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**CHILDREN'S HUMAN RIGHTS EDUCATION AS A MEANS
TO SOCIAL JUSTICE: A CASE STUDY FROM ENGLAND**

**EDUCACIÓN DE LOS DERECHOS HUMANOS DE LOS NIÑOS COMO MEDIO
PARA LA JUSTICIA SOCIAL: UN ESTUDIO DE CASO DESDE INGLATERRA**

**EDUCAÇÃO EM DIREITOS HUMANOS DE CRIANÇAS COMO MEIO PARA A
JUSTIÇA SOCIAL: UM ESTUDO DE CASO DESDE INGLATERRA**

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Abstract

Social justice depends in part on the existence and knowledge of human rights instruments. It depends also on the motivation for action to promote and protect the rights of all persons. This requires effective human rights education. Although many human rights instruments have been agreed upon, effective human rights education, defined as that which provides the skills and motivation to ensure rights are respected, has been lacking. Rather than the widespread and systematic inclusion of human rights education in schools as called for by UN bodies, for the most part human rights education has been left to efforts by non-governmental organizations. This article, a case study of children's human rights education in England, describes an exception. In Hampshire County Education Authority, schools were re-structured to use the rights described in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child as the overarching framework of all their teaching and functioning. The findings of separate studies over an eight year period that assessed the outcomes of the rights-based schools are summarized here. Over time, children become increasingly respectful of the rights of others, showing positive attitudinal and behavioral changes. The findings over time strongly suggest that schools in which the rights of the child are both explicitly taught and practiced are an effective means of promoting social justice.

Keywords: Children's rights, human rights education, social justice, human rights.

Resumen

La justicia social depende en parte de la existencia y el conocimiento de los instrumentos legales de los derechos humanos. También depende de la motivación para actuar con el fin de promover y proteger los derechos de todas las personas. Para ello se requiere una educación efectiva de los derechos humanos. Aunque hay acuerdos sobre diversos instrumentos legales sobre los derechos humanos, carecemos de una educación eficaz de los derechos humanos, definida como una educación que proporcione las habilidades y la motivación para velar por el respeto de los derechos. En lugar de la incluir de forma general y sistemática la educación de los derechos humanos en las escuelas, tal como demandan los organismos de las Naciones Unidas, en la mayoría de los casos la educación de los derechos humanos ha recaído en el esfuerzo de las organizaciones no gubernamentales. En este artículo se describe un estudio de caso sobre la educación de los niños en derechos humanos realizado en Inglaterra, que constituye una excepción. Las autoridades educativas del Condado de Hampshire promovieron que las escuelas pudieran reorganizarse de modo que usaran los derechos descritos en la Convención de la ONU sobre los Derechos del Niño como marco general de toda su enseñanza y su funcionamiento. Se presenta un resumen de los principales resultados de diferentes estudios independientes realizados en un período de ocho años. A lo largo de este tiempo los niños fueron cada vez más respetuosos con los derechos de los demás, mostrando cambios positivos de actitud y comportamiento. Estos resultados a largo plazo sugieren con firmeza que las escuelas en las que los derechos del niño se enseñan y se practican conjuntamente de forma explícita se constituyen en recursos eficaces para promover la justicia social.

Palabras clave: Derechos de los niños, educación en derechos humanos, justicia social, derechos humanos.

Resumo

A justiça social depende em parte da existência e conhecimento dos instrumentos de direitos humanos. Depende também da motivação na ação para promover e proteger os direitos de todas as pessoas. Isto requer educação efetiva dos direitos humanos. Ainda que muitos dos instrumentos de direitos humanos sejam lembrados, a educação efetiva dos direitos humanos, que se define como aquela que proporciona as habilidades e a motivação para zelar para que os direitos sejam respeitados, falhou. Em lugar da inclusão generalizada e sistemática da educação em direitos humanos nas escolas, que foram solicitados pelos organismos das Nações Unidas, para a educação humana a maior parte dos direitos foi delegado para as organizações não governamentais. Este artigo descreve sobre uma exceção em um estudo de caso de educação de crianças em direitos humanos na Inglaterra. No Condado de Hampshire, as escolas foram reestruturada para utilizar os direitos descritos na Convenção da ONU sobre os Direitos da Criança como marco geral de todo seu ensino e funcionamento. São resumidos os resultados de diferentes estudos realizados durante o período de oito anos. Com o tempo, as crianças tornam-se cada vez mais respeitosos dos direitos dos demais, mostrando mudanças positivas de atitude e comportamento. Os resultados sugerem que as escolas onde os direitos das crianças são explicitamente ensinados e praticados como um meio eficaz de promover a justiça social.

Palavras-chave: Direitos das crianças, educação em direitos humanos, justiça social, direitos humanos.

INTRODUCTION

Core to achieving social justice is the provision and protection of human rights for all individuals. This not only requires that countries ratify human rights instruments, but also that they educate their citizens about the existence and importance of respecting human rights. The primary goal of human rights education is to empower citizens to build, protect, and sustain rights-respecting societies. In essence, creating and sustaining social justice should be possible through effective human rights education. To be considered effective, human rights education should comprise three components (UN, 2011). Learners should acquire knowledge of human rights instruments and standards, the motivation to promote and sustain human rights and social justice, and the skills needed to do so. However, to date, human rights education has not achieved this goal.

The purpose of this article is to demonstrate that this goal is achievable if human rights education is introduced systematically and comprehensively in schools, and if it is contextualized in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. After describing the nature of human rights education, I address the obstacles to successful human rights education in schools. As will be discussed, there has been little systematic integration of human rights into schools. Schools often are segregated along ethnic, religious, or socioeconomic status, and school curricula tend to emphasize national citizenship values rather than international human rights standards. In addition, teachers are inadequately trained and citizenship education is often presented in ways that are neither engaging nor relevant to students. A summary of findings from a longitudinal case study of children's human rights education that has been demonstrated to evoke social justice attitudes and behaviors will then be described.

1. HUMAN RIGHTS EDUCATION

There is broad agreement among scholars, practitioners, and international bodies such as the United Nations that human rights education should comprise education *about* human rights (knowledge), education *through* human rights (skills), and education *for* human rights (values) (Bajaj, 2011; UN, 2011).

According to the 2011 UN Declaration of Human Rights Education and Training (UNDHRET), education *about* human rights describes the provision of comprehensive information about the rights afforded to the individual as well as about the values that underpin rights, and the mechanisms for their protection. Such education involves teaching of international, national, and regional, human rights instruments and standards (Tibbits, 2002), and the global concerns that threaten social justice -- sexism, racism, terrorism, environmental degradation, global interdependence, and political apathy. In human rights education, primacy is often given to the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights (e.g., Holden & Clough, 1998). This Declaration, impelled by the atrocities of the Second World War, aimed to prevent any such recurrence by identifying "equal and inalienable rights" for all as the "foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world." The rights considered to be basic and universal include rights to equality, security of person, legal rights, freedom of thought, freedom of

conscience, and religion, and freedom from discrimination, slavery, torture, and arbitrary arrest. Other international agreements that are used in human rights education include the 1976 International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the 1993 Vienna Declaration and Program of Action, and the Convention on the Rights of the Child (Cardenas, 2005; Flowers, 2007; Howe & Covell, 2005).

Education *through* human rights describes its necessary teaching methods. This means teaching in a democratic setting that respects the rights of the learner and provides opportunities for freedom of expression, thought, conscience, and religion (Tibbits, 2005; UN, 2011). Within the framework of human rights, these democratic teaching methods promote the development of the skills that are necessary for effective citizenship and the sustaining of social justice - empathy, appreciation of differences and similarities, sensitivity to rights, and communication and problem-solving skills (Howe & Covell, 2005).

Education *for* human rights describes an overt attempt to raise social consciousness to motivate action for social justice (Bajaj, 2011; Brabeck & Rogers, 2000; Print, Ugarte, Naval & Mihr, 2008). Often there is a focus on the realities of social inequality, extreme poverty, or discrimination, or the shocking human rights abuses associated with war or malevolent leaders. These latter include the persecution of the Armenians in Turkey after the First World War, the Holocaust perpetrated by the Nazis during World War 11, the genocides in Bosnia, Rwanda, and the Balkans, the slaughter of the Cambodians by the Khmer Rouge at the end of the Vietnam War, and the daily realities for those living in Mao's China or Pinochet's Chile. Writing of democratic recovery in Latin America, Magendzo (2005) clearly articulates the goal of education for human rights in his call for 'Nunca más'. There must be commitment, he writes, to "teach the new generation that the atrocities and outrages committed during the dictatorships should never ever happen again" (p. 139).

In addition to agreement on the components of human rights education, there is also agreement among United Nations bodies that it should be systematically provided in schools (UN, 2006, UNCHR, 2004). In fact one of the primary objectives of the UN Decade for Human Rights Education was to prod schools into its systematic provision (Print et al., 2008). Since this did not happen, the UN World Programme for Human Rights Education National Action Plan (2005-2007) (UN, 2006) was introduced calling for the full integration of human rights education into primary and secondary school systems. This has not yet occurred.

2. OBSTACLES TO HUMAN RIGHTS EDUCATION IN SCHOOLS

Clearly, a major obstacle to effective human rights education –and in consequence the promotion and protection of social justice– is seen in the lack of its systematic integration into schools. Instead, it has most often been members of non-governmental organizations who have taken responsibility for teaching human rights. Success has been limited. Teaching has been constrained by the demands of stakeholders, sponsors, and donors (Mihr, 2009; Print et al., 2008), and by political context (Bajaj, 2011; Massoud, 2011; Suárez, 2007). For human rights education to be transformative, it needs to be integrated into all schooling

and to include all three components. It must also take place in a school culture that itself is infused with social justice. This is rare.

One obstacle is seen in the segregation of students by such characteristics as ethnicity, religion, socioeconomic status or gender – segregation that results in an homogeneous environment. Many conflicts are ethnically based and tend to be perpetuated by the segregation of children in schools (Al-Nakib, 2012; Reimers & Chung, 2010). For example, efforts at promoting respect and equality among Jewish youth for Palestinian youth were unsuccessful when undertaken in schools segregated by ethnicity (Gordon, 2012). Similar segregation is seen in the Western world where despite a growing trend toward multi-cultural and multi-faith cities, segregation in school and teachings is common (Bowie, 2012).

A second obstacle is seen in the lack of appropriate training provided for teachers. Research in Latin America (Magendzo, 2005), North America (Covell, 2007; Howe & Covell, 2005), South Africa (Petersen, 2010), Hong Kong (Leung, 2008), and the UK (Howe & Covell, 2010) suggests that many teachers are not prepared emotionally, pedagogically, or culturally to teach human rights. Human rights instruments generally are not part of teacher training (Akengin, 2008; Bajaj, 2011; Covell, 2007; Petersen, 2010). Moreover, teachers have little training in the appropriate behavior management strategies or pedagogy that are required to model and teach social justice. In consequence, authoritarian and discriminatory practices, abuses of rights, and social injustices continue and become entrenched in school cultures. As a result, teachers tend to reproduce inequities and social injustice (Magendzo, 2005). School cultures supportive of social justice require first transforming teacher values and behaviors with appropriate training (Bajaj, 2011).

A third common obstacle is a focus on nationalism within school curricula. As Suárez (2007) stated, education promoting social justice for all cannot be successful if the aim is to inculcate students into national citizenship values. Yet this is among the most common approach of citizenship teachings in schools (Bromley, 2011; Bron & Thijs, 2011). In Canada, for example, citizenship education curricula tend to focus on the national Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms at the expense of attention to international human rights agreements (Bromley, 2011). Yet citizenship is a conferred legal status that is exclusionary whereas human rights are universal and inalienable (Hung, 2012).

A fourth key obstacle is seen in curricula. For teaching to motivate action, learners must be engaged in the material, and believe themselves able to effect change. Too often, when human rights abuses are taught they are taught as exclusively historical, and when the importance of citizenship rights are taught, they are taught about what will happen in the future (Howe & Covell, 2005). Exceptions such as the *Facing History and Ourselves* anti-racist program in which human rights abuses are linked with current daily realities are rare (Brabeck & Rogers, 2000). Engagement in learning and empowerment for action are more likely when teaching allows for relevancy because there is a component of self-interest (Goodman, 2000). Self-interest facilitates understanding and empathy, and as Goodman (2000) explained, an understanding that there are benefits to self as well as to others mitigates against attitudes and beliefs that tend to confuse charity with social justice.

In summary, social justice is most likely promoted through human rights education in schools that is taught in ways that engage students by being of relevance to their daily lives, and promote action through appropriate pedagogy. The success of this approach is seen in an initiative in England in which students are taught about their own human rights under the Convention on the Rights of the Child in rights-respecting classrooms and schools.

3. THE UN CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD

The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (the Convention) is a legally binding document that describes an almost global consensus on what childhood should be, including how children should be educated. The comprehensiveness of the articles relevant to education (2, 3, 12-15, 23, 28, 29, 42) allows the Convention to be used as a values framework for all school teaching and practices. Since children are defined in the Convention as all persons under the age of 18 years, the education rights are applicable to all school-aged children from early kindergarten through to high school. No country that has ratified the Convention has taken a complete reservation on the articles that describe obligations in education. Each, then, is required to progressively implement the education provisions (Howe & Covell, 2013). As such, the Convention has a legitimacy that is often lacking in other values frameworks that have been adopted by schools (Howe & Covell, 2005).

There are both political and educational reasons for expecting the teaching of the Convention to be a catalyst for social justice. From a political perspective, the legitimacy of the Convention is important. The Convention has been ratified almost globally by governments (the exceptions are Somalia, the United States, and South Sudan), governing parties, and politicians representing a wide diversity of political views across the world and across the political spectrum. It is neither partisan nor ideological. The aims of education, and the underlying pedagogy, actions, and interventions needed to achieve them, are clearly specified in the Convention and together provide a comprehensive rights-based values framework for all school teaching and practices (Howe & Covell, 2013). It is a values framework that is consistent with modeling and teaching social justice. For example, Article 29 of the Convention requires that education be directed not only to the development of the individual child's potential, but also to the development of "respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms... for civilizations different from his or her own ... the preparation of the child for responsible life in a free society in the spirit of understanding, peace, tolerance, equality..". And under the non-discrimination principle of the CRC (Article 2), all children have the right to be treated fairly and protected from all forms of discrimination based on characteristics such as religious, social, or ethnic status. Pedagogy and school functioning is to be democratic (Article 12), and discipline must respect the dignity of each child (Article 28). In essence, the Convention obligates a school culture and school practices that are based on and reflect the importance of human rights and social justice (Howe & Covell, 2013).

From an educational perspective, the Convention is engaging and of particular relevance to children because it appeals to their self-interest and is relevant to the everyday lives of themselves and their peers (Howe & Covell, 2005). Rather than learning about historic rights violations in their social studies classes, or the rights they will assume as adults in their citizenship education classes, children are recognized as contemporaneous citizens

with their own rights. As such, children's human rights teaching appeals to children across ages, and thus sets the stage for more broad-based human rights education later. Students are much more likely to be receptive to human rights teachings if they have already learned that they themselves have rights, and if they have experienced the value of having those rights respected.

4. CASE STUDY: THE RIGHTS, RESPECT AND RESPONSIBILITY INITIATIVE

Introduced in 2002 in Hampshire in England, the *Rights, Respect and Responsibility initiative* (RRR) provides an example of the potential for effective human rights education to promote and sustain attitudes and behaviors supportive of social justice (Covell, Howe, & McNeil, 2010).

The development of the RRR was impelled by the recognition among senior education administrators in Hampshire of the need for a shared values framework and positive school climate for improved learning and educational outcomes (Covell, Howe, & McNeil, 2010). The initiative was designed as a comprehensive whole-school approach in which children's Convention rights provide the framework for all school practices and policies. Rights are the basis upon which school mission statements, regulations, codes of conduct, teaching, and student activities are articulated and practiced. And importantly, consistent with children's rights to participation in matters that affect them (Article 12 of the Convention), school regulations and behavior codes are determined with input from the students; classroom teaching is democratic, and students from the kindergarten on are provided numerous meaningful opportunities to have a voice on school committee decisions.

A systematic approach to implementing the RRR was undertaken by the senior administrators. The first step was study leave for a core group of teachers and administrators, from which the overall design of the initiative was determined. To put the objectives of RRR into effect, Hampshire authorities -- with funding from the British Ministry of Education -- devised a three-year strategic plan of implementation. The initiative was first pilot-tested in a few schools and outcomes evaluated. Following this was teacher training in children's rights and rights-consistent pedagogy, development of resources, and the monitoring of developments. RRR was introduced first to infant, primary, and junior schools and then over time, as children went into higher grades, into secondary schools. Starting in 2002 with only 18 schools, by 2006, 360 schools had adopted RRR, and by 2011, at varying degrees of implementation, over 400 of the 527 Hampshire schools were involved (see www.hants.gov.uk/education/childrensrights).

In its holistic approach, the RRR is consistent with the three components of human rights education. RRR schools provide knowledge about rights by integrating the specific articles of the Convention on the Rights of the Child into required school curricula across all subjects. Examples include examining the importance of the right to clean water when learning about microorganisms in science, examining the right to nutritious food by graphing distances between food supply and access in mathematics, and role-playing the daily lives of children living in conflict situations to identify the effect on them of the violations of

their rights. In addition, explicit teaching about rights occurs across the school in the form of posters. For example, posters in the school library describe the child's right to access information, in the cafeteria they describe the right to nutrition, and in the gymnasium they describe the right to play and leisure. And at the beginning of each year, students and teachers collaboratively develop and display classroom charters of rights and corresponding responsibilities. These may include such statements as 'we have the right to be treated fairly and the responsibility to treat each other fairly'; 'we have the right to be heard and the responsibility to listen to and respect other people's ideas'; 'we all have the right to learn, so we will help each other'.

Education through and for human rights primarily is taught in RRR schools by respecting the child's rights to participation in learning and in school functioning. Participation enhances children's engagement in school: their commitment to learning, achievement, academic aspirations, enjoyment in school, self-esteem, and optimism for the future (Fredricks & Eccles, 2006, 2008; Jennings, 2003; Martin & Marsh, 2006; Pancer, Pratt, Hunsberger, & Alisar, 2007; Peck, Roeser, Zarrett, & Eccles, 2008). Teachers use self-directed and cooperative group learning, critical thinking, problem-solving, social issues discussion (national and international issues), role-play, and group project-based learning (Howe & Covell, 2013). These teaching strategies require that teachers respect the children's various capacities, learning styles, and opinions. In turn, children acquire communication, listening, critical thinking and problem-solving skills, and they come to appreciate the diversities among their peers.

In addition, there is an emphasis in RRR schools on asset building. Self-directed learning provides a means by which all children's interests, strengths, and talents can be identified and encouraged. Children's accomplishments are celebrated. When children are less academically inclined, their artwork may be on display in the school foyer or principal's office. Where children do well in writing, their stories are displayed in hallways; when they do well in sports, their trophies are displayed and so forth. The message is clear. Every child has rights. Every child does matter.

5. RRR AND SOCIAL JUSTICE

The effects of the RRR initiative on students and teachers were assessed annually over 8 years. Details regarding participants, methodology, and findings of the individual studies are provided elsewhere (Covell, 2010; Covell & Howe, 2007, 2008, 2011; Covell, Howe, & McNeil, 2008, 2010; Covell, Howe, & Polegato, 2011; Covell, McNeil & Howe, 2009). Below, the findings over the eight years are synthesized and summarized to illustrate the long-term outcomes of the initiative.

Longitudinal evaluation indicated significant improvements in schools where the RRR was fully implemented. Significant improvements were made in teacher support for children's rights, school climate, children's understanding of rights, academic achievement, school engagement, behavior, and participation (Covell, 2010; Covell & Howe, 2007, 2008; Covell,

Howe, & McNeil, 2008; Covell, McNeil, & Howe, 2009; Howe & Covell, 2013). Three outcomes in particular suggest a significant effect on social justice.

One is seen in the attitudinal and behavioral changes of the students in the RRR schools

Children were reported to be more cooperative with each other, more inclusive, more sensitive to the needs of children with learning difficulties, and more respectful of others in general. Incidents of teasing, bullying, and other inappropriate behaviors decreased over time and were eliminated in some schools. What had replaced arguing and fighting in these schools was problem-solving through rights discourse. For example, one child asked another to stop bothering her because he was taking away her right to learn. He apologized. Further, it was noted that the children were using rights as a values framework for their critical thinking and decision making. One example that is illustrative was reported in the Hampshire media (Lightfoot, 2009). After reading the classic fairy tale Cinderella, the children are asked to comment on her life. Daniel, aged 10, answers: "The stepmother and her sisters were horrible to Cinderella. They kept her in a cellar and made her work like a slave which infringed article 19 the right to be protected from being hurt or badly treated." Grace, aged 11, adds: "Her stepmother was very cruel and denied her right to be protected from abuse and it infringed article 31 when they didn't let her go to the ball, because children have a right to play." Such responses show that not only are the children engaged and thinking critically, but also they are able to generalize what they have learned about their own rights to the lives of others. The children had learned, in the words of one "The most important responsibility is to make sure everyone has their rights" (Covell, Howe & McNeil, 2008, p. 333).

Their pro-social actions were consistent with this expressed belief. Not surprisingly, children in the RRR schools were significantly more likely than others to report that their schools had a respectful, fair, and safe school climate (Howe & Covell, 2013). It should be noted also that the children's actions and social justice supportive attitudes and behaviors were not restricted to their classmates and friends. For example, when children learned about civil conflict in the Middle East and the 2011 earthquake in Japan they considered how these events might affect the realization of the rights of children whose families were affected (Howe & Covell, 2013). They discussed also what they could do to help the children involved. They have contacted children in other countries and have made donations to help children in difficult circumstances – not from charitable concerns, but from the empathy that comes with the knowledge that all children everywhere have the same rights as they have, but not all children's rights are respected (Howe & Covell, 2005). In addition, even the youngest children have been moved to take political action. Many have written letters to their members of parliament to advocate for greater respect for the rights of all children, others have invited politicians into their schools to be interviewed, and others have made rights-based presentations at city council meetings.

Second, there was evidence that the RRR effectively promoted an equality of opportunity for disadvantaged students that is not normally seen. As detailed elsewhere (Howe & Covell, 2013), among all the positive findings of the evaluation of the RRR, the most intriguing was its disproportionate effect on children of social disadvantage. This was clearly evident

in the most disadvantaged school; at each time of measure the most disadvantaged school showed the greatest positive changes (Covell, Howe & Polegato, 2011). The students typically came from families who were struggling with problems of poverty, poor housing, drug addiction, and criminal involvement. There was a high proportion of children with learning disabilities and difficulties. Absentee rates were very high, behavior problems endemic, and school failure was common, thus perpetuating a cycle of disadvantage and inequality.

From the beginning in 2002, the principal and all the staff saw the possibilities for school improvement in the adoption of the RRR, and embraced the RRR reform as a means of improving outcomes for their disadvantaged students. Following the successful implementation of RRR, there were marked improvements in behavior and in academic achievement. Measures over the six years following the implementation of the RRR, showed that there were highly significant changes in school attendance, engagement, behavior, and achievement. Students reported more positive self-concepts, fewer social problems such as bullying and fighting at school, more optimism about their futures, and more commitment to stay in school longer. Over the same time period, test scores were steadily rising. By the end of the assessment period the national standard test scores of the children were almost indistinguishable from those of their more advantaged peers.

The improvements were attributable to the school reform since both staff and family demographics remained constant over the period. The respect and empowerment the children experienced, together with their increased academic success and enjoyment of school, appeared to have done much to increase their intrinsic motivation (Ryan & Deci, 2000), and to overcome the poverty of aspiration that so often accompanies social disadvantage and so often leads to school disengagement and failure. In fact, the high levels of engagement and success continued as these socially disadvantaged students progressed into high school allowing continued successes and hope for the future (Howe & Covell, 2013). Social disadvantage is a significant risk factor for disengagement, underachievement, and school failure (Johnson, Crosnoe, & Elder, 2001; Kalil & Ziol-Guest, 2008; Li & Lerner, 2011; Murray, 2009; Schoon, Parsons, & Sacker, 2004). School failure, in turn, is associated with difficulties such as poor adult adjustment, antisocial and criminal behaviors, health and work problems, and marginalization from adult society (Peck et al., 2008; Schoon, Parsons, & Sacker, 2004). The RRR appeared to have built educational resilience in these students and effectively protected them against the risk for failure that is associated with their demographic. Success in school is fundamental to future equality of opportunity because education is associated with numerous positive outcomes such as more stable employment, better income, more job satisfaction, and better health (Howe & Covell, 2013).

A third outcome that suggests an influence of effective human rights education on social justice is seen in its contagion from the school into the community. Consistent with Felissa Tibbits' (2002) notion of empowerment, the RRR model of children's human rights education has had an impact not only in schools but also in the surrounding community and area (Andover Vision, 2009). Seeing the improvements in the school children's respect for others, officials in Andover aimed to establish a charter that would declare their town to be a rights-respecting community in support of the basic human rights of children, including their right to participate in decisions affecting them. The movement gained endorsements

from local community churches, other schools in Andover, local newspapers, local councils, the police, a nearby university and college, and the Children's Commissioner for England (Howe & Covell, 2013). The belief was that problems of bullying, racism, and vandalism, would be significantly reduced if all children were educated in rights-respecting and rights-promoting schools.

In summary, social justice requires the elimination or at least significant reduction of all forms of discrimination and inequities. The Hampshire experience with the RRR initiative provides an example of the potential of children's human rights education provided in a rights-respecting environment to increase equality of opportunity and equality of treatment. The children learned about rights and the value of rights; through having their rights respected they acquired the skills to promote and protect the rights of others; and by realizing the importance of rights to all children, they were motivated to take action for social justice. It is a model of promoting and sustaining social justice that is readily amenable to adaptation to other socio-cultural contexts.

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