all cultures not only one's own.

Integrity

In the lesson ‘See you again’ the instructor introduces the term ‘Manav Ahdikar’ (Human Rights). The children responded to her that they have not yet learned this concept. The instructor explains Human Rights as something everyone is born with no matter your religion, your ethnicity, your beliefs or where you come from. She explains the CRC to the students as a document from the United Nations that was created for children in the whole world. She tells the students that the government of Nepal signed this document and therefore it also applies to all children in Nepal.

She presents to the children article 28, one sentence of this document says that all children have the right to education, so every child should go to school all the way up to higher education. It should be accessible if you wish to do that. She continues to explain article 29, that it focuses on how education should be, that there should be respect for Manav Ahdikar, that there should be respect for ‘Prakrti’ (Nature), so that you learn how to have a connection to nature to respect the nature, respect the Prakrti. The instructor concludes her lesson on Human Rights for the students in saying to them, the last part I want us to work on is developing your personalities, who are you as a person and what do you want in your life, also your talents and the abilities you have physically and mentally. She asks the students maybe also at school you can see what you do there and think to yourself what is missing, what is missing here, what is something I want to learn more of?

¹⁸² Interview with Debbie Shrestha, Kathmandu, 09 January 2020.

In the lesson ‘What are you not learning?’ the instructor recapped for the students their right to education from the CRC and that education should be directed towards the full development of who you are as a person. She asked, ‘what do you want to learn in school, that you don’t already have?’ The children responded with ‘baking, karate, drawing, crafts, yoga, planting, experimenting, dancing, singing, exercise and painting’. Kansas was impeded in her answer after she replied yoga. The home caretaker shook her head in a discerned matter as if she was being scolded for saying yoga. In response to Debbie’s reaction to her answer Kansas quickly came up with an alternative and said ‘planting’.

The children’s full expression of their right to education was being limited in the home which they live in. The teacher discussed this matter with the home director and the director said that because yoga is a religious practice which is non-Christian the children are not allowed to partake. The researcher urged that the practicing of yoga was not for a religious purpose and rather for development of the body. The director agreed to allow yoga to be used for this reason and Kansas was able to incorporate yoga into her dance.

In the lesson ‘See you again’ the instructor was saying ‘which way do I go, left way or right way, I don’t know, it’s so confusing to me’, the students were expressing confusion. The researcher especially noticed Renaissance* and Success using their facial expressions to show the feeling. Renaissance’s head bowing slightly downward and Success’s head bowing drastically downward. Both students looked like they were trying to solve a difficult equation, their eyes were firmly closed, and eyebrows scrunched. Then she notices Renaissance is fidgeting with her hair and touching her head in a way that she can’t seem to find the answer she is looking for.

Similarly, while the instructor says ‘left or right, left or right’ she notices Sunshine fidgeting with the end of her jacket being uncomfortable in feeling confusion. Then Sunshine stood still while watching the other students dance. It showed her integrity because she

allowed herself to feel the confusion of the other dancers. Kansas bows her head down and squints her eyes tightly together reflecting her confused state. Renegade shows her independence in the movement through expressing strongly her confusion with a quick jumping movement, forward and then backwards to the side. Sunshine looks confused as she watched the other students express themselves. She had the integrity to stop and watch and simply feel the confusion from seeing it in the others.

Peace

After practicing expressing the feeling of confusion in the lesson ‘See you again’, the instructor explains to the students to let go of the confused feeling through clarity. She said to the students that feeling of clarity is like ‘Pani’ (Water), feel pani from your heart. She tells the students to use this pani to guide you to go to the place that you truly want to go, from your heart. She teaches them to feel this new feeling and said oh actually I know the way I just have to feel it in my heart’. She encourages the students to move their bodies in the way that feeling is for them. Secure begins to smile as she feels clarity and she shows this through symbolically picking up water from the floor and splashing it on her face and she washes away all confusion.

In the interview with Debbie she describes the Dance and Human Rights lessons as follows,

They have got right to perform, and they have got to express as per their body wants and as their mind works and where their heart leads them, they are going accordingly.¹⁸³

She addresses the body, mind and heart as the focus of Dance and Human Rights. This was the aim of the instructor to teach students an attitude of Human Rights through the development of the human being. The human being from a holistic perspective includes the body, mind and heart.

¹⁸³ Interview with Debbie Shrestha, Kathmandu, 09 January 2020.

III.4. Overall Impact

The students showed progress in their individual behaviour and as a group during the Dance and Human Rights lessons. In AWIH for example the students showed improved patience, attention and focus that enabled them to follow the instructions more easily. The students also showed improved emotional awareness where they were more able to feel an emotion and then show their feeling through a movement. There was also perceivable change in practicing meditations because the students were able to calm themselves, be quiet and still after some time. Additionally, the instructor noticed that when the students became familiar and more comfortable with the exercise ‘I am Powerful, I am Equal and I am Bold’, they began to adapt their own style and meaning to the exercise, enhancing their self-expression.

The lessons also provided a space where the instructor could intervene in conflict situations. For example, during a disagreement between a student and the director the instructor helped to ease the tension between them. This had an impact of creating more peace in the atmosphere for students to feel safe in their day care environment.

Aarav specifically started to join in the exercises and the instructor noticed that he became calmer. Prashant showed changes in the flexibility and openness of his body through the movement exercises.

At the CCH the researcher took field notes on the following regarding the impact of the lessons. She noticed that their bodies became more open which allowed them to move more freely experiencing the depth of the exercises. They strengthened their ability to use courage in overcoming fearful situations. The students improved in understanding themselves better and were more connected with their own feelings. This helped them to feel more secure and grounded. They also strengthened their ability to express certain emotions like peace. This shows that with time the value of peace was internally growing.

The students also improved their self-confidence through dancing which helped them to move more freely.

The lesson has also provided a space for the instructor to initiate hugging as a way to create peace and reunification between two students post-conflict.

Sunshine was able to release trauma from her past which helped her to calm herself internally and this showed in her movements. Kansas shares in the last lesson that she learned about relationships from dance and how we can relate to others through for example the soul gazing exercise. Secure said that she learned how to trust our partner. Renegade said that she learned to trust your friends and help others especially through the soul gazing and trust walk exercises. Sharing said she learned peace while showing with her hands a swaying motion. Almighty said she learned about her emotions and how to cooperate with one another. Knowledge said she learned teamwork especially through partner dancing.

The improvements of the students in JCSS were seen in the change of gender dynamic where boys and girls became more integrated and less afraid of each other. The students also showed improvement in their strength to feel courage and showed better comprehension of the exercises. The students also showed an expansion of their movement potential improving their improvisation skills.

Through the soul gazing exercise two of the students reported that this helped them to learn more about each other. The students also reported at the end of the course that they learned to express their feelings through dance and therefore grow in emotional expression. The impact of the lessons described here have been observed over time. The students changed or strengthened certain skills little by little as the time progressed. The impact of the students growth are the basis for building a Human Rights character.

Conclusion

The 'Final Results' chapter presents an overview of the most significant findings gathered from the micro-ethnographic field study. The results are organized based upon the institutions which the researcher observed Dance and Human Rights lessons. AWIH, JCSS and CCH all produced findings suggesting the internal growth of the students. Such growth is related to the HRV that this chapter is divided into. The HRV focused on in the thesis are understanding, participation, dignity, freedom, equality, integrity and peace.

The section AWIH *III.2.1. Understanding*, discusses the use of dance to provide an alternative for communication. The section also presents the students experience of exploring the feelings loss and love. Providing students with alternatives for communication and self-expression is important for Human Rights. If a student is able to express him or herself through for example dance they are given the opportunity for a different outlet. This will help build a HRC in the child because it is empowering to learn there is more than one form of communication or expression. This helps students to find new ways to connect with each other when verbal communication is for example dysfunctional.

Exploring the feelings of loss and love are important to building a HRC. When these feelings are found it strengthens a student's self-awareness. Being aware of one's feelings creates the possibility to make informed decisions without acting impulsively. This is essential for forming an attitude of Human Rights within children in order to respect the rights of others. Loss is an intense feeling often related to losing people we care for deeply. Losing those we love creates a wound and it is vital to face the pain of that wound in order to heal. Love is the counter feeling in this exercise because with love students learn that the feeling of loss can be overcome. For building a HRC love is the first step in creating a foundation for all to be treated as equals.

The section JCSS *III.3.1. Understanding*, there is the explanation of the students practicing feeling and expressing peace. Teaching students to understand the feeling of peace helps to build a HRC because peace like love is a founding principle of Human Rights. All Human Rights standards share the commonality that peace is necessary to achieve those standards. You are integrating a Human Rights attitude within children when guiding them to feel peace through their movements. There is also the discussion of the head connectivity exercise that teaches students to work together. The head connectivity exercise teaches students patience and to understand each other in order to reach a common goal. This is important for Human Rights because a lack of understanding and patience are main reasons for conflict.

The section CCH *III.4.1. Understanding*, the soul gazing exercise is described in relation to the students experience of the practice. Soul gazing fosters a deeper connection between two people. This allows them to become closer and understand one another. In Human Rights training it is essential to not only develop the individual's capabilities but also the relations between people. Human Rights focus on the human being and interactions between humans. In order to foster a HRC it is important to strengthen the connection between people.

Similar to the head connectivity exercise is the body connectivity exercise where the students made physical contact only with their legs and feet. Again, this teaches patience and negotiation in order to find a way to connect without falling. If the partners do fall it teaches them to stand up and try again. It also integrates within the children the practice of making sacrifices in order to find the balance together. The section also presents dance as an alternative to verbal expression. Having this alternative gives students who are shy or non-verbal the opportunity to develop their full personalities through other means.

The section AWIH *III.2.2. Participation*, focuses on the students participation in the class during a bodily awareness exercise. Teaching the students to find a deeper connection with

their body strengthens their conscious awareness of everyday life. Being a Human Rights oriented citizen requires a conscious person because if we are not aware of our environment or surroundings, we will not feel driven to make change. The section also highlights the willingness of students to participate in certain exercises, those who were not always willing before. This highlights the effect of the lesson and the ability for students to become engaged in creating a HRC overtime. The section also presents the trust fall exercise and how participation in catching another person when they fall strengthens the Human Rights principle of acting towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood. Finally, the section highlights the participation of the students in the exercise ‘I am Powerful, I am Equal, and I am Bold!’. This exercise is particularly strong in creating a HRC because of the empowerment effect it has on students. The more they repeat the exercise the more the words and movements become internalized. IF a child believes from their core they are powerful, equal and bold it gives them the possibility to live *for* and *through* Human Rights.

The section JCSS III.3.4. *Participation* focuses on the student’s autonomy to choose as a group their song for a performance on HRV. The students cooperate with each other to agree on a song for their dances in education, peace, freedom and humanity. This exercise teaches students that participation is necessary if they want to be involved in decision making. The students who were not participatory were left out of the process of creating a dance together. This is an important exercise for real life situations where Human Rights decision processes require participatory efforts from the ground up.

The section CCH III.4.2. *Participation* highlights the trust walk exercise and when the two students participate together one can rely on the other for guidance. Building a HRC requires the perspective of more than one party. If we allow each other to give assistance in difficult situations it will be easier to reach a resolution. The section also gives light to the expression of fear and how the students active participation allows her to delve deeply into the feeling. A HRC will be created when students are taught to face their feelings also the

negative ones. When they feel fear for example then they are truly able to feel courage. Courage is the feeling to overcome fear and without understanding what we fear there is no possibility for us to be courageous.

The last part of the section reflects the partnership between two of the students. It resembles negotiation between two students and how they reach an understanding. One of the students shows her participation by letting her partner lead rather than resisting her leadership. The instructor is also participatory in how she uses Nepali music to teach the lesson. Participation is fundamental in creating an atmosphere of equality and respect. The lessons teach the students to participate when they feel ready, it is not forced and their decision when they decide to participate.

The next HRV in discussion was AWIH III.2.3. *Dignity*, the exercise connecting name with movement is presented as a way to strengthen the student's identity of self. Such an exercise is important for building a HRC because it helps us to understand who we are. When seeing the other students repeat your name with movement it reflects to the participant their identity. Strengthening further who they are. If we lack self-awareness or an understanding of our identity, we will struggle to help others. Building a HRC requires selflessness and understanding who we are is imperative to understanding others and therefore wanting to help others.

In the same section courage was presented as a feeling that was explored during the lesson. Courage is such a vital feeling for a HRC because it teaches us to overcome fear in dangerous situations. Standing up for Human Rights requires courage because this often means voicing our beliefs in opposition to a government. People can be jailed, disappeared or even killed when fighting for Human Rights. The fear of consequence must be overcome with courage. Students dignified themselves when they felt courage because it taught them to be independent and self-reliant. The feeling of loss is also explored in this chapter

through describing the student's experiences. As well as their interpretations of the instructor's demonstration of the feeling loss and then love.

The perspective of the students on the feelings the instructor manifested through her dance were important to give them a space to share. That the students feel empowered in their own ideas and opinions as an equal contribution to the lesson. Human Rights require the inclusivity of opinions regardless of age, gender, race or nationality. The instructor aimed for this type of inclusivity when asking the students for their opinions. Also demonstrating the feelings of loss and love were important for the instructor to show her honest expression. She wanted to be an example for the students that if she asks the same of them to show their feelings honestly. She wants to give them the same from her side because that builds trust and creates an equal environment. Lastly, the section presents findings from the interview with Meena and her statement reflects the internal growth of the students. This internal empowerment is the basis for founding a HRC.

The section JCSS *III.3.5. Dignity*, reflects the importance of confidence and the students increased ability to express their emotions, especially anger. Being able to add your own style to the movements the instructor is doing shows confidence and dignity. The students take initiative to express themselves individually while also following the movement of the instructor. This combination is important for building a HRC in that it develops oneself while at the same time focusing on the situation at hand from a grounded place. The student's willingness to show their anger helped them to release stored negative energy. Through this practice one can dignify themselves because they let go of the toxicity they carry inside and make space for light energy to flow. If we want to live in a world where Human Rights are respected it is important that we learn how to let go of negativity.

In the section CCH *III.4.3. Dignity*, there is a description of the expression of the feelings anger, fear and clarity. Each of these are important to express for the reasons mentioned earlier. Anger and fear possess a quality that make us feel small and weak. Understanding

and confronting that feeling helps the students to realize the place they don't want to be in. Knowing these negative feelings helps them to strive for feelings like clarity. Clarity is important for the student's dignity because it offers them a sense of their dreams and how they want to apply themselves in the society. Human Rights refer to the inherent dignity of a person and in order to live a dignified life it is important that one follows clearly their inner most calling.

The section also presents a finding from the interview with the home caretaker Debbie. She comments on her perceived change of two of the students. The changes she mentions report improvement in the children's ability to express themselves and having an increased physical strength. When our physical strength becomes stronger our internal strength also becomes stronger and vice versa.

The next section AWIH *III.2.4. Freedom* presents the exercise 'I am Powerful, I am Equal, I am Bold!'. There is an account of how it was important for the instructor to include movement with the phrase the students say aloud. Using such positive and empowering words in combination with movement that embodies the words strengthen the impact of the exercise. The attitude of Human Rights is build within the children from the ground up when they practice such an exercise. This is a tool to remind students of their inner power and strength that can be put into action through the movements.

The section CCH *III.4.4. Freedom* discusses the performance of the exercises from the students. The feeling of freedom is achieved for them through meditation, dancing, and overcoming fear. Freedom is such an important HRV because it forms the basis for all Human Rights. In order to live by a culture of Human Rights freedom must be present. Giving the students the possibility to feel and understand freedom through different exercises in the lesson help them to learn the main goal of a HRC. The section also discusses the Human Rights article 'Freedom of Expression' from the UDHR. The

researcher suggests that the practice of students to show their feelings through dance is also the practice of their right to freedom of expression.

The section also gives a detailed explanation of a meditation exercise and the reflections from the students of how it made them feel. The inward exploration of the exercise allows students to feel calm and peace within. Meditating gives them the time and space to become quiet in order to hear their inner most thoughts and voices. Such an exercise is strengthening for a HRC because it allows a person to find peace and discover those parts of their lives they want to change. Human Rights are accommodating to change and foster standards that encourage people to be who they truly want to be. Meditating goes hand in hand because in meditation if the individual allows it, they are able to be honest with oneself.

The section AWIH *III.2.5. Equality*, presents interview results of Meena's commentary on the soul gazing exercise. The soul gazing exercise provides a space for two people to connect on a level that reminds them of their humanity. This develops the HRV of equality because it removes labels that define peoples worth such as monetary value, nationality or skin colour. Looking into the eyes of another person for an extended period of time shows that behind the facade is a human being without labels, with feelings. It helps to remind us of our oneness. The section also presents the lesson on the right to education from the CRPD. The students from AWIH are not receiving an equal level of education as other children. The instructor found it important to teach them their Human Right to education in her lesson because of their exclusion.

As a counter message to the students lack of being incorporated in the education system the teacher took the initiative to teach them the exercise 'I am Powerful, I am Equal, I am Bold!'. This opposes how the society is treating them through empowering them with the words 'I am Equal'. Teaching them that they are deserving of the right to education by law and then teaching them from an internal perspective they are equal is important for building

a HRC. The knowledge of human Rights is one aspect and how to apply yourself through that knowledge is another aspect. It was apparent that the exercise was working on the students because they reported to the director that they feel bold and equal after the Dance and Human Rights lessons.

In the section JCSS *III.3.6. Equality*, the researcher presents the finding on fear and courage in the lesson 'Freedom of Association'. She explains that the students have internalized the exercise because they are making comments later in the class that reflect the lesson. The following section CCH *III.4.5. Equality* reflects the instructors effort to include the students in the lesson because she values their input. This creates an equal environment where student and instructor learn from each other. There is also a comment from the interviewee from the CCH. She reports that respect is one of the main HRV taught in the Dance and Human Rights lessons. For the researcher respect is part of equality because if we treat others as equals, we will also treat them with respect.

In the section AWIH *III.2.6. Peace* there is a quote from the director of AWIH that pertains to love. Love is a common value across all nations and cultures. Therefore, fostering love in the Dance and Human Rights lessons helps to build a culture of Human Rights. If we learn to love one another across borders it is possible to live by Human Rights standards therefore achieving peace. The section also commented on the students to become quiet in the meditation after some time. The feeling of peace arises when everything becomes still. It is important that the students are guided to feel peace through meditation. When they are able to feel peace in the meditation the student's internalize the feeling and therefore how to engage in the activities outside of the lesson which bring themselves and others peace.

The next section JCSS *III.3.3. Peace* presents the results of student's experiences practicing shifting the feeling of fear into courage. It is concluded that translating fear into courage is like turning poison into medicine. Without fear there would be no courage, it is necessary that students face their fears in order to strengthen their courage. As mentioned earlier

courage is important for building the foundation of a HRC. Being a proactive and independent citizen requires strength. The symbolism of nature is used to guide the students into a peaceful direction. It is important for Human Rights because connecting students to nature helps them to become familiar with the right to a healthy environment. When students are taught to feel peace through nature it gives them an appreciation for nature that will help to live with the attitude of protecting their environment rather than destroying it. The section also presents the instruction of the students right to freedom of peaceful assembly. As well as their decision to perform the HRV education, peace, freedom and humanity.

The last section CCH III.4.7. *Peace* is the result of the exercise expressing the feeling of clarity. There is also an excerpt from Debbie's interview that describes the student's performance in the lessons and how it guides them to follow their hearts. Overall, the final results chapter is a combination of findings from the different classes with each institution. The researcher aims to produce the results that are most significant for building a culture of Human Rights.

The underground culture the instructor aims to build within children focuses on reminding them of core values. Understanding, participation, dignity, freedom, equality, independence, integrity and peace are all founding principles of Human Rights standards. Through the work of the researcher she has discovered that movement as an alternative form of expression guides children towards self-empowerment. The lessons provided a space for students to explore their sense of humanness while expressing their emotions. The internal growth of students could be seen in their changed behaviours. Their increased love and trust for one another showed in their actions. Developing a culture of Human Rights presupposes love and trust as the basis for human unity.

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Addendum

1. English Abstract

The thesis explores the Performing Arts and their use as a tool for fostering a culture of Human Rights within children. The use of a medium like dance focuses on the human body helps the student to internalize Human Rights Values. The thesis aims to elaborate on the interlinkages between the two disciplines of Human Rights Education and the Performing Arts. The aim of Human Rights Education as defined by the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights is to provide content knowledge about human rights, imparting the skills needed to apply human rights, and fostering attitudes/behaviours, which promote a universal culture of human dignity.

The reader will discover that the research elaborates on how dance lessons help to develop the skills that foster an attitude of Human Rights. Performing Arts have the possibility to translate a complex topic such as human rights into creative activities for younger ages. The creative process helps children to develop themselves in relation to their understanding of a Human Rights Culture. The Performing Arts are the expression of actions or words that display an internal transformative process. This practice strengthens a culture of Human Rights because it empowers students to stand up or speak out for their rights.

The data for this study was collected during a four-month period in Kathmandu, Nepal. A micro-ethnographic study was conducted with three groups of children aged 5-16 in the context of Dance and Human Rights lessons. Participant observation by the researcher was the main method applied for collecting data. Interviews with Nepalese professionals in the field of social work and performing arts were a secondary source of data.

There is limited research on Performance Art in connection with Human Rights Education. The study is important for offering new research in the field and especially with regards to the medium of Dance and its use for implementing a culture of Human Rights within

children. This was the specific tool used by the researcher who was also an instructor of Dance and Human Rights. The dual role as instructor and researcher provided the opportunity to have a clear insight into the growth of the student and how a culture of Human Rights was formed.

Understanding, participation, dignity, freedom, equality, independence, integrity and peace are examples of the values, which were taught to the children through Dance. These values underpin all Human Rights standards. In order to have an attitude of Human Rights a child must strengthen the internalization of such values. The Dance and Human Rights lessons are an approach, which guide children through movement exercises to strengthen core values. Dance has shown to be a Performing Arts medium that helped children in Nepal connect on an internal level with Human Rights.

2. Deutsches Abstract

Die Arbeit beschäftigt sich damit, wieweit sich die darstellenden Künste – und hier im Speziellen das Medium Tanz – als Instrument zur Förderung einer Kultur der Menschenrechte bei Kindern einsetzen lassen. Die Arbeit zeigt auf, dass der Einsatz von tänzerischen Methoden, die sich auf den menschlichen Körper konzentrieren, den Schülerinnen und Schülern dabei helfen kann, die Werte der Menschenrechte zu verinnerlichen. Ziel der Arbeit ist es, die Zusammenhänge zwischen den beiden Disziplinen der Menschenrechtsbildung und der darstellenden Künste zu untersuchen und herauszuarbeiten. Das Ziel der Menschenrechtsbildung im Verständnis des Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights besteht darin, inhaltliches Wissen über Menschenrechte bereitzustellen, die für die Anwendung der Menschenrechte erforderlichen Fähigkeiten zu vermitteln sowie Einstellungen und Verhaltensweisen zu fördern, die eine universelle Kultur der Menschenwürde fördern.

Der Leser wird feststellen, dass das Forschungsvorhaben herausarbeitet, wie Tanzstunden dazu beitragen können, jene Fähigkeiten zu entwickeln, die eine Haltung der Menschenrechte fördern. Performing Arts haben das Potential, ein komplexes Thema wie Menschenrechte in kreative Aktivitäten für jüngere Altersgruppen umzusetzen. Der kreative Prozess hilft Kindern, sich in Bezug auf ihr Verständnis einer Menschenrechtskultur zu entwickeln. Mit Hilfe der darstellenden Künste können innere Transformationsprozesse in Bewegungen oder Worte gefasst werden. Diese Praxis stärkt eine Kultur der Menschenrechte, weil sie es den Schülerinnen und Schülern ermöglicht, im Rahmen einer Lernhandlung aufzustehen oder für ihre Rechte einzutreten.

Die Daten für diese Studie wurden während eines Zeitraums von vier Monaten in Kathmandu, Nepal, gesammelt. Eine mikro-ethnografische Studie wurde mit drei Gruppen von Kindern im Alter von 5 bis 16 Jahren im Rahmen des Tanz- und Menschenrechtsunterrichts durchgeführt. Die teilnehmende Beobachtung der Kinder und Jugendlichen durch die Forscherin war die Hauptmethode für die Datenerfassung.

Interviews mit nepalesischen Fachleuten im Bereich Sozialarbeit und darstellende Kunst waren eine sekundäre Datenquelle.

Bislang gibt es kaum Forschung zu den möglichen Wechselwirkungen von tanzpädagogischen Ansätzen und Menschenrechtsbildung. Insofern leistet die Studie Pionierarbeit, insbesondere im Hinblick auf das Medium Tanz und dessen Verwendung zur Umsetzung einer Kultur der Menschenrechte bei Kindern. Die Autorin der Arbeit war in einer Doppelrolle tätig – einerseits als Lehrende, andererseits als Beobachtende und Analysierende. Die Doppelrolle als Trainerin und Forscherin bot die Gelegenheit, einen klaren Einblick in das Wachstum der Schülerinnen und Schüler und in die Entstehung einer Kultur der Menschenrechte zu erhalten.

Verständnis, Teilhabe, Würde, Freiheit, Gleichheit, Unabhängigkeit, Integrität und Frieden sind Beispiele für die Werte, die den Kindern durch Tanz vermittelt wurden. Diese Werte untermauern alle Menschenrechtsstandards. Um eine Menschenrechtshaltung zu entwickeln, muss die Internalisierung solcher Werte gestärkt werden. Die Verbindung von Tanz- und Menschenrechtsunterricht ist ein solcher Ansatz, der Kinder durch Bewegungsübungen dabei unterstützt, diese Grundwerte zu stärken. Tanz hat sich als Medium der darstellenden Künste erwiesen, das Kindern in Nepal dabei half, sich innerlich mit den Menschenrechten zu verbinden.