

Seton Hall University

eRepository @ Seton Hall

Seton Hall University Dissertations and Theses
(ETDs)

Seton Hall University Dissertations and Theses

Spring 5-18-2020

Teacher Perceptions on Awareness and Compassion Among Students Following a Human Rights Education Professional Learning Community

Anthony J. Casella
ac1201@me.com

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholarship.shu.edu/dissertations>



Part of the [Educational Leadership Commons](#), [Elementary and Middle and Secondary Education Administration Commons](#), and the [Secondary Education Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Casella, Anthony J., "Teacher Perceptions on Awareness and Compassion Among Students Following a Human Rights Education Professional Learning Community" (2020). *Seton Hall University Dissertations and Theses (ETDs)*. 2729.

<https://scholarship.shu.edu/dissertations/2729>

Teacher Perceptions on Awareness and Compassion Among Students Following a Human Rights
Education Professional Learning Community

by

Anthony J. Casella

Dissertation Committee

David Reid, Ph.D., Mentor
Richard Blissett, Ph.D.
Constance McCue, Ed.D.

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Education
Department of Education, Management, Leadership, and Policy
Seton Hall University

2020

© 2020 Anthony J. Casella



COLLEGE OF EDUCATION AND HUMAN SERVICES
SETON HALL UNIVERSITY

APPROVAL FOR SUCCESSFUL DEFENSE

Anthony J. Casella has successfully defended and made the required modifications to the text of the doctoral dissertation for the Ed.D. during this **Spring Semester 2020**.

DISSERTATION COMMITTEE

(please sign and date beside your name)

Mentor:

Dr. David Reid

2-5-20

Date

Committee Member:

Dr. Richard Blissett

2/5/2020

Date

Committee Member:

Dr. Constance McCue

2/5/20

Date

The mentor and any other committee members who wish to review revisions will sign and date this document only when revisions have been completed. Please return this form to the Office of Graduate Studies, where it will be placed in the candidate's file and submit a copy with your final dissertation to be bound as page number two.

Abstract

This study examines the perceptions of a faculty after the interdisciplinary implementation of a human rights education platform in the context of moral efficacy in the student body. The teachers participated in a year-long professional learning community (PLC) focused on bringing human rights issues into regular classroom dialogue, modeled after the United Nations human rights education effort. This study considers the following questions: (1) How do teachers perceive the implementation of human rights discussions into their curriculum influences their students' awareness of human rights issues? (2) In what ways, if any, do teachers perceive a difference in their students' empathy before and after the implementation of the faculty professional learning community (PLC) during the 2017-2018 school year?

Through a qualitative research design, the study utilized a narrative research method with semi-structured interviews of faculty who taught prior to or during the implementation of the PLC. Four themes emerged: (1) increased awareness in the student body of human rights and global issues that exist in the world, (2) increased compassion in discussions about violations of human rights as well as increased kindness toward one another, (3) a culture of change in school regarding activism and involvement in Christian service and advocacy initiatives, and (4) increased knowledge amongst the faculty that subsequently is implemented into the lessons and classroom. The findings suggest that properly training faculty to incorporate human rights discussions and associated assignments into the classroom translates into increased awareness and compassion amongst the school population, students and teachers alike.

Dedication

I dedicate this dissertation first to my wife. Without her patience, encouragement, and support, especially during the time of having our first child (and currently awaiting our second), this would never have gotten done. Much sacrifice on both our parts were put into this work. I love you.

Second, I would like to dedicate this to my mom and Nick. Without their support and encouragement through my adult years, I would never have thought I could attain the accomplishments I have. They believed in me when I didn't believe in myself, for which I will forever be grateful.

Acknowledgments

I want to thank all of my Seton Hall professors, especially Dr. Reid. His patience, support, and insight were invaluable throughout this entire process. His positive attitude was a beacon of light and always encouraging. Dr. McCue has been a valuable influence since my days at Fordham. The work she puts into the Catholic School Administration program at Seton Hall has allowed generations of cohorts to understand the value of a Catholic School education from an administrative standpoint and how to lead by example (also, relationships, relationships, relationships!). Dr. Blissett helped to ignite the idea process and guide me down the path for research, as well as provide valuable insight during the proposal process. Thank you!

I would also like to thank Brother Thomas Leto for all of the opportunities he has provided me. He pushed me to pursue the Seton Hall degree and helped me every step of the way. He has been an influence on many aspects of my professional life, and I will be forever grateful for his leadership.

I would also be remiss if I did not acknowledge the Christian Brothers. Their dedication to educating young men and women around the world is the foundation of much of this project and my early education. Thank you for the difference you make every day in the lives of many.

Table of Contents

Abstract.....	ii
Dedication.....	iii
Acknowledgments.....	iv
List of Figures.....	viii
Chapter I: Introduction.....	1
Introduction of Topic.....	1
Problem Statement.....	1
Purpose of Study.....	2
Significance of Study.....	3
Design.....	4
Research Questions.....	5
Limitations.....	5
Delimitations.....	5
Definition of Terms.....	6
Organization of Study.....	7
Chapter II: Review of the Literature.....	8
Human Rights.....	8
Catholic Schools.....	10
The United Nations.....	11
History of Human Rights Education.....	14
Why Study Human Rights Education.....	17
Service Learning.....	22
Social-Emotional Learning.....	24
Professional Learning Communities.....	25
Summary.....	25
Chapter III: Methodology.....	27

Research Design.....	27
Rationale for Narrative Research Design.....	28
Context.....	29
The Prep School Professional Learning Community.....	31
Participants and Sampling Strategy.....	32
Data Collection.....	35
Interviews.....	37
Field Notes.....	37
Data Storing.....	37
Data Analysis and Coding Process.....	38
Establishing Validity and Reliability.....	42
Ethical Considerations.....	43
Chapter IV: Findings.....	44
Findings: Major Theme Strands.....	45
Theme 1- Increased Awareness.....	45
Language and Vocabulary.....	45
Inside and Outside the Classroom.....	47
Theme 2 – Increased Compassion.....	50
Presence of Compassion.....	50
Catholic Education.....	53
Theme 3 – Culture of Change.....	54
Shaping a Community of Brotherhood.....	54
Outlet and Direction.....	57
Theme 4 – Teaching the Teachers.....	60
Summary of the Analysis of Interviews.....	63
Chapter V: Conclusions and Implications.....	65
Discussion.....	65
Implications.....	66
Researchers.....	66

Practitioners.....	68
Recommendations.....	70
Future Research.....	71
Conclusions.....	71
References.....	73
Appendix A.....	82
Appendix B	83
Appendix C.....	84
Appendix D.....	86

List of Figures

Figure 1. Demographics of the Participants	33
Figure 2. Years Teaching at The Prep School.....	34

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Introduction to the Topic

Human rights are inherent to all human beings, no matter race, creed, gender, or beliefs. There have been many times in history where these rights were taken away from people or governments in power. Within the last century, the world superpowers have attempted to create barriers to prevent such actions from recurring. After the atrocities of the Second World War, the countries of the world were prompted to create a forum to prevent the recurrence of such appalling events; this organization was called the United Nations (United Nations, 2002, 2004).

Educating today's students is far more connected and real than in the past because it not only provides them with knowledge but empowers them to improve their own world (Prensky, 2017). Teaching students about human rights has the capacity to expand and develop understanding and support for their social responsibilities and mutual respect for one another (Covell, Howe, & McNeil, 2010).

Problem Statement

Human rights describe moral norms or moral standards which are understood as inalienable fundamental rights of every human person (Roser, 2018). We know that violations to these inherent rights exist around the world, and one of the fundamental drivers to accomplish the goal of protecting these rights is the recognition of the many dimensions in which they are violated (Roser, 2018).

A potential way to change the standards of human rights protection is to increase the knowledge of what they are and ways in which violations could be prevented. Many countries around the world—Australia, Ireland, and Mexico to name a few—have implemented a human

rights education model across their school systems. The knowledge and respect of human rights that students gain from this, combined with understanding, respect, and tolerance for difference, can empower them to tackle prejudice, improve relationships, and make the most of their lives (Equality and Human Rights,2018).

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to understand the experiences of teachers relative to the interdisciplinary implementation of human rights issues discussions in the context of moral efficacy in the student body. Moral efficacy is defined as “a belief in our ability to act ethically and to induce others to do so in the face of moral adversity” (Hannah, Avoli, & Walumba, 2011).

To coordinate the implementation, the faculty were exposed to human rights topics and asked to work cooperatively by department to select topics that are pertinent to the subject material or topics in which they have a personal interest or investment. This cross-curricular movement sought to access students in all subject areas, engendering a schoolwide effort. Though the school is K-12, the upper school (Grades 9-12) was chosen as the area of focus, due to the cognitive developmental state of teenagers. A study conducted at the University of London found that when faced with emotional social situations, the area of the brain that processes these emotions was more active in teens than in adults, which may indicate open-mindedness and acceptance of new ideas (Burnett & Blakemore, 2009). Therefore, the implementation of a cross-curricular experience at this point in their lives may expand their world view and instill progressiveness toward resolving human rights violations where they can in their future.

Faculty who taught in the school during the PLC were the focus of the study. The reason for this selection of the demographic of the faculty is because of their experience and their

exposure to students in the school culture of The Prep School before and after the PLC. Many of the students come from wealthy or influential backgrounds and therefore may be more likely to be sheltered from the atrocities that exist in the world. The school borders the third wealthiest region in the United States according to *U.S. World and News Report*.

Moreover, the school has a well-established Christian-service program. Although service hours are a requirement for graduation, hours are accepted only with a reflection statement submitted by the student. This study sought to learn if the added component of classroom discussion and reflection, with a focus on the topics highlighted through curriculum, had an impact on compassion exhibited by the student body.

Significance of the Study

Literature exists on human rights education, professional learning communities, and moral efficacy of adolescents individually, but this study examined these three topics collectively and in their relation to one another. A Canadian study on a European model focused on implementing children's rights education in the Hampshire Education Authority titled the *Rights, Respect, and Responsibility* (RRR) initiative (Covell et al., 2010). The RRR was a three-year strategic plan that included approximately 400 schools and provided a successful model of children's rights education (Covell et al., 2010); but children's rights are only one aspect of human rights education.

This study delved into the implementation of a human rights education platform in a secondary school in the United States and revealed the perceived impact it has on the moral efficacy of students. The United Nations has called for countries to observe the innate rights afforded to every person since its inception and, through the World Programme for Human

Rights Education, there is an action plan in place to educate students in order to avoid atrocities in the future (United Nations, 2004).

Design

Through a qualitative research design, the study utilized a narrative research method with semi-structured interviews of faculty who taught at The Prep School prior to or during the implementation of the PLC. The rationale was that each teacher comes with a different background in the subject material that he or she teaches and his or her exposure to students. For instance, a math teacher is not going to have the same ability to understand how a student is thinking compared to an English or Religion teacher who has journaling as part of his or her classwork. However, if any teachers are coaches or moderators of afterschool activities, they might have more exposure than a classroom teacher. The flexibility of a semi-structured interview works best, all things considered.

The setting was The Prep School, which has a service requirement for all students with a reflection aspect. The faculty also participated in a year-long professional learning community with the focus on human rights issues during the 2017-2018 academic year. Both of these, combined with the teachers' experience and exposure to the culture, made this a good population in which to discover the effects exposure to the marginalized has on the students. The interviews consisted of 11 questions that were open-ended and allowed room for elaboration on the interviewee's part.

Research Questions

This study examined two research questions:

1. How do teachers perceive the implementation of human rights discussions into their curriculum influence their students' awareness of human rights issues?
2. In what ways do teachers perceive their students' empathy before and after the implementation of the faculty professional learning community (PLC) in the 2017-2018 school year?

Limitations

Limitations of a study are “those characteristics of design or methodology that impacted or influenced the interpretation of the findings” based on the researcher’s work (Price & Murnan, 2004). The study collected data from individual interviews which relied entirely on the participants’ accounts, honesty of their answers, and interpretations of the questions. The fact that the data reflect participants’ perceptions of the effect human rights discussions and the PLC have on student awareness and empathy may not accurately depict the efficacy of the program. However, the faculty’s perception of students’ awareness as well as the changes seen after the implementation are an important source of evidence as to the program’s impact. The ability of the faculty who were part of the PLC to obtain before and after opinions added good perspective on potential changes in the community or environment as a result of the PLC. Research bias may be another limitation in that the researcher implemented the program being discussed.

Delimitations

This study involved only participants who teach at The Prep School in the upper school (Grades 9 to 12). Administration, staff, or teachers that were not involved in the PLC were not

petitioned. Teachers from other private, parochial, or public schools were not considered for this study.

Definition of Terms

This section defines key terms for the study. Some are defined as they were used for the purpose of the study and the rest based on how they appeared in the literature.

Compassion: sympathetic consciousness of others' distress together with a desire to alleviate it (Merrian-Webster.com, n.d.).

Empathy: the action of understanding, being aware of, being sensitive to, and vicariously experiencing the feeling, thoughts, and experience of another (Merrian-Webster.com, n.d.).

Efficacy: the power of producing an effect (Merrian-Webster.com, n.d.).

Human Rights: those rights which are inherent in our nature and without which we cannot live as human beings; examples are right to life, liberty, religion, and speech among others (United Nations, 2004).

Perception: immediate or intuitive recognition or appreciation; insight (Dictionary.com, n.d.).

Professional Learning Community (PLC): a systems approach to school improvement. Teachers are organized into grade level, course specific, or interdisciplinary collaborative teams in which educators work interdependently to achieve common goals for which members are mutually accountable (DuFour, 2009).

Service-Learning: a balance between service to the community and academic learning; the hyphen in the phrase symbolizes the central role of reflection in the process of learning through community experience (Eyler & Giles, 1999).

Organization of the Study

This inquiry is divided into five chapters. Chapter I has presented the introduction to the study and the research questions that guide it. Chapter II is a literature review relevant to human rights education and the pedagogical research that currently exists pertaining to it. Chapter III describes the methodology that was used to conduct the study, including participants, data collection, and the analysis of said data. Chapter IV summarizes the data collected through qualitative measures. Chapter V includes a summary of the study and the findings, conclusions, and recommendations for practice.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

This literature review includes an explanation of human rights and the evolution of its definition as it has transcended through the last century. The chapter also gives a history of the United Nations and its efforts to bring about understanding and awareness of human rights violations since its inception. It also provides a framework for service-learning and professional learning communities as they relate to secondary school culture.

Human Rights

Human rights acknowledge that every single person is entitled to enjoy his or her human rights without discrimination based on race, color, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status (United Nations, 2004). The concept of basic human rights has existed throughout documented history. Historical sources for bills of rights include the Magna Carta (1215), the English Bill of Rights (1689), the French Declaration of the Rights of Man and the Citizen (1789), and the Bill of Rights in the United States Constitution (1791). Early philosophical sources of the idea of human rights include Francisco Suarez (1548–1617), Hugo Grotius (1583–1645), Samuel Pufendorf (1632–1694), John Locke (1632–1704), and Immanuel Kant (1724–1804) (Nickel, 2017).

The idea of lasting national human rights ultimately depends on the government and people of a nation agreeing that action is needed to bring about or keep positive change. Genuine improvements in human rights observance require acceptance, education and training, a sound legal and judicial system, and a commitment to the rule of law (*Handbook on national human rights plans of action*, 2002). Today, there are 30 rights listed as separate articles in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights; they are Right to Equality, Freedom from

Discrimination, Right to Life, Liberty, Personal Security, Freedom from Slavery, Freedom from Torture and Degrading Treatment, Right to Recognition as a Person before the Law, Right to Equality before the Law, Right to Remedy by Competent Tribunal, Freedom from Arbitrary Arrest and Exile, Right to Fair Public Hearing, Right to be Considered Innocent until Proven Guilty, Freedom from Interference with Privacy, Family, Home and Correspondence, Right to Free Movement in and out of the Country, Right to Asylum in other Countries from Persecution, Right to a Nationality and the Freedom to Change It, Right to Marriage and Family, Right to Own Property, Freedom of Belief and Religion, Freedom of Opinion and Information, Right of Peaceful Assembly and Association, Right to Participate in Government and in Free Elections, Right to Social Security, Right to Desirable Work and to Join Trade Unions, Right to Rest and Leisure, Right to Adequate Living Standard, Right to Education, Right to Participate in the Cultural Life of Community, Right to a Social Order that Articulates this Document, Community Duties Essential to Free and Full Development, and Freedom from State or Personal Interference in the above Rights(Flowers, Minnesota Univ, & Stanley Foundation, 2000).

Current high school students are the future leaders, lawmakers, advocates and persons in position to effectuate change. Writer and philosopher George Santayana states, "those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it". Applying this thinking to fundamental rights, one may postulate that if we do not teach our children about the atrocities that are happening in the world, they will continue. This study looks at the perceptions of faculty after implementations of human rights education based on their interactions with their students. Through the examination of what human rights are and where they are violated around the world, the hope is that the students will have a better understanding which will lead to increased compassion and empathy for injustices that exist.

Catholic Schools

Catholic primary and secondary schools are well-suited in helping students develop a sense of purpose through building a relationship with self, God, others, communities, and all creation during their school years (Quinn, 2018). The rise of Catholic Schools began in the 1800's, primarily with influx of English, German, Irish and Italian immigrants in the United States (Edgar, 1976). In New York, by 1900 there were more than 55,000 students enrolled in parochial elementary schools and in Catholic secondary schools. Catholic school enrollment throughout the Archdiocese peaked in 1965, at the end of the Baby Boom (Ravitch & Viteritti, 2000). Currently, there are 215,768 students enrolled in Catholic Schools in the state of New York (New York State, 2019).

A Catholic school's commitment to the principles of Catholic social teaching is expressed in its mission, vision and core values. Catholic social teaching has been defined through a myriad of papal, conciliar, and episcopal documents (Vacarelli, 1999). The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops identified 7 major themes of Catholic social teaching:

1. Life and Dignity of the Human Person
2. Call to Family, Community, and Participation
3. Rights and Responsibilities
4. Option for the Poor and Vulnerable
5. The Dignity of Work and the Rights of Workers
6. Solidarity
7. Care for God's Creation

Catholic school teachers respond to human need for identity, empathy and meaning by cultivating an environment where students are respected and empowered to value diversity,

encourage acceptance and act on behalf of justice (Dobzanski, 2001). Education in Catholic schools provides social contexts through spiritual modeling, community service, and opportunities to lead, through which students are able to consider different ways of being themselves in the world (Quinn, 2018). Students in Catholic schools are challenged to develop an awareness of their own giftedness of social justice issues, and from this flows a sense of solidarity or concern which should then be expressed in actions of service and structural change (Dobzanski, 2001).

The United Nations

The major event that turned the global focus for the need to focus on human rights would be the actions that led up to and were included in World War II. Countries that fought against Hitler's regime decided a new international organization was needed to promote international peace and security; and that securing human rights in all countries would help lessen the likelihood of another World War ("Human Rights," 2016). A forum was created in 1945, called the United Nations, to reaffirm the faith in human rights of all peoples taking part (United Nations, 2004). Its charter established goals of protecting future generations from the "scourge of war" and promoting "fundamental human rights" and the "dignity and worth of the human person" (Nickel, 2017).

One of the first major achievements of the newly formed United Nations was the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), adopted on December 10, 1948. It was the first time in history that a document was considered to have universal value, adopted by an international organization, and fundamental values were set forth in detail (United Nations, 2004). The UDHR was a set of recommended standards rather than a binding treaty, which is an agreement by States to be bound by a particular set of rules (United Nations, 2004). The

Declaration was the first step in the process of formulating the International Bill of Human Rights, which was completed in 1966, and came into force in 1976, after a sufficient number of countries had ratified them, making them a treaty (Nickel, 2017). A country ratifying a UN human rights treaty agrees to respect and implement within domestic law the rights the treaty covers, and accept and respond to international scrutiny and criticism of its compliance (Nickel, 2017).

A common method of treaty implementation within the UN is the creation of a standing committee, or treaty body, to monitor the performance of member states, and to which those states are required to submit periodic reports on compliance (Nickel, 2017). There are ten human rights treaty bodies composed of independent experts of recognized competence in human rights, who are nominated and elected for fixed renewable terms of four years by State parties ("OHCHR | Human Rights Treaty Bodies," 2018). The ten treaty bodies that exist in the United Nations are

Human Rights Committee (CCPR)

Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (CESCR)

Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD)

Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)

Committee against Torture (CAT)

Subcommittee on Prevention of Torture (SPT)

Committee on the Rights of the Child (CRC)

Committee on Migrant Workers (CMW)

Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD)

Committee on Enforced Disappearances (CED)

The committees hold public sessions in which is heard from non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and meets with representatives from the state making the report; then these treaty bodies evaluate the human rights compliance by reporting to the larger council (Nickel, 2017).

Three notable agencies for human rights are the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), which seeks the implementation of human rights standards in the daily lives of all people everywhere; the Human Rights Council, which tackles gross human rights violations; and the Security Council, which has the authority to impose diplomatic and economic sanctions, sponsor peacekeeping missions, and authorize military interventions in cases of human rights emergencies (Nickel, 2017). The “Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action (1993),” established the OHCHR, which has field offices around the world and serves as a full-time advocate for human rights within the UN, assists in the development of new treaties and procedures, sets the agenda for human rights agencies within the UN, and provides advisory services to government (United Nations, 1993).

The OHCHR alerts the world of human rights violations, empowers individuals to claim their rights and is comprised of partnerships with local, national and international human rights NGOs; and works to increase human rights education and awareness in order to empower people to access their rights by using the United Nations mechanisms effectively (OHCHR, 2008). In 2006 the Human Rights Council (HRC) was created to replace the UN Human Rights Commission. The new Council's responsibilities include promoting universal respect for the protection of all human rights, addressing gross human rights violations, making recommendations to the General Assembly, and responding promptly to human rights emergencies (Nickel, 2017). This change was important because it elevated the Council as a subsidiary organ of the General Assembly, making it one of the three pillars of the United

Nations, along with Development and Peace and Security (OHCHR, 2008). Eventually a fourth pillar, Rule of Law, was added. One of the mandates of the HCR is to coordinated universal periodic reviews (UPR), which are based on interactive dialogue with countries or territories (States) under review and compliment the work of treaty bodies (OHCHR, 2008). The UPR is a process that requires every country to self-review, and engage in peer review with other countries, the status of their compliance with international human rights standards every four and a half years (Tibbitts, 2014). The review itself takes place in Geneva and takes the form of an interactive dialogue between the State under review and the member and observer States of the Council (OHCHR, 2008). Approximately 16 States are review in each two-week session; there are currently 193 member States that makeup the UN.

The United Nations is committed to maintaining international peace and promoting social progress; one of the ways in which they do this is through the advancement of human rights to all nations. For the better part of the last two decades, UN doctrines have encouraged schools around the world to educate their students about human rights and the protection and enforcement of those right. This study applies the guidelines of the United Nations regarding human rights education. The World Programme for Human Rights Education outlines segments for implementation, which this study intends to explore and support.

History of Human Rights Education

Education can be perceived as a vehicle to prepare students to become productive and successful citizens (Levin-Goldberg, 2008). Human rights education (HRE) refers broadly to education and training that aims to contribute to the building of a universal culture of human rights through teaching about human rights and fundamental freedoms (Struthers, 2017). Education for human rights seeks to teach learners with the skills required for translating

knowledge and values into wider action that will contribute to the building of a culture that is respectful of the rights of all people (Lohrenscheit, 2002). Education for human rights should, therefore, encourage learners to develop their power to perceive critically the way they exist in the world with which and in which they find themselves (Struthers, 2017).

In 1946, there was a United Nations Charter that mandated the promotion and stress the importance of Human Rights. The beginnings of HRE were outlined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights by aiming to promote dignity, tolerance and peace through educating individuals and groups to respect, defend and advocate for their rights (Library, Archives, Information, & Voinea, 2017). The preamble of the Declaration states clearly, “that respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms are to be advanced through teaching and education,” and Articles 26 and 28 of the Declaration affirm that “education about our rights is the foremost right that leads to the full and free development of the person” (Frantzi, 2004).

HRE has been developing for decades, the concept of implementing human rights education in formal school curricula by NGOs, intergovernmental organizations (IGOs), and dedicated individuals around the world (Suarez, 2005). The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) is a specialized agency of the United Nations (UN) based in Paris (UNESCO, 2018). Based on the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1946, the UNESCO’s purpose is the following:

Contribute to peace and security by promoting international collaboration through educational, scientific, and cultural reforms in order to increase universal respect for justice, the rule of law, and human rights along with fundamental freedom proclaimed in the United Nations Charter (UNESCO, 2018).

UNESCO began implementing associated school programs to a small degree with the beginnings of a HRE model in 1953 (Suarez, 2005). These early efforts were inconsistent and infrequent, and it was not until 1974 that an international education document mentions the need for human rights as part of the system, calling for “recommendation concerning education for international understanding, cooperation and education relating to human rights and fundamental freedoms” (Torney-Purta, 1987). 76 countries signed that recommendation, which was further developed in 1978 at the International Congress on Teaching of Human Rights, where the definition was further elaborated to include:

Human rights education and teaching must aim at (1) Fostering the attitudes of tolerance, respect, and solidarity inherent in human rights; (2) Providing knowledge about human rights, in both their national and international dimensions, and the institutions established for their implementation; (3) Developing the individual’s awareness of the ways and means by which human rights can be translated into social and political reality at both the national and international levels (Torney-Purta, 1987).

In 1995 the United Nations began a Decade for Human Rights Education and redefined HRE in the following terms:

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

- (e) The building and maintenance of peace;
- (f) The promotion of people-centered sustainable development and social justice;

The UN Decade provides a universal standard for education about human rights, teaching for human rights in an atmosphere of human rights (Rosemann, 2004). The UN affirmed that HRE is a life-long process by which all people learn respect for the dignity of others. However, not all of the outlined goals were achieved and, in lieu of a second decade, the UN commission working on human rights education decided on promoting a plan of action moving forward. A common standard for means, methods, and methodology of human rights education will be established and form a permanent basis for all participants within and recipients of human rights education (Rosemann, 2004). In proclaiming the United Nations Decade for Human Rights Education in December 1994, the General Assembly defined human rights education as “a life-long process by which people at all levels of development and in all strata of society learn respect for the dignity of others and the means and methods of ensuring that respect in all societies (Flowers, 2000).

Why Study Human Rights Education?

Human rights education embodies the hopes and ideals of most human beings and also empowers people to achieve them (Flowers et al., 2000). Traditional education is passive, where students try to retain information disseminated to them. Education for human rights seeks to address violations of human rights by taking relevant action informed by reflection (Struthers, 2017). Following the Decade for Human Rights Education push from the United Nations, the General Assembly proclaimed a World Programme for Human Rights Education, or WPHRE, (2005-Ongoing) on December 10, 2004. In the Declaration on Human Rights Education and

Training, the UN General Assembly endorsed the view that teaching and learning processes for HRE should incorporate the following:

- 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;
- Education *through* human rights, which includes learning and teaching in a way that respects the rights of both educators and learners;
- Education *for* human rights, which includes empowering persons to enjoy and exercise their rights and to respect and uphold the rights of others (United Nations, 2011).

This was to be accomplished in consecutive phases and each phase would include a strategy for action for each member States. The first steps of these strategies is analysis or study of current situation to see where enhancements can be made; second would be to develop priorities in ways of an implementation plan; third would consist of disseminating and monitoring of these plans; and final evaluation of the implementation strategy would need to occur (United Nations, 2017).

The first phase (2005-2009) focused on human rights education in the primary and secondary school systems. The second phase (2010-2014) focused on human rights education for higher education and on human rights training programs for teachers and educators, civil servants, law enforcement officials and military personnel. The third phase (2015-2019) focuses on strengthening the implementation of the first two phases and promoting human rights training for media professionals and journalists (OHCHR, 2018).

The Plan of Action for the World Programme for Human Rights Education (WPHRE) Phase I stresses that promoting a rights-based approach to education enables the education system to fulfill its fundamental mission to secure quality education for all human rights-based approaches, by providing tools that help integrate the norms, standards and principles of international human rights into any work process (United Nations, 2005). Human rights-based approaches relate to both means and ends, this implies that human rights principles should guide the programming of human rights education training activities (Decara, 2017).

The second phase of the Plan of Action focuses on human rights education in higher education and human rights training of teachers and educators, civil servants, law enforcement officials and military personnel (United Nations, 2018). This phase encompasses establishing research partnerships with higher education institutions to inform human rights education institutions to inform human rights education policies and practice, and to facilitate collaboration and information exchange between researchers of different higher education institutions (Decara, 2017).

The third phase of the WPHRE (2015–2019) focuses on strengthening the implementation of the first two phases and promoting human rights training for media professionals and journalists. According to the OHCHR, the mid-term report of the third phase will be compiled in April of 2018.

All of this activity and support at the international level regarding the three phases of the WPHRE has resulted in definitions, standards and guidelines for human rights education (HRE2020, 2015). In 2010, the High Commissioner for Human Rights reported that the international community has increasingly recognized “the fundamental contribution of human rights education to the realization of human rights” (MacNaughton, 2015).

The influence of human rights education (HRE) on the behavior and attitudes of students has been recorded in several developed countries, where student understanding of and engagement with human rights education has transformed into numerous positive outcomes. These outcomes include, deepened moral development and awareness of human rights, empathy and respect for others in society, respect for the environment, active participation in decision making, better management of conflicts, and support for peers with learning disabilities (Tibbitts, 2014). Many schools around the world who implemented aspects of WPHRE reported it having had a positive impact on the relationship between the students and staff by standardizing values like respect, empathy and listening; which contributed to the students' ability to manage and resolve disputes among themselves, a decrease in insulting language and in bullying overall (MacNaughton, 2015). Studies conducted by the Search Institute and Minnesota Advocates for Human Rights implementing HRE in middle and secondary schools showed positive in behavioral outcomes, which indicated a striking reduction in inappropriate behaviors among students receiving human rights education, with a clear distinction between students receiving disparate lessons and those participating in an integrated human rights education program (Flowers et al., 2000). This study calls attention to the benefits of implementing HRE into curriculums.

The increasing challenge to the implementation of effective human rights education programs is the crucial need for rigorous evaluation of the outcomes (Bajaj, 2012, p.79). As Bajaj notes, we need greater empirical research on human rights education “rather than repetitive claims of its importance.” The goal is to pave the way for a world that respects human rights through an awareness of and commitment to the goals laid out in the Universal Declaration, WPHRE, and other key documents (MacNaughton, 2015). This mass human rights approach to

education should foster critical thinking among learners, hopefully turning them into “critical consumers” of human rights, giving students the following:

1. the ability of students to recognize the human rights dimensions of, and their relationship to, a given conflict or problem-oriented exercise;
2. an expression of awareness and concern about their role in the protection or promotion of these rights;
3. a critical evaluation of the potential responses that may be offered;
4. an attempt to identify or create new responses;
5. a judgment or decision about which choice is most appropriate;
6. an expression of confidence and a recognition of responsibility and influence in both the decision and its impact (Tibbitts, 2002).

How an individual understands human rights will influence their judgement on issues where rights are considered universal (Jerome, 1998). The bible verse “With great wisdom comes great resp” from Proverbs 24 indirectly outlines the ideals behind the push for human rights in the classroom. The classroom instruction based on the UN policies should not only give students the knowledge and understanding of human rights violations but should instill in them moral efficacy to effectuate change. As the instrument for instruction, teachers are in a unique position to observe students’ integration and application of the information into their world view.

Therefore, this study seeks to understand how teachers perceive the impact of implementing a HRE model across the curriculum has on the student body, and whether or not that education empowered the students to think differently.

Service Learning

Sponsors for HRE attest it is a powerful mode of producing empathetic and conscious global citizens; however, in order to strengthen student global engagement, students must be given the opportunity to not just learn about human rights but practice and connect to the human rights experience (Levin-Goldberg, 2008). Service-learning is a form of experiential education in which students engage in activities that address human and community needs together with structured opportunities for reflection designed to achieve desired learning outcomes (Jacoby, 2003). It focuses on effective citizenship and behavioral issues; this encourages better understanding on behalf of the students relative to social issues in their own community (Eyler & Giles, 1999). Service-learning can take the lessons given inside the classroom and enable students to get tangible results (Perez, 2000). Students engaged in service learning can face problems facing society first-hand, some for the first time. This will help transform their view of the world and help them to develop better problem-solving skills to address those issues of which they are now aware (Suryanarayana). This will help transform their view of the world and help them to develop better problem-solving skills to address those issues about which they are now aware (Suryanarayana, 2015). According to Suryanarayana, “A service-learning experience may be the catalyst in the life of a student to dive into the complexities of the social issues they have encountered and to seek to develop innovative solutions” (p. 74).

Other benefits to students who participate in service-learning is gaining a stronger sense of meaning and purpose in their academics and developing leadership skills; by working with others, they are given opportunities to be more responsible and take initiative (Eyler & Giles, 1999). The Carnegie Corporation emphasized the importance of service-learning engagement:

Active learning opportunities that offer students the chance to engage in discussions of issues and take part in activities that can help put a "real life" perspective on what is learned in class. These activities can range from collaborative or independent research projects and presentations to simulations, mock trials and elections, service-learning projects, and participation in the student government.

These direct exchanges with the marginalized or less fortunate help to create a sense of empathy. Empathy is defined as “a means to recognize and appreciate the feelings of others, the origins of these feelings, and the ability to engage in the emotional episodes of an individual while remaining apart from them” (Empathy, 2018). Service-learning has been found to develop a student's overall empathetic ability and, through reflection and discussion, develop an appreciation for the thoughts, feelings, and ideas expressed by others (ASCD, 2017). Students in schools where service and learning are well integrated through classroom focus and reflection are more likely to demonstrate greater issue-knowledge, have a more realistic and detailed personal political strategy, and give a more complex analysis of causes of and solutions to the problem at the conclusion of their experience than those in classes where the service was less integrated or not done at all (Eyler & Giles, 1999). Engaging learners in issues of social justice and equipping them with the skills and experience necessary to reflect critically on the world provides the means through which learners can become empowered human rights activists (Struthers, 2017).

The service-learning does not necessarily have to be part of coursework; it could be in the form of community service programs that are established in the school. This works best for middle and secondary schools. Community service may be carried out as school-wide events, separately organized school programs, or school-sponsored projects that are non-curriculum-

based and assist marginalized members of society (Spring, Grimm, Dietz, & Corporation for National and Community Service, 2008). Community service experiences during adolescence are transformative in that they train teens to become innovative citizens, people who see beyond surface causes and effect change in their communities and beyond; they question why people are hungry, debate solutions to clean energy, or investigate the relationship between race and poverty (Empathy, 2018).

Social-Emotional Learning

Recently, there has been a wave of interest in social-emotional learning (SEL); concepts related to SEL include five fundamental abilities: self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making (Weissberg, Durlak, Domitrovich, & Gullotta, 2015). Self-awareness includes skills related to identifying emotions, self-perception, and recognizing one's strengths, or self-efficacy; self-management includes goal setting and the discipline used to attain such goals; social awareness includes the respect of others and empathy toward those in need; relationship skills involve communication, teamwork and engagement abilities; and responsible decision-making involves problem-solving through evaluation and reflection (Weissberg et al., 2015).

The word *compassion* originates from Latin *com* (with) + *pati* (to bear, suffer). According to Merriam-Webster.com (2018), compassion is defined as a “sympathetic consciousness of others’ distress together with a desire to alleviate it.” Compassion can be considered to be a multidimensional state rather than a singular concept. Some have suggested that compassion has “two main components: the affective feeling of caring for one who is suffering, and the motivation to relieve suffering” (Halifax, 2012).

Compassionate behavior in an adult is linked to experiences humans go through as a child, developmentally speaking, and is linked to learned-behavioral interaction with parents and caregivers (Volling, Kolak, & Kennedy, 2008). Therefore, it stands to reason that teachers are viable models for compassionate thinking and conduct, beginning in preschool and continuing throughout the student's academic career. As noted by Roeser and Pinela (2014), middle school through high school may in fact be the most opportune time to cultivate compassion in adolescents.

Professional Learning Communities

A professional learning community (PLC) is a group of educators that shares expertise and works collaboratively to improve teaching skills and the academic performance of students (Great Schools Partnership, 2013). The professional learning community model shifts the core mission of education from teaching to learning, and this simple shift has profound implications for schools (DuFour, 2004). PLCs are largely considered one of the most promising educational reform efforts for sustained, practical school improvement (Ruebel, 2011). The powerful collaboration that characterizes PLCs is a systematic process in which teachers work together to analyze and improve their classroom practice (DuFour, 2004). Actively engaging teachers in PLC work increases their professional knowledge and allows them to expand through critical reflection, which will inevitably increase student learning (Vescio, Ross, & Adams, 2008).

Summary

The aftermath of World War II convinced the developed nations to establish a United Nations that would oversee issues that violated the rights of individuals around the globe. Through time, the idea of human rights has gained traction and member States have developed a system of checks and balances to review one another. The idea of human rights education in a

classroom setting has also evolved. The United Nations Decade for Human Rights Education and the World Programme for Human Rights Education have underscored the need to integrate human rights issues into curricula around the world. Studies have shown that service-learning or community service followed by reflection have the greatest impact on students' empathy, awareness, and understanding of the dimensions of the rights of others. It is incumbent on teachers to get the message across in the classroom. Collaboration through professional learning communities with a focus on human rights could assist faculty in analyzing and improving their practice, which could help them enhance student learning and understanding.

Each of the sections of the literature review helped to increase an understanding of human rights education, its history through United Nations processes and the pedagogical reasoning to implement it in the classroom. Furthermore, methods for implementation in academic institutions were outlined through empirical research.

Taking into consideration that the United Nations' push for human rights education is still developing and the fact that no states in the United States have instituted policies regarding human rights education, there is very little known regarding the implementation and evaluation of such education. Any work that has been done in American schools has been done through individual teachers. Catholic schools embody the principles of Catholic social teaching in their mission, which both empower students to make a difference in the lives of others and teach a greater purpose to live through Church doctrine.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this study is to examine teachers' perceptions of the moral efficacy of high school students post the implementation of a human rights education model. The planned study was formulated on two central research questions:

1. How do teachers perceive their students' awareness of human rights issues after incorporating human rights discussions into their curriculums?
2. In what ways do teachers perceive their students' empathy before and after the implementation of the faculty professional learning community in the 2017-2018 school year?

Research Design

Through a qualitative research design, the study utilized a narrative research method. Qualitative research is a process that seeks an in-depth understanding of an idea or concept that focuses on the "why" in that it refers to concepts, definitions, characteristics, symbols, and description rather than counts and measures (Berg & Lune, 2017). The data collected are rich in descriptions of people, places, and conversation; and research questions are formulated to investigate topics in all their intricacy (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007).

Qualitative research is used to explore, interpret, or obtain a deeper understanding of certain aspects of human beliefs, attitudes, or behavior, such as a person's experiences and perspectives (Stewart, 2008). This research comes in the form of inquiry that analyzes information through conversation in natural settings in order to capture expressive information about beliefs, values, feelings, and motivations that underlie behavior (Berkwits & Inui, 1998).

The research is based on the perception of the participants; therefore, the planned method of research is optimal since it is interpretive and descriptive by nature. Interviews provide the forum for the participants to elaborate on their opinions, making a qualitative research design appropriate for this study.

Rationale for a Narrative Research Design

Narrative research describes the lives of individuals through collecting individual experiences and discussing the meaning of those experiences (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007).

Narrative inquiry is a form of qualitative research that involves gathering personal accounts or perspectives and focusing on the meaning of their experiences (Josselson, 2007). These personal accounts could be collected through a variety of ways—conversation, written and visual.

Interviews offer unique insight and personal perspective, providing a more comprehensive understanding of beliefs, knowledge, and attitude (Gill et al., 2008).

Narrative research comes with inherent limitations in that it relies on the participants' ability to assess the previous school climate based on their memories. The potential paradigm shift comes in after the implementation of a human rights education platform during the 2017-2018 school year. The interviews request the participants to look back on their knowledge to before the present time period and compare it to their perceptions during the time of the interview. However, by focusing on the teachers that have been in the building more than 10 years and going across multiple disciplines, there will likely be enough information to ascertain and confirm trends.

Another inherent limitation in this particular study would be researcher bias since it examines a program that I implemented in this school. I addressed that participants should be open and candid with their answers because it is incumbent upon the researcher to integrate

biases and beliefs at the outset of the study (Creswell & Poth, 2018). This hopefully alleviated misconceptions on behalf of the participants and enabled them to be honest with their opinions.

Context

The Prep School is an all-boys Catholic high school, founded in 1916 and located in Westchester County, New York. The ethnic makeup of the school is 68.5% White (non-Hispanic), 13% Hispanic or Latino, 9% African American (non-Hispanic), and 9.5% Multi-Racial or other. A total of 98% of the student body identifies as faith-based, 70% of which identify as Catholic. The Prep School is located in a relatively affluent area and pulls students from all over Westchester Country, New York City, Connecticut, and New Jersey. The school runs pre-kindergarten through Grade 12, but this study focused only on the upper school (Grades 9-12). The population of the upper school for the 2018-2019 academic year was 796. A total of 71% of the teaching faculty (32 out of 45) have taught there for 10 years or more. Through a professional learning community effort, The Prep School implemented a cross-curricular human rights education platform in the 2017-2018 school year.

The Prep School was chosen for this study due to the region in which it is located, the demographics of the student makeup, and the number of long-term faculty in the building. Like most Catholic schools in the area, The Prep School has a long history of requiring community service prior to graduation; therefore, the ideals of solidarity with the marginalized and giving to those in need are present in the curriculum. Discussing human rights inside the classroom merely took the fundamentals of service and expanded on the meaning of the action. The faculty in this school have seen decades of students come and go, shaping the culture of the community, giving them the best insight on whether or not the HRE model had an impact on students' attitudes toward injustices in the world.

The Prep School has a fairly robust community service program. There was a significant focus on expanding the campus ministry program in the past eight years at the school. In most Catholic schools one would need to complete a certain number of service hours prior to graduation. In 2011, that was revised at The Prep School to clearly define what service means and that time needed to go toward helping the marginalized and put under the umbrella of campus ministry. What is unique to The Prep School is their dedication to providing ample service opportunities. Approximately 75 service trips are coordinated locally, where the school provides transportation. Additionally, there are eight service-immersion trips a year in which students can travel domestically and abroad to serve the poor in different regions. Recently, the Prep School expanded the service requirement to include upperclassmen advocacy projects. Junior students must choose a specific area of concern on which to focus all of their service during the school year, making sure to document actions and reflections. Then, during their senior year, they are supposed to compile what they learned and plan future actions that can be taken into a digital portfolio highlighting their advocacy project. This digital portfolio will be unique to them and something they can use on a resume or to differentiate themselves in the college application process. In February of the senior year there is an advocacy Fair, where the underclassmen can see what the seniors accomplished. The hope is for the students to learn that they can make a difference in the world and hopefully continue on the project they started.

The ideas for the implementation of the PLC at The Prep School came from a trip I participated in as a member of campus ministry in a Christian Brothers school. The program is offered every year through Edmund Rice International (ERI), a faith-based non-governmental organization (NGO) committed to working for children and young people who are marginalized around the world. One of the ways in which this is accomplished is through participation in

universal periodic reviews (UPRs) held at the United Nations in Geneva, Switzerland, where all 193 member States (countries) that are part of the United Nations meet and review one another. One of the responsibilities of the ERI NGO is to identify human rights violations from member States, conduct research (usually in person) pertaining to the violations, draft recommendations based on the research, and submit them to the United Nations Office of the High Commissioner of Human Rights (OHCHR) for review.

During this program, my cohort of participants were individually tasked with creating ways to implement human rights awareness in our schools. I designed a proposal for a program that would not only expand the knowledge of our students but would also focus on educating faculty. After researching through the United Nations library, I began to uncover the resources that I used to refine and implement what became the PLC.

The Prep School Professional Learning Community

During the 2017-2018 academic year, the Prep School organized a professional learning community that had the cross-curricular goal of introducing human rights issues through the lens of each subject area. Teachers were given a formal presentation on global human rights issues and violations. They were then asked to select human rights topics that they would be able to incorporate into their lesson plans. The faculty were divided into random groups and challenged to devise creative ways on how to bring up some of these issues in the classroom. Their feedback during a breakout session, as well as other suggested methods, was collected and discussed in the large group. They were then tasked with doing individual research on how they can implement human rights topics on class materials and submit proposals to the administration prior to the next scheduled professional development day (in three months). Dedicated planning time was provided during the first three large faculty meetings, where teachers would work with

their departments on how human rights issues would be introduced into their specific subject areas. Teachers were then asked to submit lesson plans (where applicable) to be shared with the greater school community.

This unique application of the PLC was what drew my efforts to creating this study. The school had an existing service program, but studying the issues in a classroom perspective sheds a different light on many of the issues the students worked on outside of the classroom.

Participants and Sampling Strategy

Primary participants were selected through a purposeful sampling process. This method of selecting subjects is based on those who are believed to facilitate the expansion of the developing theory (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007). There is no hard rule for the number of participants it takes for a qualitative study. The time allotted, resources available, and study objectives might best determine the sample size (Patton, 1990). According to Adler & Adler (2012), depending upon the situation, relatively few people, as few as six to 12, can offer insights and might simply be the maximum number of people available at the time.

For this study, the criteria for being asked was that they took part in the 2017-2018 professional learning community on human rights education. Of the 50 full-time faculty, 39 met the criteria. I placed a typed letter in the mailboxes of the selected teachers that had worked at the Prep School during the 2017-2018 academic year and followed up with an email notification. The letter identified the research topic, gave a sampling of what the interview questions could include, explained that this would be voluntary, that their privacy would be protected, and asked them to sign, date, and return the form to me by a certain time. At the time of this data

collection, I was a member of the staff and a teacher, with no direct oversight of any of the participants.

The participants that returned the form were then contacted by me via email or in person to schedule a time to meet for the interview. The interviews requested the participants to share their opinions based on their experience working with students in The Prep School community and their impression of student social awareness and moral consciousness prior to and in the wake of the implementation of human rights education lessons through the professional learning community endeavor.

Out of the 39 teachers that met the requirements, 31 teachers agreed to participate in this study. It is interesting to note that over a third of the participants (11) taught in the Prep School for more than 20 years; therefore, they had over two decades of generations to reference. Twenty-nine percent (9) had taught in the school for over 10 years and 77% had taught in schools prior to the Prep School. Most of those who participated in the study (74%) taught a humanities subject. The demographics of the participants can be seen in Figure 1.

Religion	3
English	6
History	7
Art	3
Science	5
Math	3
Language	3

Figure 1. Demographics of the participants.

There were 31 full-time teachers from The Prep School that took part in this study of the 39 that were eligible. The participants returned the signed letter explaining the nature of the study, stating that their involvement was voluntary, provided sampling questions, and assured

them that their privacy would be protected. All subjects in the school were represented in the interviews, including teachers from Religion (3), English (6), History, (7), Arts (3), Science (5), Math (3), and Languages (3). Of those interviewed, 24 had taught in middle or secondary schools prior to teaching at The Prep School; and seven have taught only at The Prep School. The chart below (Figure 2) is a visual representation of the breakdown of teachers by the years they taught at The Prep School.

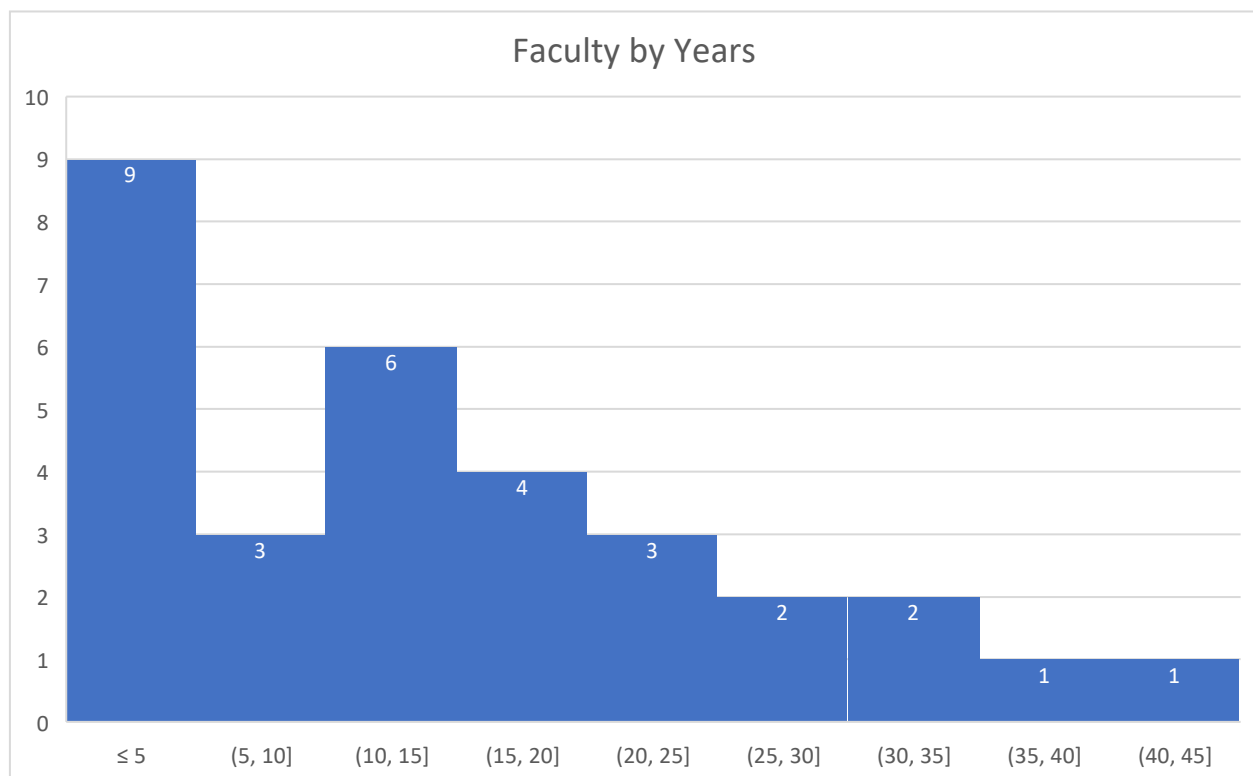


Figure 2. Years teaching at The Prep School.

The average number of years was 15.9, with a standard deviation of 6.76. A total of 35% (11) of participants had taught at The Prep School for over 20 years and 62% (19) had taught at the school for over a decade. Two of the three that had less than five years' experience had

taught previously at high schools. Nineteen of the participants had at least one master's degree, and two had doctorates.

Data Collection

This study used a semi-structured interview style, asking open-ended questions that allow for more discussion. These interviews consisted of several key questions that helped define the areas to be explored while also allowing for more detail through conversation (Gill, Stewart, Treasure, & Chadwick, 2008). This study highlighted the participants' personal opinions based on their experience working with students in the time they were employed by The Prep School. The flexibility of using semi-structured interviews, especially compared to structured interviews, allows for the discovery or elaboration of information that is important to participants but may not have been thought of as pertinent prior to the discussions (Gill et al., 2008). This study is formulated around two central research questions:

1. How do teachers perceive their students' awareness of human rights issues after incorporating human rights discussions into their curriculums?
2. In what ways do teachers perceive their students' empathy before and after the implementation of the faculty professional learning community in the 2017-2018 school year?

In order to elicit responses that allowed for open-ended interpretation and discussion, the following questions made up the interview protocol:

Teacher Background

1. In what ways has the implementation of the advocacy professional learning community (PLC) influenced your knowledge of human rights issues?

2. In what ways has the implementation of the advocacy professional learning community (PLC) influenced your perception of human rights issues?
3. In what ways has the implementation of the advocacy professional learning community (PLC) influenced how you discuss human rights issues in your classroom?

Classroom Activity

4. In what ways do you discuss human rights issues with students?
5. In what ways do you use the human rights curriculum in your teaching (lesson plans, class projects, etc.)?

Student Learning

6. Based on your experience at this school, how would you describe your students' awareness of human rights issues prior to the implementation of human rights curriculum?
7. How would you describe students' compassion relevant to human rights issues before the implementation of the human rights curriculum?
8. How would you describe students' awareness of human rights issues after the implementation of the human rights curriculum?
9. How would you describe students' compassion relevant to human rights issues after the implementation of the human rights curriculum?
10. In what ways did your students' awareness change after the implementation of the human rights curriculum?
11. In what ways did your students' compassion change after the implementation of the human rights curriculum?

Interviews

The interviews were conducted in person, using a semi-structured format and were in private locations, such as the respective teacher's office or classroom. The questions were chosen in hopes of eliciting participants' honest reactions based on the personal experience working with students in The Prep School community. This type of interview, sometimes referred to as "guided conversation," allows the participant to play a stronger role in defining the content of the interview and allows codable topics to emerge (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007).

My position in the school was more working with students and not having much direct contact with the faculty as a whole. They knew me as a colleague, but my particular role in the school did not call for more than information sharing. I did not hold a position of direct authority over the teachers. Therefore, I believe the participants' answers were honest and authentic.

Field Notes

During the interview process, I took descriptive notes on what I saw, heard, thought, and perceived; in addition, reflective notes were taken on any ideas, strategies, reflections, and patterns, especially in the earlier interviews (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007). These notes were essential when reviewing the recordings and transcripts later on in the research process. The process of note-taking helps the observer to internalize and commit to memory what has been observed (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007).

Data Storing

Each interview was recorded using a digital audio recorder. To limit background noise, the one-on-one interviews were conducted in teacher offices, classrooms, or faculty meeting rooms according to the interviewee's schedule. The audio recordings were stored and later

transcribed, with the permission of the interviewee (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007). Each interview was saved as the interviewee number and date; for example, “Int1.02.02.19” for an interview occurring on February 2, 2019. A separate file was kept with a legend to identify each interviewee.

Field notes are a secondary data-storage method. During the interview, notes were taken on what I heard, saw, experienced, and thought in the course of collecting the data (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007). Following each interview, the recording was reviewed along with the field notes, and additional notes were taken.

The digital audio recordings were sent to an online service (www.scribie.com) to be transcribed. The transcription service matched the title of the digital audio file when saving the new document and the interviewee was referred to by his or her number in the audio recording to protect anonymity. Each digital file, both audio and document, was password-protected using a 4-digit password.

To protect participants’ confidentiality, all audio recordings and digital transcriptions were saved to a USB memory drive. The USB drive, field notes, interviewee legend, and any hard-copy documentation was kept in a security safe that utilized the same code for the data to access.

Data Analysis and Coding Process

This study employed a grounded theory analysis to focus on conceptual links between categories and properties (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). This approach to coding is a systematic methodical approach to qualitative analysis that is “grounded” in the data itself (Saldaña, 2011). The constant comparative method was developed in 1967 by Glaser and Strauss and calls for “constantly comparing” participants’ responses with one another to develop tentative categories

(LeCompte & Schensul, 2013). Each of the 31 interviews with the participants of the study were audio recorded to later transcribe and analyze the text. Names were not used during the recordings of the interviews; each interviewee was assigned an identifier based on the date and time of the interview. The codes and themes that emerged came from patterns or structures identified when reviewing the audio files, transcripts, and field notes taken during the one-on-one interviews. Patterns are defined as actions or data that appear more than twice (Saldaña, 2011). Bogden and Biklen offered the following thoughts:

Data interpretation refers to developing ideas about your findings and relating them to the literature and to broader concerns and concepts. Analysis involves working with the data, organizing them, breaking them into manageable units, coding them, synthesizing them and searching for patterns (2007).

Each of the recordings was sent to an online transcription service (scribie.com) to get converted into text. Once received, each transcription was reviewed and edited by listening and reading to check for accuracy. Then each audio interview and transcription was reviewed a second time to ensure familiarity with the material. Once I was familiar with the material, I created an MS Excel file with individual worksheets for each question. The first cell of the worksheet was the question and the cells below contained all interviewees' responses to the corresponding question. This takes the data from a descriptive format and progresses it into an interpretive form, enabling the researcher to look beyond the surface for broader meanings and patterns (Bree & Gallagher, 2016). I physically retyped each question and all answers to further familiarize myself with the data. This enabled me to focus on each question and each response one at a time, also known as line-by-line coding (Christians & Carey, 1981). I did this and took additional notes on each question to establish codes; then I entered the codes in the cells

immediately next to everyone's response. I also color-coded each interviewee by the subject taught; knowing this helped create perspective from their answers. This method of coding employs exploratory research and is called "inductive coding," which helped me develop categories (Christians & Carey, 1981).

In the initial coding process, I examined each answer and organized the answers through a grouping process by codes; columns were created for primary and secondary coding for each response (Saldaña, 2011). Coding means assigning designations to "various aspects of data so that you can easily retrieve specific pieces" (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). I reviewed comments to identify common thoughts and words used by respondents and began to look for emerging themes. In an iterative process, coding categories at this early stage can be discarded and modified later in the process (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007). Reviewing the audio and transcripts along with the field notes several times enabled me to tag data that might be relevant to the study, then through additional analyses create categories and themes (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). This initial, or open, coding splits the data into individually coded segments that eventually lead into the development of categories (Saldaña, 2011).

A unique set of codes emerged for each question; the more open-ended questions had between 10-15 codes while more directed questions, like Question 7, "How would you describe students' compassion of human rights issues before the implementation of human rights curriculum?" was coded as "weak," "average," or "strong." For example, Question 3, "In what ways has the implementation of the advocacy professional learning community (PLC) influenced how you discuss human rights issues in your classroom?" had the initial codes of "students more prepared for human rights discussions," "students more knowledgeable," "communal aspect to teaching/connecting class content across disciplines," "relating class content to human rights

issues,” “able to teach/discuss more in depth,” “actively working to inspire students,” “human rights examples reinforce subject matter,” “larger component of class,” “encourage students to be more vocal,” “allows students to reflect more,” “better able to relate to/understand students perspective,” and “spreading message of service to others.”

Additionally, I met with a first-year doctoral student in the Seton Hall Education program to review my coding process and check for internal validity. I explained the methodology that I used for coding and asked that he code my data independently. I extrapolated the participant answers from the MS Excel file, connecting to the two questions of the Interview Protocol that generated thematic saturation, roughly 18% of the data. The questions were Question 2, In what ways has the implementation of the advocacy professional learning community influenced your perception of human rights issues, and Question 8, How would you describe students' awareness of human rights issues after the implementation of the PLC human rights curriculum? I removed any information that tied back to the participants, including the labels I used for them in the MS Excel file. We met to compare our findings, which were in direct correlation, thus validating my findings. This process is known as “member-checking,” which assists with validating the information and coding process used (Saldaña, 2011).

The codes were then organized into a codebook which is a compellation of codes, their descriptions, and data example for reference (Saldaña, 2011). The Microsoft Office Suite (MS) was utilized for this purpose. The final spreadsheet contained the list of parent codes, to which a macro was written to assist with the sorting and extrapolating of the data (Ose, 2016).

The codes were then looked at across all questions and combined into broader categories; these led to the emergence of initial themes. These themes included knowledge, influence, global awareness, advocacy, compassion, consciousness, service-learning, human rights issues,

reinforced teachers, cross-curricular learning, empathy, increased teacher knowledge, open-mindedness, engagement, and validating. Through a constant iterative review process, themes were combined based on overlapping comments and similar impacts on the students, faculty, and school community as a whole. The themes were ultimately narrowed down into the four major theme strands of increased awareness, increased compassion, culture of change, and teaching the teachers. These themes and their subthemes are explored further in Chapter IV.

Establishing Validity and Reliability

Validity and reliability are two factors that need to be addressed when designing a study, analyzing results and judging the quality of a study (Golafshani, 2003). Each can be approached through careful attention to a study's conceptualization and the process of gathering, examining, and interpreting the data (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). Initially, I requested that the North America advocacy Coordinator of the Christian Brothers Schools review the research questions and interview protocol for clarity. He was chosen as an expert in the field that I am researching; he was not included in those interviewed. I also piloted the interview questions with the art teacher in The Prep School, who was also a participant in the study. He has been teaching at the school for a little over five years and is also an alumnus; thus, he has a good sense of the school culture. Both the advocacy coordinator and the art teacher deemed the questions clear and relatable.

I requested that the participants be available to review the transcripts that relate to our meetings. This respondent validation assisted with preliminary findings and interpretation of data (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). However, since the answers provided by the participants and the transcripts generated yielded no additional questions, further clarification was not necessary. Once the data collection was complete, I began the coding process by categorizing and verifying.

The process of data collection strategies, data sources, and verifying information was deemed to provide enough internal validity, or triangulation, to defend the findings.

Ethical Considerations

The research involved human subjects; therefore, all institutional review board guidelines required by Seton Hall University were followed. The participants were given a document informing them of the following:

1. My affiliation with Seton Hall University
2. They are participating in a research study
3. An explanation of the purpose of the study and expected duration of their participation
4. A statement as to the voluntary nature of their participation, specifying their right to refuse or discontinue participation
5. A statement indicating their anonymity and the procedures used to protect their confidentiality (Seton Hall University, 2018)

CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS

The purpose of this study is to determine whether the faculty perceptions of moral efficacy of high school students was affected after the implementation of a human rights professional learning community (PLC). To do this, I interviewed 31 teachers from The Prep School that took part in the PLC. Drawing on their responses, I explored their perceptions on the awareness and compassion of their students prior to and following the implementation of a human rights-based PLC in the 2017-2018 academic year.

The impetus of the study came from the United Nations push for implementation of human rights education in the classroom. Literature on human rights, The United Nations and Catholic schools was explored to set the foundation for the study. The participants were asked questions to better understand the climate of The Prep School and classroom instruction from their experiences. This chapter presents the findings for the following research questions:

1. How do teachers perceive their students' awareness of human rights issues after incorporating human rights discussions into their curriculums?
2. In what ways do teachers perceive their students' empathy before and after the implementation of the faculty professional learning community in the 2017-2018 school year?

The 31 teachers who participated in human rights education professional development took part in the PLC training focused on human rights lessons in the classroom and continued working at The Prep School the following year. The semi-structured, in-depth, face-to-face interviews were conducted in the months of May and June of the 2018-2019 academic year, toward the end of the academic year that immediately followed the implementation of the PLC.

The findings I present in this chapter signify the overarching themes that emerged from the interviews. The narratives of each participant's personal observations and experiences with the student body before, during, and after the implementation of the human rights education PLC initiative.

Findings: Major Theme Strands

The major findings based on the coding process used in this study are presented in this section. Inductive coding and inductive analysis were used to identify essential features and relationships and examine the data to develop the themes (Coffey & Atkinson, 1996). Four major themes surfaced from the coding procedure: (1) increased awareness, (2) increased compassion, (3) culture of change, and (4) teaching the teachers.

Theme 1 – Increased Awareness

Language and Vocabulary

Increased awareness was the first theme that emerged from teacher narratives. The teachers' extended experience in the classroom was invaluable to deciphering the intended goal of this study regarding the moral efficacy of a student population after a human rights advocacy PLC was implemented. As part of the advocacy PLC, the faculty were challenged to devise creative ways on how to incorporate human rights topics in class discussions and projects, to individually research topics and implementation strategies, and to submit a lesson plan. The hands-on work and self-directed learning enhanced faculty awareness and buy-in, which led to the ongoing viability of the program. Participant 1.5.15 commented as follows:

So the advocacy has kinda made me more aware of these issues. Instead of just having something handed to us and then put it away, this advocacy and this program has continued for a period of time. There's a normal complaint in educational circles that

when administrators do things sometimes that it just ends then and it doesn't continue.

This has continued. So it's kind of made me more aware of the issues that are there.

There was consensus that having the PLC be both directed with the goal of human rights issues and autonomous where the teacher can choose when and how it is implemented made it well-received among the faculty. They appreciated the flexibility, which translated into more buy-in amongst the faculty. One of the interviewees reflected that it reemphasized the importance of being a teacher, and many others intimated similar sentiments, referring to teaching human rights as planting a seed that later becomes fruitful and that many reap the benefits. Several teachers also commented on the fact that their lessons and feedback were going to be shared with other schools in the network (schools that are linked by the same founder as that of The Prep School). They felt that the work that they put into this PLC was not only going to benefit their students, but there would be future benefits for students in schools around the world. Participant 2.6.6 put it well with the following statement:

So the perception . . . What it raised for me was the extent to which if we are gonna change the world, we need to pique at least the conscience of the young people. So in that sense it was a new, or not so much a new, kind of new realization, but more of a . . . More of an impetus to be more explicit about making connections between human rights and individual actions and teaching around those things.

Many of the participants commented that PLC connected all teachers to a certain idea, which translated well to the students. They noticed students had a broadened knowledge of many current events and issues that affected people locally, domestically, and globally.

Participant 1.5.2 added the following:

So I would say that after the PLC, students became much more aware of these issues because a number of teachers really strive to bring human rights topics that connect with their content area. Kids kind of made a connection between human rights issues in the world with their educational experience. So they weren't just seeing something on the news and it was isolated; they were seeing something on the news and then learning about it in action or in immersion in a classroom.

Teachers felt that student understanding increased because the news was not isolated; the teachers were able to incorporate current events into the classroom more easily. With over 50 teachers in the building focusing on human rights advocacy-related material, many students were able to contribute to discussion in class because they were exposed several times over the course of the year. One of the teachers began to survey students beforehand and use that information to make it more personal, national, and global in terms of how they could relate to each topic (1.6.12, personal communication). Teachers said students sometimes connect the dots in issues-related discussions on their own, without being prompted by the teacher. Teachers feel their awareness of issues affecting persons around the world has significantly increased after the implementation of the PLC.

Inside and Outside the Classroom

Implementing the upperclassmen advocacy projects along with the advocacy PLC significantly increased awareness for the junior class. They had the experience of focused service and the reinforcement in the classroom with lessons and discussion. Instead of just focusing on the “cause and effect, there’s an effect-cause, cause-effect,” which shows that not only is it in the world, but it is part of their world (2.5.25, personal communication).

Along with the implementation of the advocacy PLC and the upperclassmen advocacy projects was the establishment of the Human Rights Club on campus. Several students and faculty members created the club to provide students with an outlet to make a change. The club sponsors various drives to both fundraise and raise awareness for various causes. They covered topics such as a water bottle campaign to raise environmental concerns about the pollution disposable water bottles cause; they raised funds by selling reusable water bottles and put the money toward water bottle fountains in the school. They conducted a Rice Bowl campaign to raise awareness and funding to provide the marginalized in Africa with food and water. They also conducted an Ethical Trade Fair, where goods were sold to promote greater equity in international trading partnerships through dialogue, transparency, and respect. They have also organized a number of presenters to come in to speak to the student population on various human rights-related issues. They had about a dozen students join initially and by the end of the 2017-2018 academic year, there were over 50 members in the club. It is now one of the largest clubs on campus. Participant 3.6.6 commented as follows:

Well, I think advocacy and human rights no longer are just simple buzzwords. Now that they have a meaning, you can put faces behind it. There's speakers who've come in. You can see who has gone through some of these issues, and the students now have an actual connection to it. So, if you can connect to it, it has to have increased, from my point of view. I think the value of working together on these concepts has been . . . Now there's an awareness, and now they start to think along the problem-solving level. Like, how do I solve this, or could I solve this, or how does this impact me? How am I influenced by this?

As previously mentioned, community service was available at The Prep School for the better part of a decade; however, now there is a perception that students are getting more involved in service, not only because they have to, but because they want to (2.5.14, personal communication). Awareness and action have both increased on campus according to the teachers that were surveyed in person. They feel that the understanding about human rights violations globally is higher, and the desire to do something about it has also taken shape amongst the students. This is evidenced by participation in classroom discussions mostly; students often already have knowledge of topics or pick up on global impacts of violations more quickly than they did prior to the implementation of the PLC. Participant 1.5.17 has stated the following:

I've noticed that I'll come up with a quote or I'll come up with a headlining story topic that I think they may or may not have been aware of, and I'm always surprised that they know what I'm talking about. So, they're up-to-date on what's going on, and I think that that is, in part, because we're making such an effort to talk about it with them.

Teachers who have been in the school for a while knew that the students looked at their community service requirement as a burden, but they now feel it is something a majority of the students anticipate completing.

As was previously hypothesized in Chapter 1, this study confirmed that classes dealing with the humanities (English, World Languages, Religion, and the Arts) seemingly had more opportunities for reflection through writings than a subject like Math. Participant 1.5.28, a Math teacher, commented as follows::

It's not a subject as per history . . . where you can implement human rights issues on a daily basis. But in math, what we try to do is we try to implement human rights issues

into word problems. What we try to do is we try to make the word problems real-life issues, especially in algebra or in geometry, where you can incorporate human rights topics into your word problems, just to give the kids a better sense of real life issues and try to relate it to math.

However, all teachers across all fields perceived student awareness as having increased after the implementation of the 2018-2019 PLC.

Theme 2 – Increased Compassion

Presence of Compassion

The second finding that emerged after my analysis was increased compassion. The vast majority of the participants in the study agreed that there was a level of compassion that The Prep School student body possessed prior to the PLC. Several teachers commented that the compassion now had direction and substance due to exposure and lessons both inside and outside of the classroom. Participant 1.5.2 offered the following comment:

I don't think that their compassion was non-existent; I think they had compassion, but I don't necessarily know that the compassion was for the same issues. So I think after the human rights curriculum was implemented, I think students' idea of compassion expanded. They could make a connection . . . for example, before the human rights curriculum, they might have just donated money to someone who is homeless or donated food. I think after the human rights curriculum was implemented, they might start thinking more about the causes of homelessness and how they might work to end them. I don't think it's necessarily just about compassion. I think students learned about the actual educational pieces tied into compassion.

The increased focus in the classroom through lessons and discussion brought a certain level of understanding amongst the students. Teachers felt that the students began to understand how fortunate they are based on the region of the world in which they live and what is provided for them by their parents. Some mentioned the changes in perception in their own lives, how the PLC forced them to do research and come to the realization of the large number of human rights violations there are, both locally and abroad. Participant 1.5.17, who had been teaching at The Prep School for 10 years at the time of these interviews, contributed the following statement:

I think this has been a very positive PLC for our community. I do see the changes and the benefits in our student body, among our faculty. I think it's forcing us to face issues that we might not have wanted to talk about. And it's always uncomfortable talking about things that are uncomfortable, but I think the best teaching, the best learning and growing happens when that happens.

Many of the veteran teachers (those teaching more than 10 years) have noticed more compassion come through in the writing and presentations in the classroom. They referenced that there is an overall change in their personality, both in the classroom regarding topics discussed and toward one another. Participant 1.5.17 commented as follows:

And I think their compassion also coincides with their awareness. To see them, in their writing, begin to separate their own motives and their own . . . I guess, their own identities and speak for another group or on behalf of another group and do that with ease and do that with comfort, I think, is very telling of how understanding they are.

The teachers also pointed out a certain level of emotional maturity in the students. They noted that there was a heightened level of gratitude that the students displayed for the opportunities and possessions they have in their lives. Having that ability to compare their lives to the less

fortunate gives them the opportunity to see their problems in context. Yes, whatever they face in their lives could be a struggle to them, but compared to many others around the world, it isn't so bad (2.5.21, personal communication). Along these lines, participant 1.6.3 stated the following:

My idea of what the boys can understand has changed. I now see that students can be a little more sophisticated in their understanding, and that I should have been doing this all along. What we do with the advocacy projects in our classes, we should have always had as part of the curriculum.

Some of the teachers indicated that they were initially skeptical of the PLC, but after the implementation they noticed that not only could the students handle it, that the application of Human Rights into the curriculum was beneficial for the overall school community.

Overall, most of the teachers interviewed agreed that the compassion amongst the student body has grown overall, especially in regard to human rights issues. Participant 1.5.2 commented as follows:

I think that there are students whose compassion has grown for human rights issues. For example, there are students who I would never have thought would become involved in the Human Rights Club, who have now become involved in the club after this was implemented, and I think that probably played at least somewhat of a role in them doing so. I think that there's just generally speaking more of an openness to learning about the issues and not being ignorant of them, particularly issues that happen outside of our country or outside of our local community. I think students are more compassionate, more willing to donate their money or their time or to learn about ways in which to solve those issues.

Perhaps the best phrase that could sum it up is that “their compassion deepened because it became more informed” (1.5.16, personal communication).

Catholic Education

Education in Catholic schools focuses on the development of the whole human person: intellectually, physically, socially, emotionally and of course, spiritually (Morris, 2012). The Prep School is part of a larger network of schools founded by Blessed Edmund Rice, known as Christian Brothers Schools. As Edmund Rice Christian Brother schools continue to fulfill their mission to educate the hearts, minds, souls, and bodies of young people across the United States, the need for constant reminders of who and what Christian Brother educators are, is absolutely necessary (Leto, 2018). The Edmund Rice Christian Brothers of North America website lists the seven essential elements of a Christian Brother education:

1. Evangelize youth within the mission of the church
2. Proclaim and witness to Catholic identity
3. Stand in solidarity with those marginalized by poverty and injustice
4. Foster and invigorate a community of faith
5. Celebrate the value and dignity of each person and nurture the development of the whole person
6. Collaborate and share responsibility for the mission
7. Pursue excellence in all endeavors

These essential elements encompass and expand upon the principles of Catholic social teaching, making The Prep School an excellent candidate for such a PLC. It aligns with the school’s mission and code. Proclaiming the word of God, building community, and providing service were the three constructs absolutely necessary for a Catholic school to be authentically Catholic

(National Conference of Catholic Bishops, 1973). Participant 2.5.15 added the following thoughts:

Helping students to understand that we are all made in the image and likeness of God, and that no one is higher or better. Better is not defined by money but character and how we treat each other.

The advocacy lesson plans complement the traditional Catholic school teaching in that it provides the students context in why we are called to a higher purpose and what occurs when these basic principles are not followed. Participant 2.5.11 commented as follows::

What I have tried to do now is that, with each lesson, I do try to bring out the advocacy part, like what can we do? What does the church call us to do, and how can we respond to that?

This is different from what goes on in a traditional Catholic school classroom in that the PLC provided an environment to question the students about what to do with the information. It challenged the students to look at human rights violations through a Christian lens, taking a humanitarian, moral, and ethical approach to potential problem-solving and advocacy efforts.

As a result of the PLC, students have become more cognizant of human rights violations that exist around the world. They are also more empathetic to the needs of others, whether it be their peers or marginalized members of our society.

Theme 3 – Culture of Change

Shaping a Community of Brotherhood

A common theme among the participants was that the ways the boys interact with one another in the school is different. One of the participants (1.5.15) in the interview stated that “the culture of the school has changed.” He went on to explain that sports and academics were

always there, but the PLC program enhanced the willingness to participate and get involved in the school and various charitable functions. Several point out that it is not the same students who get involved anymore; there's a wider variety of faces. Regarding awareness, Participant 3.6.12 commented as follows:

I think their awareness has been piqued. You see more guys kind of interacting and doing stuff with the different causes that we have during lunch time and guys signing up to . . . Even when you walk down the hallway, where you have the pictures of the guys volunteering, you look at certain types you never would've thought they'd volunteer, but you've got that picture right there. It's clear as day. So I think it's definitely opened up. It really, really has opened up.

Participants pointed out a difference in interactions between them and the students, as well as the students and one another.

We're using [different] language and vocabulary, and there have been various, for lack of a better phrase, setups in our lobby during lunch periods of student groups bringing poster board-type sessions to the students during lunch. I think their awareness that just helping feed people is not enough has gone up. I see that in the talk. I see that in how the students have really grown our Human Rights Club here, which was non-existent up until two years ago (1.5.14, personal communication, May 14, 2019).

Several commented that, in their opinion, students are slower to judge and more accepting of one another's opinions. The principal of the school has been mentioning for years that the boys should think of their time at The Prep as part of a brotherhood and that we are responsible for one another. The teachers see that may be coming to fruition on a deeper level, with help from the PLC.

I think they're nicer to each other, to a certain extent, and I think I see that in the mixed homerooms, too. I think that it's been sort of slow to kick that off, but I do hear the way students talk to one another (1.6.6, personal communication, June 6, 2019).

But the better interaction is not just within the walls of The Prep School. Participants brought up that there is better interaction with the marginalized during service trips, as well as volunteers from other schools and organizations. Participant 1.6.3 reflected as follows:

I just wanna say that in the last year and a half, since this project started, our students have been connecting with other schools. And not connecting just because we have a football game against them, or we have a competition, a debate competition. They're connecting because they have this similar take on a human rights issue. We've had FaceTime calls with schools from other nations, we have had kids who have met students from other schools who are doing their own advocacy projects, who think that's really cool. And so that connection helps them see a global . . . It helps them see there's a global perspective for this, and they're getting perspective now, as high schoolers.

References were made in terms of the passion the students have now in class when they are defending their opinion regarding human rights violations and the informed nature behind it, especially the teachers who have taught the same students multiple times. Participant 1.5.29 put it this way:

I can think of having students as freshmen and then having them again as seniors, and having to really break down barriers of previous things that they thought they had understanding of, and now as seniors, being able to not just discuss things, not just introduce topics, but really grow beyond them, whether it be global warming, whether it be . . . I'd mentioned healthcare a handful of times, but a lot of students were really blank

slates when they came in, and now there's at least a discussion. Now there's . . . It's a little deeper understanding.

One of the teachers who has taught for 17 years, 14 of which are at The Prep School, stated that the number of various ways that the students reach out has “exploded” in the last two years, especially in cases where they get attached to causes or families in need.

Outlet and Direction

The Prep School has a student-run morning news program called GaelForce Live (GFL), a platform where the morning announcements are disseminated to the homerooms via a video display. Students can use this forum to create more than just announcements; they can create informative videos and broadcast club information as well. Since the introduction of the advocacy PLC, more and more students used this as a platform to inform their peers about important facts and information pertaining to human rights violations. Participant 4.6.6 reflected as follows:

I know that for the students that want to do something, they have felt empowered and emboldened to be able to do something about it. If an idea for a project has come to mind, students have been willing to get on GaelForce Live, sit in the lobby, do their best to outreach to other students. It's provided a level of comfort for them to actually go out and advocate for these.

The outlets do not just come by way of GFL; the Human Rights Club was also created in the 2017-2018 academic year to foster the idea that the students are emboldened to make a difference. The Human Right Club seems to be the easiest and largest outlet currently in the school for students who want to campaign on behalf of the marginalized. The club has even

hosted several video conference discussions with students from schools in developing nations.

One of the moderators, Participant 1.5.2 contributed the following:

[The]Human Rights Club was started after the curriculum was implemented, so that the club has dozens of students who are now involved in actual human rights issues that run the gamut. I think that a number of students found service opportunities that are required for them to graduate, but I think some of them sought out different opportunities that were more human rights related. I would say that, just generally speaking, I think students know more about human rights issues now than before the curriculum was implemented.

However, two other groups were created in the 2018-2019 academic year that some of the veteran teachers attributed directly to the aftermath of the advocacy PLC. The first is “Gaels for Life,” which is a club where students profess their stance on being on the side of pro-life. The second is Prep ACTS; the acronym stands for Acceptance, Compassion, Tolerance for all Students. This club is geared toward students who are struggling with sexuality or identity. It’s there to remind students that they are all accepted in the eyes of God. The culture in the school has shifted to one of acceptance, according to those interviewed. Participant 1.6.3 commented as follows:

They've done GFL announcements and they've done poster campaigns and you see flyers, and there's just several more and different things going on at any one time. There's so much going on that relates to human rights in the building now.

Whether it be in class, through a club, or by other means, the students are getting noticeably proactive when it comes to human rights advocacy. Participant 1.6.11 reflected as follows:

Well, I have everything from students who did research on stateless-ness and who are actually writing to people to get them to get their small businesses to join forces with them so they could come up with campaigns to make a difference in other places. I have a student who's gonna be traveling to Dominican Republic in order to start his advocacy there, and he was working on trying to get people's awareness here. I've got other students who've reached out through their parishes and were really excited to try to bring word about some of their smaller projects. Another student did some research and decided to try to write a paper on . . . Or a letter, a persuasive letter to somebody in his community so that he could actually clean up his community and work on making it a cleaner place, to remove trash. Somebody else did the same thing, a letter to another person in his community that he was sending out so that he could help clean up the Hudson River. I think it's really exciting when they could use what they're doing in class to bridge into something that they actually want to do in the real world.

Responding to this, some faculty are creating avenues where students are challenged to collaborate on advocacy issues. One instance is The Prep School's Leadership Weekend, a retreat-style workshop that has been run at the school since the early 1980s. On the weekend, a student committee leads smaller groups of participants on a variety of activities that involve leadership skills. They added a section to this weekend specifically for advocacy. Participant 2.4.14, the moderator of the committee, shared his thoughts:

I run a leadership retreat. On that retreat, the students had an activity where they had to create an advocacy poster based on statelessness, which is basically individuals that do not have a place to call home, a country of origin, a citizenship, if you will. So just noticing them, back in March, discuss that, based on a book that one of our juniors is

putting together for his advocacy project, I would again definitely say that the awareness is high. More students are getting more involved, not only because they have to, but I think a large number of them because they want to.

As the 2018-2019 academic year progressed, students became more involved with human rights-related activities, more vocal about their beliefs, and more accepting of the views of others. This is vastly different from what the more experienced teachers witnessed earlier in their careers.

Theme 4 – Teaching the Teachers

Perhaps an unpredictable result or theme that emerged when reviewing the data was that the advocacy PLC had an impact on the faculty—both inside and outside of the classroom.

Participant 1.5.14 revealed the following response:

I think the method that we implemented with educating the adult faculty members was a very important part of the process to get them on board. My perception of what they thought of it was quite different than what I expected, because I thought there would be more resistance to adding another requirement onto the faculty's load of things that they needed to do, but aside from a couple of small issues—I think they were small in general—the faculty rose to the occasion and my perception was that what they were being asked to do in the classrooms, they were happy to do.

The faculty were introduced to the advocacy PLC at the end of the 2016-2017 academic year with a presentation on exactly what advocacy means in a human rights context and the fact that they would have to begin to incorporate methods of conveying these in the classroom. At the beginning of the 2017-2018 academic year, the faculty were presented with the terms of the PLC, ways of incorporating it into the classroom, and time to meet with members of their

department that day to come up with a plan. They had to provide the administration with a time that they could be observed implementing the lesson, as well as provide any lesson plan they had developed to incorporate human rights into their subject area. The lesson plans were then collected and posted to a website that was shared with the larger Edmund Rice Christian Brothers Schools network around the world. Several teachers mentioned that they appreciated that their efforts were not a “one and done” scenario. The fact that the work was used to inspire members not only inside The Prep School but schools around the world made it more meaningful to them. They also valued the interactions that they ordinarily may not have had with their colleagues. Participant 1.5.2 expressed the following:

I would say that it's given me a broader knowledge base of human rights issues. I would say that going into it, I did have a decent amount of knowledge on human rights topics. But I think that the PLC allowed me to interact with other teachers and, in doing so, not only enhanced my knowledge of it but also some of the perspectives that I gained from interacting with other teachers throughout the building, particularly teachers in different subject areas who would maybe look at the same human rights issue through a different lens.

What was arguably more important was that the training presented teachers with knowledge that may not have had going into it. Participant 1.5.2 expressed the following:

The human rights issues have been something that I've studied in the past and have kind of been involved with in the past. I would say that it's changed my perception in the sense that . . . I've realized that most people don't know about them, or a large percentage of teachers that work in this building aren't really knowledgeable about human rights issues, and certainly they wouldn't be as involved with them as myself or someone else might be.

So I think it changed my perception of how others in the building, other teachers and faculty members would look at human rights issues.

Whether they want to acknowledge it or not, they are the educated ones in the building from whom the students are going to seek for clarity on topics they do not understand. Expanding the knowledge of the teachers, even just in the scope of what human rights violations exist in the world, is always a challenge, but it is what this PLC accomplished (1.5.15, personal communication, May 15, 2019). Participant 1.5.15 added the following thoughts:

And I think as teachers we talk about this . . . I think they see us, even though we don't like to think this, as we are leaders in their little 42-minute classroom. And how we act and how we perform and how we talk about these issues, I think, has a profound effect, even though it's like a seed. And you may not see it, but years later it can be really fruitful, the kids that are doing so many great things.

Increasing awareness amongst the [students] seemed to have a positive impact on their levels of compassion; so too did it for the faculty. Some said it expanded the way they look at the world as well as the way they look at their students. For example, Participant 1.5.17 stated the following:

It brings things closer to home. When you hear more and more about it, when there's work done in your building, with your students, when you are trying to focus on a global issue, it makes you realize that these things are impacting students in our own school, they're impacting teachers in our own school to some extent. And I think that the awareness of the conversation makes you a little more compassionate, a little more understanding of the needs of students overall.

Teachers have become more involved in human rights-related activities and have become more aware of the atrocities that exist locally. The interconnectivity of the PLC allowed them to become more familiar with members of the school community, not just those in their departments.

Summary of the Analysis of the Interviews

Chapter IV presented the qualitative data collected through responses to a semi-structured interview process with 31 teachers from The Prep School that participated in a human rights-focused professional learning community training and implementation in the 2017-2018 academic year. This approach required deeply disseminating the details in each response given by every participant. The research questions that were analyzed were based on teacher perceptions of student awareness post a human-rights PLC and teacher perceptions of student compassion both before and after the PLC implementation. The analysis of the theme-extrapolation document revealed four major categories in the participants' responses: increased awareness, increased compassion, culture of change, and teaching the teachers. Within the theme of increased awareness, there was an emphasis on the fact that the language and vocabulary used by the students was impacted. They are kinder and more open-minded toward one another and toward global issues. This was expressed through student interactions both inside and outside the classroom. The teachers intimated that there was a level of compassion that already existed in The Prep School community prior to the PLC; however, afterwards it was more focused and informed. The participants noticed that there was a paradigm shift in the culture of the school. Students were more open to new ideas and took action through the Human Rights Club and student media outlets, as well as initiating new clubs that welcomed diversity. There was a sense of brotherhood, where students were becoming more responsible for one

another as well. The direction of interactions with one another came from a more mature social-emotional basis than it had in previous generations of school community, based on the responses of teachers who had been in the school 10 years or more. The impact was not limited to just the students; there was a subsequent response from the teachers that they too were influenced. Teacher awareness and compassion, from their own admission, increased as a result of the PLC training and from their observing student actions.

Chapter V provides a summary of the findings, the outcomes of the data analysis, and a discussion of the results. The chapter ends with conclusions and implications for future research.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

Discussion

According to the United Nations Office of the High Commissioner website, Human Rights can be achieved only through an informed and continued demand by people for their protection (United Nations, n.d.). There are human rights violations that exist all over the globe, and since the early 2000s, the United Nations has been recommending that schools around the world educate children and adults about these atrocities. The idea behind the push is that an educated population would lead to more advocacy and hopefully an end to the maltreatment and neglect that exist. Schools should be the model of a good society as John Dewey suggested; therefore, human rights education in the curriculum is important (Dewey, 1899). This study examined two research questions:

1. How do teachers perceive the implementation of human rights discussions into their curriculum influence their students' awareness of human rights issues?
2. In what ways do teachers perceive their students' empathy before and after the implementation of the faculty professional learning community (PLC) in the 2017-2018 school year?

Understanding the perceptions of faculty who have taught in a school before and after the application of a human rights-based professional learning community (PLC) project is necessary in order to know whether or not human rights education can have an impact. The findings revealed that studying human rights violations in the classroom increased both awareness and compassion in the student body. Many of the teachers expressed that they noticed a difference in awareness. They noted that the students treated one another with a sense of openness, willing to

accept diverse ideas. They noted that compassion was always present amongst the school community, which may be a result of the school's Catholic mission; but after the implementation of the PLC, there was a more "informed compassion." The students were able to articulate why they were empathetic toward a certain person or cause. This is evident through their advocacy projects, class presentations, homework assignments, and classroom discussions.

Furthermore, as a direct result of the PLC, human rights-related groups that were already on campus grew and new ones were established, including a pro-life group and ACTS (Acceptance, Compassion, Tolerance for all Students). Indirectly, in a response to the student-created groups, the faculty formed a Socio-Emotional Committee that meets regularly to address student and faculty needs pertaining to emotional development, time-management, and stress reduction. Although there is no direct evidence linking this to the PLC, there is a link to Themes 3 and 4. Theme 3 discusses the paradigm shift in the school where student activism and dialogue led to groups being formed and to open-minded behavior toward one another. Theme 4 displayed that empowering the teachers with knowledge and encouraging the discussions in the classroom allowed faculty to recognize the needs of their students. In response to these needs, faculty-led groups like the Socio-Emotional Committee were formed.

Implications

Researchers

This study provides a framework for implementation of a human rights education (HRE) curriculum in a faith-based institution. The study focused on teachers' perceptions of the awareness and compassion exhibited by their students after a cross-curricular advocacy program based on human rights violations was instituted. The results were conclusive in that there was a positive change in both aspects, as well as effects on the culture and the way some teachers

teach, but did other factors lend themselves to the success? The fact that the data reflect faculty perceptions of the positive effect human rights discussions and the PLC had on student awareness and empathy may not accurately depict the efficacy of the program. Further study may look at additional outcomes such as comparative analysis of knowledge between incoming freshman and graduating seniors, longitudinal analysis of students' knowledge or involvement in advocacy endeavors (post-graduation), or comparison with schools in which human rights curriculums are instituted. It would also be interesting to see the implementation of the PLC and related advocacy programs in a public or secular private school to see if the element of religion, specifically Christianity, makes a difference. Faith-based institutions require religious studies which include, as part of the curriculum, the teaching of morality and service to others. This may have had a positive impact in the acceptance of the program by The Prep School students.

Another limitation of this study was the implementation in an all-boys school. Adolescents develop at varying intervals based on gender; there exists differences between the capacity of emotional intelligence and reflection based on age and sex as a child develops (Santrock, 2007). Would there be a difference if females were involved, whether it be an all-girls equivalent or a co-educational setting? Would the presence of young women have an impact on adolescent males? Would an all-female environment produce similar results? These are directions that future researchers could take in an effort to decipher the most beneficial approach for HRE platforms in American schools.

Last, this study was conducted in an Edmund Rice Christian Brothers school. All schools based on the founder Blessed Edmund Rice operate under the Essential Elements, as previously discussed. Would there be a difference if an HRE curriculum were implemented in a Catholic school founded by an alternate religious denomination

Practitioners

The implications did not rest on just the students but the faculty and larger school network as well. Through the PLC training, the teachers were given the information and the tools to share in the classroom, and many intimated their knowledge base was expanded as a result. They admitted that although they had an idea of human rights violations, the training provided context and the realization of the importance of classroom application. There was also an appreciation of a cross-curricular movement, where participants were able to work with teachers from other subject areas with whom they would not have otherwise had the opportunity, or that students would come to class well-versed in particular human rights topics. Sharing the lesson plans with the larger network of Christian Brothers schools was also appreciated— that their work was not considered “one and done.”

There was also the perception of a paradigm shift in the culture of the school. The students were charged with deeper knowledge and were charged with doing something about it. Student clubs, such as the Human Rights Club, Gaels for Life, and Prep ACTS (Acceptance, Compassion, and Tolerance for all Students) flourished. Students utilized the lobby during their lunch periods to construct displays and conduct fundraisers to raise awareness and donations for various causes. Audrey Osler (2015) put it best in the following observation:

By extending the concept of recognition within human rights beyond its current legal framing, drawing on the concept of intersectionality, including the ethics of recognition, exploring the possibilities of narrative and the narrative imagination, and inviting learners to tell their own stories, it should be possible not only to strengthen the quality of HRE but also, as human rights educators, to deepen our collective understanding of rights and

of the everyday contradictions and ambiguities that learners face when seeking to interpret legal frameworks in an inherently unjust world (p. 265).

Human rights should be presented in context with society, thus making it important and applicable in a school curriculum. Education in general assists a child to explore the world and express his or her ideas (Arshad, 2016).

Inspiring students in high school to have a voice and empowering them to use it for good has the potential to plant seeds for the future, which is fundamentally what education does. The study found that expanding the knowledge of human rights and what the students could do about human rights violations only gave them freedom to run with their ideas. Not only are they inspired to speak up in the classroom, but they are also enlightened enough to listen to alternate points of view with less prejudice. The participants agreed that commitment amongst the faculty resulted in greater awareness and compassion amongst the students, resulting in a perceived expanded mindset amongst the student population. The establishment of special interest groups like the Socio-Emotional Committee enhance faculty involvement and support of the needs of the student body in a school.

The United Nations Office of the High Commissioner of Human Rights (OHCHR) states on its website that human rights education encourages “all individuals to uphold their own rights and those of others” (OHCHR, 2018, par. 1). It is through education that human rights can be achieved globally. It would be a ripple effect; the more schools that implement similar programs, the more students will be globally informed, which will increase the chances for change to occur.

Recommendations

We can gather from the perceptions of the faculty that partook in the advocacy PLC that there are benefits to be had when implementing such programs. The limitation existed that since this study was implemented in one school based in the Catholic tradition, there was an inherent sense of morals and values already present in theology classes and other faith-related functions that the students are exposed to by nature of being enrolled. The advocacy PLC was introduced along with upperclassmen advocacy projects and the implementation of a Human Rights Club on campus. It seems from the information gathered that students need avenues to express their informed opinions. The Human Rights Club's membership more than tripled in their second year, making it one of the largest clubs on campus, and the class of 2020 had about 50 projects in total for their advocacy requirement, which were scheduled to be presented in the spring of their senior year. Additional clubs that promote inclusion and support life were also formed after the PLC; therefore, it is important to have a prepared faculty who will support different options for outlets.

Another thing The Prep School had in place was morning video announcements. This was heavily utilized in the dissemination of student-created information, along with the ability to create displays in various places on campus. Enabling the students to creatively express their views fosters growth in their involvement. It is paramount that the students have avenues to express what they have learned in the classrooms and learn how to take leadership roles in making a difference in the world. The advocacy projects force them to think about what they can do to put an end to whatever problems they are looking to resolve.

It is also important to note that The Prep School's administration was progressive in that it was open to implementing such a PLC. Some schools are very conservative in their views, or

not easily open to the idea of change. Once clubs like Prep ACTS were proposed, The Prep School was supportive in that call for awareness, compassion, and acceptance. This further allowed the students to feel comfortable with their efforts of giving a voice and encouragement to those who are in need.

Future Research

Although this study provides useful information about the effects of an advocacy PLC, the study was limited to one all-boys Catholic school in a fairly affluent section of the northeast portion of the United States. Suggestions for future research would be the application of an advocacy PLC in a different setting, such as a public school, co-ed school, or all-girls school to see if the results are similar. If more schools begin to answer the call of the United Nations to implement human rights education models into their curriculum it would expand the availability of willing participants. The material that The Prep School collected was shared with the larger network of Edmund Rice Christian Brothers Schools; if one of those schools adopts a similar program, it might be advantageous to do a similar study and compare the results.

Conclusions

Research is limited on the impact of a human rights education (HRE) model on high school students. This study looked at one school that implemented a limited HRE model after training faculty and administering a human rights-related professional learning community (PLC) initiative. The findings can inform educational leaders from other schools to replicate a culture consisting of faculty and students that are informed citizens. Taking into consideration the United Nations push for HRE implementation in schools around the globe, this study could serve as a reference point for schools in the United States.

The results from increased awareness of human rights violations in the world could encourage today's students, who are tomorrow's leaders, to get more involved in decision-making. That could take shape from something as little as advocating on their personal social media to researching politicians and voting for those who represent the marginalized or get involved on a global platform and represent a non-governmental organization (NGO) at United Nation summits. The students at The Prep School had a good foundation for compassion; but as the participants in the study explained, they displayed a more informed compassion post the advocacy PLC. That translated to less discrimination and a more open-minded attitude toward different opinions.

The teachers that were interviewed in the study confirmed that there was a paradigm shift in the culture of the school. More students were involved in activities that gave a voice to those who had none, as well as participating in clubs whose purpose was to promote advocacy. Teachers too got involved more and admitted that the PLC project helped them learn, both from the training and from the students. The findings from this study have benefits not only to a school community internally but externally as well. Those students represent their school on a public platform. Schools like The Prep School, especially with the addition of a human rights program into an already excellent curriculum, educate the whole person—mind, body, and spirit.

REFERENCES

- Arshad, M. S. (2016). Why it is important to include human rights education in school curriculum of children. Retrieved from www.linkedin.com/pulse/why-important-include-human-rights-education
- ASCD. (2017). Citizens in the making. *ASCD Express*, 13(6).
- Bajaj, M. (2012). From "time pass" to transformative force. School-based human rights education in Tamil Nadu, India. *International Journal of Educational Development*, 32(1), 72-80.
- Berg, B. L., & Lune, H. (2017). *Qualitative research methods for the social sciences* (9th ed.). Boston : Pearson.
- Berkwits, M., & Inui, T. S. (1998). Making use of qualitative research techniques. *Journal of General Internal Medicine*, 13(3), 195-199.
- Bogdan, R., & Biklen, S. K. (2007). *Qualitative research for education: An introduction to theories and methods* (5th ed.). Boston, MA: Pearson A & B.
- Bree, R., & Gallagher, G. (2016). Using Microsoft Excel to code and thematically analyse qualitative data: A simple, cost-effective approach. *AISHE-J: The All Ireland Journal of Teaching & Learning in Higher Education*, 8(2), 2811.
- Burnett, S., & Blakemore, S.-J. (2009). The development of adolescent social cognition. *Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences*, 1167, 51-56. doi:10.1111/j.1749-6632.2009.04509.x

- Christians, C. G., & Carey, J. W. (1981). The logic and aims of qualitative research. In G. H. Stempel, III & B. H. Westley (Eds.), *Research methods in mass communication* (pp. 342-362). Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall.
- Compassion. (n.d.). In *Merriam-Webster's online dictionary*. Retrieved from <http://www.m-w.com/dictionary/compassion>
- Covell, K., Howe, R. B., & McNeil, J. K. (2010). Implementing children's human rights education in schools. *Improving Schools*, 13(2), 117-132.
- Creswell, J. W., & Poth, C. N. (2018). *Qualitative inquiry & research design: Choosing among five approaches* (4th ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Decara, C. (2017). *Guide to a strategic approach to human rights education: How NHRIs can benefit from their unique position and set winning priorities*. Copenhagen: Danish Institute for Human Rights.
- Dewey, J. (1899). *The school and society: Being three lectures*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.
- Dobzanski, J. L. (2001). The Catholic school: A catalyst for social transformation through the teaching of gospel values. *The Journal of Catholic Education*, 4(3), 319-334.
doi:10.15365/joce.0403042013
- DuFour, D. R. (2004). Schools as learning communities. *Educational Leadership*, 61(8).
- DuFour, D. R. (Fall, 2009). Professional learning communities: The key to improved teaching and learning. *Systems Thinking*. Retrieved from <https://www.advanced.org/source/professional-learning-communities-key-improved-teaching-and-learning>
- Efficacy. (n.d.). In *Merriam-Webster's online dictionary*. Retrieved from <http://www.m-w.com/dictionary/efficacy>

- Empathy. (2018). *Psychology Today*. Retrieved from
<https://www.psychologytoday.com/basics/empathy>
- Equality and Human Rights Commission. (2018). Retrieved from
<https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en>
- Eyler, J., & Giles, D. (1999). *Where's the learning in service-learning?* (1st ed.). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Flowers, N. (2000). *The human rights education handbook: Effective practices for learning, action, and change*. Human Rights Education Series, Topic Book.
- Frantzi, K. K. (2004). Human rights education: The United Nations endeavour and the importance of childhood and intelligent sympathy. *International Education Journal*, 5(1), 1-8.
- Gill, P., Stewart, K., Treasure, E., & Chadwick, B. (2008). Methods of data collection in qualitative research: Interviews and focus groups. *British Dental Journal*, 204(6), 291-295.
- Golafshani, N. (2003). Understanding reliability and validity in qualitative research. *The Qualitative Report*, 8(4), 597-606.
- Great Schools Partnership. (2013). Professional learning community. Retrieved from
<https://www.edglossary.org/professional-learning-community/>
- Halifax, J. (2012). A heuristic model of enactive compassion. *Current Opinion in Supportive & Palliative Care*, 6(2), 228.
- Hannah, S. T., Avoli, B. J., & Walumba, F. O. (2011). Relationships between authentic leadership, moral courage, and ethical and pro-social behaviors. *Business Ethics Quarterly*, 21(4), 555.

- HRE 2020. (2015). *Human rights education indicator framework: Key indicators to monitor and assess the implementation of human rights education and training*
- Jacoby, B. (2003). *Building partnerships for service-learning* (1st ed.). San Francisco, CA : Jossey-Bass,
- Jerome, J. S. (1998). The philosophic foundations of human rights. *Human Rights Quarterly* (2), 201.
- Josselson, R. (2007). Narrative research and the challenge of accumulating knowledge. In M. Bamberg (Ed.), *Narrative-state of the art* (pp. 7-15). Amsterdam, Netherlands: Benjamins.
- LeCompte, M. D., & Schensul, J. J. (2013). *Analysis and interpretation of ethnographic data : A mixed methods approach* (2nd ed.). Lanham, MD: AltaMira Press.
- Leto, T. R. (2018). *Catholic identity in Edmund Rice Christian Brothers schools in the United States* (Doctoral dissertation). Available from ProQuest Dissertations and Theses database (UMI No. 10793371)
- Levin-Goldberg, J. (2008). *The impact of a human rights education on student attitudes and behaviors*. (Unpublished doctoral dissertation). Northcentral University, San Diego, CA.
- Lohrenscheit, C. (2002). International approaches in human rights education. *International Review of Education/Internationale Zeitschrift für Erziehungswissenschaft/Revue Internationale de l'Education* (3/4), 173.
- MacNaughton, G. (2015). Human rights education for all: A proposal for the post-2015 development agenda.. *Washington International Law Journal*, 24(3), 537-569.
- Merriam, S. B., & Tisdell, E. J. (2016). *Qualitative research:A guide to design and implementation* (4th ed.). San Francisco, CA : John Wiley & Sons.

- National Conference of Catholic Bishops. (1973). *To teach as Jesus did. A pastoral message on Catholic education*. Washington, DC: United States Conference of Catholic Bishops.
- New York State Catholic Conference. (2019). New York's Catholic Church—How we serve. Retrieved from <https://www.nyscatholic.org/what-is-th-new-york-state-catholic-conference-/new-yorks-catholic-church-how-we-serve/>
- Nickel, J. (2017). Human rights. In E. N. Zalta (Ed.), *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University, Metaphysics Research Lab.
- OHCHR. (2008). *Working with the United Nations human rights programme: A handbook for civil society*. Retrieved from http://www.ohchr.org/EN/AboutUs/CivilSociety/Documents/Handbook_en.pdf
- OHCHR (2018). Human rights treaty bodies. Retrieved from <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/Pages/TreatyBodies.aspx>
- Ose, S. O. (2016). Using Excel and Word to structure qualitative data. *Journal of Applied Social Sciences* (19367244), 10(2), 147.
- Osler, A. (2015). Human rights education, postcolonial scholarship, and action for social justice. *Theory and Research in Social Education*, 43(2), 244-274.
- Patton, M. Q. (1990). *Qualitative evaluation and research methods* (2nd ed.). Newbury Park, CA: Sage.
- Perception. (n.d.). In *Dictionary.com onlinedictionary*. Retrieved from <http://www.dictionary.com/browse/perception>
- Perez, S. (2000). *Assessing service learning using pragmatic principles of education: A Texas charter school case study*. Texas State University, San Marcos, TX.

- Prensky, M. (2017). *Education to better their world*. New York, New York: Teachers College Press. Retrieved from <http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&AuthType=ip,sso&db=edsglr&AN=edsgcl.479406259&site=eds-live&authtype=sso&custid=s8475574>
- Price, J. H., & Murnan, J. (2004). Research limitations and the necessity of reporting them. *American Journal of Health Education*, 35(2), 66-67.
- Quinn, B. P. (2018). Purposeful explorers: Adolescents finding their purposes in a Catholic high school. *Journal of Catholic Education*, 21(2).
- Ravitch, D., & Viteritti, J. P. (2000). *City schools : Lessons from New York*: Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press.
- Roeser, R. W., & Pinela, C. (2014). Mindfulness and compassion training in adolescence: A developmental contemplative science perspective. *New Directions For Youth Development*, (142), 9-30. doi:10.1002/yd.20094
- Rosemann, N. (2004). Human rights education—towards the end of UN decade. *Nordic Journal of Human Rights*, 21, 461-469.
- Roser, M. (2018). Human rights. Retrieved from <https://ourworldindata.org/human-rights>
- Ruebel, K. K. (2011). Research summary: Professional learning communities. Retrieved from <http://www.amle.org/TabId/198/ArtMID/696/ArticleID/310/Research-Summary-Professional-Learning-Communities.aspx>
- Saldaña, J. (2011). *Fundamentals of qualitative research*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.
- Santrock, J. W. (2007). *Adolescence* (11th ed.). New York, NY: McGraw-Hill.

- Seton Hall University. (2018). Informed consent document. Retrieved from <https://www.shu.edu/institutional-review-board/informed-consent-document.cfm>
- Spring, K., Grimm, R., Jr., Dietz, N., & Corporation for National and Community Service (2008). *Community service and service-learning in America's schools*. Retrieved from <http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&AuthType=ip,sso&db=eric&AN=E D506728&site=eds-live&authtype=sso&custid=s8475574>
- Struthers, A. E. C. (2017). The underdeveloped transformative potential of human rights education: English primary education as a case study. *Journal of Human Rights Practice*, 9(1), 68-84. doi:10.1093/jhuman/huw023
- Suarez, D. F. (2005). *Creating global citizens: The emergence and development of human rights education* (Unpublished doctoral dissertation). Stanford University, Stanford, CA
- Suryanarayana, N. V. S. (2015). Incultation of service learning in college students. *International Journal of Psychology and Education*, 3(2) 70-83.
- Tibbitts, F. (2002). Understanding what we do: Emerging models for human rights education. *International Review of Education / Internationale Zeitschrift für Erziehungswissenschaft / Revue Internationale de l'Education* (3/4), 159.
- Tibbitts, F. (2014). Human rights education here and now: U.S. practices and international processes. *Journal of International Social Studies*, 4(2), 129-134.
- Torney-Purta, J. (1987). Chapter 13: Human rights and education viewed in a comparative framework: Synthesis and conclusions. In N. B. Tarrow (Ed.), *Human Rights & Education* (pp. 223-233). International Education Series., Vol. 3. Riverside, NJ: Macmillan.
- UNESCO. (2018). UNESCO. Retrieved from <https://en.unesco.org/>

- United Nations. (n.d.). Human rights education and training. Retrieved from <https://www.ohchr.org/EN/Issues/Education/Training/Pages/HREducationTrainingIndex.aspx#main>
- United Nations. (1948). Dag Hammarskjold Library. Drafting of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Retrieved from <http://research.un.org/en/undhr/ecosoc/2>
- United Nations. (1993). World conference on human rights, 14-25 June 1993, Vienna, Austria. Paper presented at the World Conference on Human Rights, Vienna, Austria.
- United Nations. (2002). *Handbook on national human rights plans of action*. Retrieved from <http://gull.georgetown.edu/record=b1269438>
- United Nations. (2004). ABC : Teaching human rights: Practical activities for primary and secondary schools. New York and Geneva: United Nations.
- United Nations. (2005). Plan of action for the first phase of the World Programme for Human Rights Education. Retrieved from [http://www.ohchr.org/EN/Issues/Education/Training/Compilation/Pages/PlanofActionfortheFirstPhase\(2005-2007\)oftheWorldProgrammeforHumanRightsEducation\(2005\).aspx](http://www.ohchr.org/EN/Issues/Education/Training/Compilation/Pages/PlanofActionfortheFirstPhase(2005-2007)oftheWorldProgrammeforHumanRightsEducation(2005).aspx)
- United Nations. (2011). United Nations declarations of human rights education and training. Retrieved from http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=%20A/RES/66/137
- United Nations. (2016). Human rights. Retrieved from <https://www.un.org/en/sections/issues-depth/human-rights>
- United Nations. (2017). Plan of action, World Programme for Human Rights Education, Third Phase. Retrieved from www.ohchr.org/Documents/Publications/ThirdPhase

- United Nations. (2018). World Programme for Human Rights Education. Retrieved from <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/Issues/Education/Training/Pages/Programme.aspx>
- Vacarelli, J. A. (1999). Sharing or secularizing Catholic social teaching? A reflection on sharing Catholic social teaching: Challenges and directions. *The Catholic Social Science Review*, 4, 303-312.
- Vescio, V., Ross, D., & Adams, A. (2008). A review of research on the impact of professional learning communities on teaching practice and student learning. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 24, 80-91. doi:10.1016/j.tate.2007.01.004
- Volling, B. L., Kolak, A. M., & Kennedy, D. E. (2008). Empathy and compassionate love in early childhood: Development and family influence. In B. Fehr, S. Sprecher, & L. G. Underwood (Eds.), *The science of compassionate love: Theory, research, and applications*. (pp. 161-200). Hoboken, NJ: Wiley-Blackwell.
- Weissberg, R. P., Durlak, J. A., Domitrovich, C. E., & Gullotta, T. P. (2015). Social and emotional learning: Past, present, and future. In R. P. Weissberg, J. A. Durlak, C. E. Domitrovich, & T. P. Gullotta (Eds.), *Handbook of social and emotional learning: Research and practice*. (pp. 3-19). New York, NY: Guilford Press.

Appendix A

PRE - IRB FORM

Pre-IRB review is mandatory for all proposals. Proposals that do not have a pre-IRB review will not be considered by the IRB and will be sent back to the investigator.

Pre-IRB form to be filled by the department/schools:

Investigator(s): Anthony Casella


Proposal Title: Veteran teacher perceptions of student moral efficacy post a human rights education model implementation.

Required statement by pre-IRB reviewer:

I have reviewed the proposed research. I state that:

- a) the question(s)/hypothesis of the research is sound and is clearly stated;
- b) the study design is appropriate to answer the question(s) or prove the hypothesis of the research;
- c) the research has reasonable likelihood of contributing to generalizable knowledge.

My signature (1) affirms that the proposed research is scientifically sound, and (2) represents my approval of the research.


Pre-IRB reviewer's signature

Robert Ketchen, Assistant Professor
Pre-IRB reviewer's name and title

2/27/19
Date

Appendix B



March 27, 2019

Anthony Casella

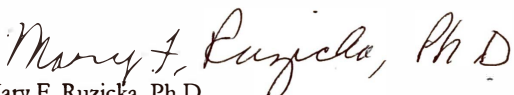


Dear Mr. Casella,

The IRB is in receipt of the application for your research entitled "Veteran Teacher Perceptions of Student Moral Efficacy Post a Human Rights Education Model Implementation."

Your Application does not fall under the purview of the IRB because, as you describe it in your Application, it is a non-generalizable case study.

Sincerely,


Mary F. Ruzicka, Ph.D.
Professor
Director, Institutional Review Board

Cc: Dr. David Reid

Office of Institutional Review Board
Presidents Hall • 400 South Orange Avenue • South Orange, NJ 07079 • Tel: 973.313.6314 • Fax: 973.275.2361 • www.shu.edu

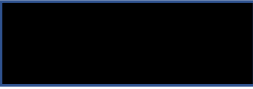
A HOME FOR THE MIND, THE HEART AND THE SPIRIT

Appendix C



April 2019

Mr. XXX XXXXX



Dear XXXX,

I am a doctoral student at Seton Hall University in the Department of Education, Leadership, Management and Policy. Under the mentorship of Dr. David Reid, I endeavor to investigate teacher perceptions on the moral efficacy of students after the implementation of a Human Rights Education model. I would like to invite you to participate on this study.

The intent of this qualitative case study is to meet with teachers of high school students who have taught in the school more 5 years or more. Using teacher perceptions, I hope to gain a better understanding of student capacity for learning considerations for respect for human rights and violations of in the world.

Your participation will involve a 1:1 interview about 40 minutes in length. All interviews will be conducted onsite at a time, date, and place of your convenience. Interviewees will consist of faculty members who have been teaching in the school for 5 years or more.

Your participation in this research is completely voluntary. If you agree to participate now and change your mind later, you may withdraw at any time by sending me an email using anthony.casella@student.shu.edu.

The interview protocol is included for review.

Every effort to ensure that the information you provide as part of this study remains confidential. Your identity will not be revealed in any publications, presentations, or reports resulting from this research study.

Information will be collected using an audio recorder and with field notes in the duration of the interview. All interviewee names will remain confidential during the interview and data transcribed and recorded will be stored on a flash drive with the researcher for a period of five years concluding the study until erased.

Records will be assigned codes and no one but the researcher will have access to the legend of the transcript.

Although you will not directly benefit from this study, it has been designed to learn more about the results of implementing a Human Rights Education model in secondary schools.

There are no foreseeable risks involved in participating in this study.

There is no compensation associated with the interview.

My contact information is cell: (914) [REDACTED] and my email is anthony.casella@student.shu.edu.

Thank you in advance for your consideration of participation in this study and ask that you sign this letter and place it in my mailbox by Friday, April 5, 2019.

Sincerely,

Anthony Casella
Principal Researcher

By signing below, you agree to participate in this study. You indicate that you understand the risks and benefits of participation, and that you know what you will be asked to do. You also agree that you have asked any questions you might have, and are clear on how to stop your participation in the study if you choose to do so. Please be sure to retain a copy of this form for your records.

Participant's Signature

Participant's Name, Printed

Date

Appendix D

Interview Protocol

Teacher Background

1. In what ways has the implementation of the advocacy professional learning community (PLC) influenced your knowledge of human rights issues?
2. In what ways has the implementation of the advocacy professional learning community (PLC) influenced your perception of human rights issues?
3. In what ways has the implementation of the advocacy professional learning community (PLC) influenced how you discuss human rights issues in your classroom?

Classroom Activity

4. In what ways do you discuss human rights issues with students?
5. In what ways do you use human rights curriculum in your teaching (lesson plans, class projects, etc.)?

Student Learning

6. Based on your experience at this school, how would you describe your students' awareness of human rights issues prior to the implementation of human rights curriculum?
7. How would you describe students' compassion of human rights issues before the implementation of human rights curriculum?
8. How would you describe students' awareness of human rights issues after the implementation of human rights curriculum?
9. How would you describe students' compassion of human rights issues after the implementation of human rights curriculum?
10. In what ways did your students' awareness change after the implement of human rights curriculum?
11. In what ways did your students' compassion change after the implement of human rights curriculum?