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## **Teachers' Impact on the Implementation of Human Rights Education in International Indian Schools in Kuwait**

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Date of publication: June 25<sup>th</sup> 2023

Edition period: February 2023 - June 2023

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**To cite this article:** Lakshminarayanan, R., & Suzana, K. (2023). Teachers' Impact on the Implementation of Human Rights Education in International Indian Schools in Kuwait. *International Journal of Sociology of Education*, 12(2), 168-200. <http://dx.doi.org/10.17583/rise.11827>

**To link this article:** <http://dx.doi.org/10.17583/rise.11827>

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# “Teachers’ Impact on the Implementation of Human Rights Education in International Indian Schools in Kuwait

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## **Abstract**

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With globalization, the establishment of private international schools has increased, particularly in nations with large migrant populations. These schools are affiliated to accreditation bodies from their respective country of origin for curriculum and assessment, although they may also be subject to certain norms within host countries. This duality alludes that students’ knowledge is largely dependent on the teacher who effectuates the official curriculum defined by the accrediting institution into the actual curriculum within the classroom. Although this reflects on all courses taught, it has wider implications in the effectiveness of Human rights education (HRE). This paper investigates key factors that determine the effective implementation of HRE by teachers in international schools, using the case study of Indian schools in Kuwait. By developing the 3I model (Introduction, Interpretation, and Implementation), the researchers determined the causative linkages in the structure and effectiveness of school curriculum for HRE, measured with exploratory factor analysis and structural equation modelling. The results indicate that human rights are not adequately addressed in the official curriculum and the teacher’s own knowledge and comprehension of human rights influences the application of HRE in the actual curriculum, which may present scope for bias and subjectivity.

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**Keywords:** Human Rights education, international schools, Indian school curriculum, Kuwait

2023 Hipatia Press

ISSN: 2014-3575

DOI: 10.17583/rise.11827

# **Impacto de los Docentes en la Implementación de la Educación en Derechos Humanos en las Escuelas Indias Internacionales en Kuwait**

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## **Resumen**

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Con la globalización, ha aumentado el establecimiento de escuelas internacionales privadas, particularmente en países con grandes poblaciones de inmigrantes. Estas escuelas están afiliadas a organismos de acreditación de sus respectivos países de origen para el currículo y la evaluación, aunque también pueden estar sujetas a ciertas normas dentro de los países anfitriones. Esta dualidad alude a que el conocimiento de los estudiantes depende en gran medida del maestro que lleva el currículo oficial definido por la institución acreditadora al currículo real dentro del salón de clases. Aunque esto se refleja en todos los cursos impartidos, tiene implicaciones más amplias en la eficacia de la educación en derechos humanos (EDH). Este documento investiga los factores clave que determinan la implementación efectiva de HRE por parte de los docentes en escuelas internacionales, utilizando el estudio de caso de las escuelas indias en Kuwait. Al desarrollar el modelo 3I (Introducción, Interpretación e Implementación), los investigadores determinaron los vínculos causales en la estructura y efectividad del currículo escolar para HRE, medidos con análisis factorial exploratorio y modelos de ecuaciones estructurales. Los resultados indican que los derechos humanos no se abordan adecuadamente en el currículo oficial y que el propio conocimiento y comprensión de los derechos humanos por parte del docente influye en la aplicación de la EDH en el currículo real, lo que puede presentar un margen de sesgo y subjetividad.

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**Palabras clave:** educación en Derechos Humanos, escuelas internacionales, plan de estudios de la escuela India, Kuwait

There has been a considerable surge in the establishment of private international schools across the world due to large scale global migration. This increase emanates from the inclination of employees in MNC's, military personnel posted overseas, diplomats and other expatriate communities, who might seek to educate their children through educational systems and curriculum more suited to their respective country of origin, largely due to the transient nature of their employment. The growth was further augmented by the aspiration of local communities to educate their children in international educational models, particularly with English as the medium of instruction, thereby seeking to prepare them for global citizenship (Hayden & Thompson, 2008; Hughes, 2020; Reid & Ibrahim, 2017).

Such International schools are subject to diverse norms, regulations, and guidelines, both from host countries as well as their respective country of origin. In addition, most of the administrators, teachers and students in these schools are also expatriates, which presents considerable challenges in terms of adaptation of prescribed official curriculum to the actual curriculum taught in the classroom. The inherent diversity and varied adaptations of curriculum in these schools, raises questions about educational quality and standards, as well as training and productivity of teachers. While teacher' effectiveness in the classroom is applicable to the teaching of subject matter in all courses, in the case of Human Rights Education (HRE), it is particularly relevant as it impacts the empowerment of learners towards attitudes and practices promoting a universal culture of human rights. Although the demand for such international schools is seen globally, it has increased phenomenally in nations with a large migrant population such as countries in the Arabian Gulf region, wherein this research is grounded. Kuwait 2020 Human Rights Report, (2020) attests to the prevalence of many HR violations and restrictions, particularly faced by blue collar and domestic workers. In Kuwait, there exists a huge migrant population from India, including professionals, blue collar labourers and domestic workers. As of April 2023 there are 26 Indian schools addressing the educational needs of the children of Indian expatriates in Kuwait. However holistic incorporation of HRE within the school curriculum and a sensitized approach by teachers in classrooms are necessary to garner greater dialogue and debate to facilitate better HR conditions within society. Deriving from the above relevance, the authors investigate the key factors

determining the effective implementation of HRE by Indian school teachers in Kuwait, using the 3I model (Introduction, Interpretation, and Implementation), to determine the causative linkages in the structure and effectiveness of HRE by measuring with exploratory factor analysis and structural equation modelling. The paper highlights that HRE needs to be addressed through multiple parameters to develop consciousness of HR and its abuses among students within specific communities, for effective societal transformation.

### **Literature Review**

While there has been some academic research on international schools, much of these have been limited to defining their meaning, purpose and growth (Bunnell et al., 2016; Hayden & Thompson, 1995; Leach, 1969; Terwilliger, 1972).

In recent years there is greater focus on the leadership dimensions, administrative and supervisory aspects, universality of accreditations and standardisation of curriculum within international schools (Blyth, 2017; Hammad & Shah, 2018; Tarc, 2018). The various challenges faced by teachers in international schools due to greater diversity and mobility among both students and staff have also been studied (Bunnell, 2021). Ledger (2016) suggests that international schools need to foster intercultural understanding by connecting with host communities, rather than teaching through a bubble. Further, Hughes (2020) points to a gap between discourse and practise, which creates a disconnect between what is taught and what is evidenced within local communities. This suggests that the teacher has a crucial role as an intermediary in effectuating the HRE process. Therein the need for pre-service teacher preparation for adaptation in international schools through enhanced skill development and international awareness is mandatory (van Werven, 2015) as they are often restrained by lack of explicit training in HRE which impedes effective implementation (Kasa et al., 2021)

HRE is often also implicit and restricted, and therefore largely dependent on teachers' individual perceptions and limited knowledge of rights (Osler & Skarra, 2021). Although the role of the teacher as a crucial factor in HRE is widely recognised, Jerome (2018) points out that teachers conservativeness, their accountability to management, their ignorance as well as their own biases contribute to ineffective dissemination of HRE. Their understanding of human

rights is often limited to the student as ‘duty-bearers’ rather than as ‘rights-holders’(Waldron & Oberman, 2016). Struthers (2019) points out that teachers may also consider aspects of HRE as too controversial or difficult to teach for fear of antagonising sensibilities of students or parents or the community who may have antagonistic or opposing viewpoints.

While most academic writing has focused on international schools in the western context, there is limited research on the impact and effectiveness of HRE in international schools in the GCC region. Considering the huge migrant population and the diverse experiences of migrants especially from the Asian subcontinent, the researchers feel that this paper is timely and relevant due to the wide disparity in what is experienced by Asian migrant workers in this region, western migrants and the host communities. Only when there is effective dissemination of HRE by teachers can there be constructive and transformational dialogue and debate within societies, and human rights can become a reality for everyone, everywhere.

### **Development of HRE and Curriculum Impact**

The development and incorporation of HRE across the globe emerged from the UN charter and Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR, 1948), following the grave human indignities and violations suffered by many during the world wars. Towards the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the recognition that HRE was vital to create wider knowledge and consciousness about human rights gained ground. The guiding principles of human rights curriculum were established by UNESCO (UNESCO, 1974; UNESCO, 1979, OHCHR, 1987) and the World Plan of Action on Education for human rights set an agenda for research and information networks (UNESCO 1993, 1993). Baxi (1994) calls this an ‘Age of Rights’ in which ‘the language of rights nearly replaced all other moral languages’. In the nineties, the UN was instrumental in formulating definitions, content, curriculum guidelines and best practices for HRE (Flowers, 2000; The Global Human Rights Education Network. Human Rights Education Associates, 2009). During the UN decade for HRE, (UN Resolution A/RES/49/184, 1994), considerable progress was made to integrate HRE into school curriculum. The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) for 2001–2015 (UN Millennium Development Goals, 2002) further

recognized the ‘interdependence of social development, human rights and global peace’.

The goal of HRE is to instil the value of human rights among children, beginning from their formative ages of school education. It encompasses learning about human rights and its mechanisms, developing values, attitudes and behaviour that uphold human rights and acquiring skills to practice, uphold and defend human rights (Amnesty International, 2018). Many stakeholders at the international, national, and regional levels formulated broad guidelines and policies that sought to introduce HRE in educational institutions. However, the effective implementation of HRE depends on the educational ethos, the pedagogical process, and most importantly on the teacher, who is central to the interpretation of official curriculum and implementation of actual curriculum in the classroom (Muller, 2000). HRE requires interactive pedagogical approaches for teachers to teach about, through, and for human rights (“OHCHR, United Nations Declaration on Human Rights Education and Training,” 2001; Tibbitts, 2017), thereby promoting human rights *through* education and *in* education (Deng, 2011). While the course and subject matter is the heart of classroom teaching, curriculum interpretation is totally dependent on teacher’s knowledge and classroom skills. Teachers influence the attitudes and behaviour of students and through them affects the wider community and social environment. Perspectives in HRE are determined by ideology of teachers, learners and implementing agencies, diversity in understanding HRE as well as the impact of social location (Bajaj, 2015). Consequently, the universality of human rights remains debated; viewed either as a largely western or Eurocentric concept (Mende, 2021; Zembylas, 2017) or dependent on the plurality of cultural relativism (Donnelly, 2016; Le, 2016). This validates that the implementation of HRE has to be structured to address specific regional issues and concerns and its application across the world needs to be culturally appropriated and sensitized.

Curriculum establishes the learning standards and instructions for teachers to evaluate and realize learning outcomes through knowledge, skills and ability and needs to be transparent and clear to the teacher and the student (Muller, 2000; Kelly, 2009). Although, policymakers and academicians frame and design curriculum, the teacher plays a systemic role in ensuring curriculum effectiveness. The subject is the heart of classroom teaching, but the teachers interpret the content to reveal its true educational potential,

therefore curriculum interpretation is totally dependent on teacher's knowledge and classroom skills (Deng, 2011). Consistent assessment of teacher preparation and measurement of teaching-learning by reliable evaluators is therefore necessary (Connelly et al., 2008).

Elaborating on the types of curriculum, Kelly (2009) explains formal curriculum as the planned course of subject study and informal curriculum as taught through extracurricular voluntary activities. Both formal and informal curriculum, aim to develop skills, attitudes and values among students, however it is the actual or operational curriculum taught in class that provides the real experience for the students (Doll, 1996). In addition, hidden curriculum or the informal, unwritten curriculum of information, ideas, values, beliefs and practices emerging through the teaching-learning process are also vital influencers (Alsubaie, 2015). Differences, therefore, arise between official prescribed curriculum and the actual curriculum experienced in the classroom, because teachers teach from different perspectives and emphasize specific topics that match their views.

In the case of HRE, the teacher's values, attitudes, knowledge and patterns of behaviour become integrated into the student experiences and impact their understanding and interpretations of ground realities (Košir, 2011; Panda, 2001). Therefore, teachers are challenged not only in learning about human rights but also in figuring out how to make it meaningful and empowering for their students. Zembylas et al., (2016) concluded that human rights are often interpreted by teachers, based on their understanding of cultural, social, and political complexities. Therefore students experience curricula based on what is taught and what is left out by the teacher (Alvunger et al., 2017). Thus, teachers' perspectives on human rights and their knowledge and awareness of its intrinsic concepts and contextual dimensions, play a vital role in teachers' interpretation and implementation of the curriculum. While official curriculum is planned and validated by competent authorities, the teacher's awareness and experiences have greater impact over student attitudes and behaviours through the actual curriculum.

Although International organisations and covenants, governmental agencies, NGOs, and academicians have strived to uphold human rights for all, considerable violations are increasingly reported across the globe which presents a consistent challenge for human rights practitioners. Therefore, the effective dissemination of HRE within indigenous contexts is vital to redress



gross human rights violations in societies. Within the above contextual framework, this paper seeks to analyse the factors affecting the effective implementation of HRE by teachers in international schools using the case study of Indian schools in Kuwait. The research focuses on the teachers' perception, awareness and understanding of HRE. It seeks to determine if human rights are adequately addressed in official curriculum and whether the teacher's innate knowledge of human rights impacts their teaching in the classroom.

### **Kuwait: Migrant Communities and Human Rights**

Since 1961, Kuwait has been a constitutional, hereditary emirate with an elected parliament. The constitution of Kuwait includes many articles consistent with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) and the government is also a signatory of many international charters, protocols and conventions relating to human rights. Although a small country in terms of land size (17,818 sq. miles), its GDP per capita amounted to 24,811.8 USD in 2021 ([The World Bank, 2021](#)) and it possesses the 9<sup>th</sup> largest oil reserves in the world ([Rystad Energy, 2022](#)).

In the 1950's, the rapid development of the oil industry and related infrastructure, precipitated the demand for a large foreign workforce to Kuwait ([Lakshminarayanan, 2019](#)), and today about two-thirds of Kuwait's population is comprised of expatriate workers. This demand for foreign labour was further exacerbated by the simultaneous expansion of the state's welfare system that enabled the Kuwaitis to sustain an upscale lifestyle, while shunning some jobs as unworthy of their affluent status ([Lakshminarayanan, 2020](#)). It is interesting to note here that Global Finance, cited a report from Ultrata Corporation that Kuwait had one billionaire for every 33,090 residents, ranking first in the world ([Arab Times, 2022](#)). While affluent Kuwaitis enjoyed an opulent and luxurious lifestyle, even the 'not-so-rich' Kuwaiti could afford good amenities due to the free 'cradle to grave' welfare system, that included free education and health care and subsidised housing, guaranteed by the state. This contributed to a complete reliance on migrant labour, which was viewed as essential to sustain their comfortable way of living.

Kuwait's migrant communities have contributed extensively to the development of the state. While many expatriate professionals are employed in healthcare, petroleum, education and IT sectors, a large majority of migrants, especially from Asia and Africa work as domestic and manual labourers. Despite guarantees of human rights embedded in the constitution of Kuwait, there are constant reports of the deplorable and restrictive conditions faced by blue collar and domestic workers ([Kuwait 2020 Human Rights Report, 2020](#)). Migrant workers face consistent difficulties and legal constraints, due to the law mandated *kafala* (sponsorship) system, which ties all foreign nationals (designated as non-Kuwaitis), to their Kuwaiti employer who is their official sponsor. This system prevents workers from changing jobs without an official transfer sanctioned by the sponsor. In fact, the segregation of the entire migrant population as 'non-Kuwaiti' in itself alludes to discriminatory practices between the expatriate and the national ([Longva, 1997](#)). According to the *Freedom House Report (2022)*, many cases of abuse and violence by these sponsors exist including non-payment or delayed payment of salaries, long working hours, indirect discrimination (e.g. healthcare) as well as human trafficking and visa trading by recruitment agencies. The Covid-19 pandemic restrictions and lockdowns further accentuated the inhumane housing conditions especially in labour camps, that jeopardised the well-being of migrant workers ([Jafar, 2021](#)). Although the state does provide legal avenues to redress labour grievances, many employers reportedly confiscate the passports of domestic workers and threaten dismissals and the relevant authorities have failed to take action against such violations of the law ([Al Rayes, 2019](#)).

Migrant workers are also impeded from redressing their grievances due to censorship of the press and ban on labour unions, and those who protest or engage in illegal strikes, sit-ins, walk outs or partake in union activities to protest against their plight, often face dismissal and deportation. Thus, the very existence of migrant workers is reduced to their labour capacities, providing them – 'a permanent temporary and conditional membership' status ([Alshammiry, 2021](#)).

In Kuwait, the largest migrant community of approximately one million is from India, a number almost equal to the indigenous Kuwaiti population. Latest statistics available from 2019 suggest that Indians constitute approximately 3,27,000 domestic workers (i.e. drivers, gardeners, cleaners,

child caregivers, cooks and housemaids), 28,000 government sector employees (nurses, doctors, engineers in National Oil Companies and scientists), 5,23,000 private sector employees (engineers, chartered accountants, doctors, computer professionals, teachers, administrative and technical workers, and health care providers) and 1,16,000 dependents, mainly spouses and children (Embassy of India, 2021). It is mainly blue collar and domestic workers who face considerable restrictions and are subject to discriminatory practices, although the sponsorship system and its resultant irregularities impact migrants of all nationalities, at large.

### **International Schools in Kuwait**

The increase in the number of expatriates in Kuwait created a need for international schools catering to the specific educational needs of transient expatriate communities. With the industrial and commercial growth of Kuwait as a global player in oil exports, some affluent nationals also sought to educate their children in western private international schools, where English was the language of instruction. Since most public schools adopted Arabic as the medium of instruction, the need for private schools accredited to international boards, serving the interests of expatriate children with diverse national curriculums and indigenous language lessons, gained momentum. Gradually many private international schools were established including American, British, Spanish, Indian, Pakistani and Philippina schools, among others. By law, all international schools are owned by a Kuwaiti national (the official sponsor) but managed by board members or individuals appointed from expatriate communities. Hence these schools, although established and managed by various members of respective expatriate groups, always have a mandatory Kuwaiti partner who has a controlling power over the school's existence. While affiliated to their respective country of origin in terms of curriculum, teaching and assessment, these schools are also subject to the supervision of Kuwait's Ministry of private education, which prescribes general norms and guidelines under which they could operate.

### **HRE in Kuwait**

In 2006, Kuwait became the first country in the Arabian Gulf region to introduce an explicit human rights component to the national curriculum aimed towards the promotion of democratic and humanistic ideals. This curricular module, entitled 'The Constitution and Human Rights' (*al-dustar wa huqūq al-insdn*), was introduced across secondary school in grades 10, 11 and 12 and based on universality of human rights and the Constitution of Kuwait. However, after 2010, this was reduced to a one year module only taught in Grade 12, which in due course developed a 'strong nationalistic tone' even as demands for rights were problematised (Al-Nakib, 2011; 2012).

In the case of the international schools, apart from a social science course entitled Kuwait Social Studies (KSS), and Arabic language studies mandated for all students and Islamic studies, mandated for Muslim students, there is no attempt to integrate the international school curriculum to the host country ethos, within the educational system. The KSS course focuses exclusively on history, society and culture of Kuwait and leaves little scope for debate or discussion on human rights perspectives.

### **Indian Educational System and HRE**

In India, the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) was formed to decide on curriculum, textbooks, and examination system for all affiliated schools. While in 1962, there were 309 CBSE affiliated schools in India, there are as of 2021, 24000 affiliated schools in India and 240 schools in 26 countries across the world (CBSE, 2021).

In 1961, the National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) was established by the Government of India to assist and advise the government on policies and programmes for the qualitative development of school education, including preparation of textbooks and curriculum as well as teachers training (NCERT, 2021).

HRE within the Indian educational ethos began to develop consequent to the establishment of the National Human Rights Commission, (NHRC) in India in 1993 to spread human rights literacy (NHRC, 2021), and was envisaged as an instrument that creates an ambience of dialogue and discourse

in the school (NCERT, 2005). Realizing the importance of sensitizing teachers to the needs of a multicultural society, the National Council for Teacher Education (NCTE) was established to create teachers that are ‘competency-driven and commitment based’ (NCTE, 1998). It is the same curriculum and procedural mandates for HRE constituted by Indian institutions such as the CBSE, the NCERT, the NCTE and NHRC that are applicable in the Indian international schools in Kuwait.

### **Indian international schools in Kuwait**

Aligning with the needs of the large number of Indian expatriates in Kuwait, a few leading Indian businessmen in Kuwait, took the initiative to establish the first international school for Indian students in 1959, named as the Indian School (now known as Indian Community School) with 22 students (The Indian Community School, 2021). Presently, there are 26 Indian schools in Kuwait with approximately 60,000 students and 2000 faculty, a majority of whom are Indian nationals. These schools are affiliated to the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE), India, follow the curriculum of the National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT), India and are supervised by the Embassy of India in Kuwait. Teachers with educational qualifications as specified in CBSE guidelines, are recruited locally or from India. Regular supervisory visitations are recommended by CBSE representatives, and Principals’ meetings are also intermittently held to ensure that all rules and curriculum updates applicable for Indian schools are applied uniformly and effectively. Teaching requirement is expected to subscribe to curriculum and textbooks mandates of CBSE. However, in actual practice vast inconsistencies do exist in terms of application of CBSE curriculum requirements. Many times, curriculum completion is an issue since the total number of school working days prescribed by CBSE is 220 days in each academic year, which is impossible in Kuwait due to the three month long summer vacation period, the shortened working hours during the month of Ramadan and the large number of public holidays declared. This often results in teachers prioritising subjects like Mathematics and Sciences at the cost of the social science courses (A.D., Personal Communication, 16<sup>th</sup> May. 2022). Another issue of concern is the qualifications of teachers, since many times due to visa restrictions, teachers may be appointed from dependent visa

holders (mainly wives of men employed in Kuwait), who may not have the prescribed educational qualifications mandated by the CBSE (J.A, Personal communication, 12<sup>th</sup> May 2022). Another vital challenge is the high attrition rates among schoolteachers due to the transient and uncertain nature of expatriate employment in Kuwait. All these factors challenge the smooth functioning of the teaching- learning process in Indian international schools in Kuwait.

## **Methods**

### **Design**

The dissemination of HRE across the globe has been mainly done through social sciences and the role of social science textbooks as a powerful means to build social identities and instil values in future generations has been recognised by scholars (Apple & Christian-Smith, 1991; Avery & Simmons, 2001; Košir & Lakshminarayanan, 2021). The curricula of HRE in social science textbooks was expected to correlate with development of human rights documents, grassroot realities as well as national and international goals and agendas (Bajaj, 2011; Tibbitts & Fernekes, 2011).

However, the effectiveness of the teacher in interpreting official curriculum within the actual classroom ethos is a crucial factor in HRE. In the case of international schools with their inherent diversity of students and teachers and the contradictory conditions experienced in theory and practice among migrant communities especially in the Arabian Gulf states, this presents a considerable challenge. Within this context, the present study investigates the factors impacting the effective implementation of HRE by social science teachers in Indian international schools in Kuwait. The study focused on teachers' perception, awareness and understanding of HRE in the official curriculum, and its application in the actual curriculum within the classroom. It was assumed that there exists a linear causal relationship between the presentation of human rights in the official curriculum, teachers' awareness of human rights documents and guidelines and their implementation of HRE in actual curriculum. The research methodology used in this paper was mainly quantitative and included a questionnaire as well as unofficial interviews used to verify the integration and implementation of

HRE within the school curriculum in the perception of the teachers. The main objective was to identify links and gaps in the school curriculum as well as the teachers’ knowledge, understanding and teaching of HR through the 3I model (Introduction, Interpretation, and Implementation) as shown in Figure 1.

Deriving from the gaps identified in literature and stated objectives the following hypotheses were formulated:

Hypothesis 1: Teachers who are aware of and understand human rights (interpretation) effectively implement human rights in the actual curriculum.

Hypothesis 2: Teachers who are introduced to human rights documents interpret and apply human rights in the actual curriculum.

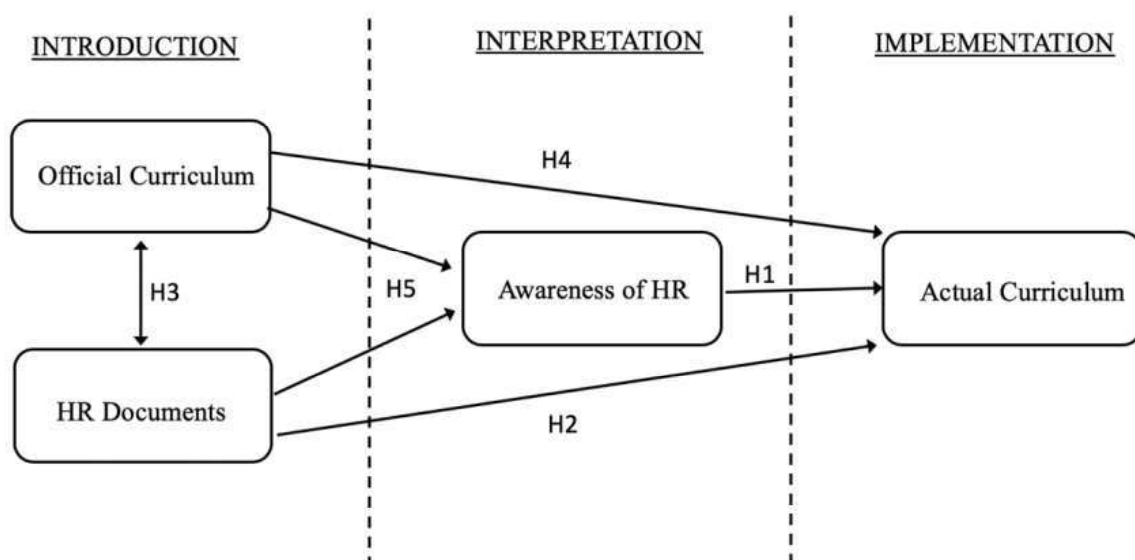
Hypothesis 3: When human rights are introduced in the official curriculum, teachers will link them with human rights documents.

Hypothesis 4: Introduction of human rights in official curriculum has a significant impact on the implementation of human rights in the actual curriculum.

Hypothesis 5: When teachers are introduced to both human rights documents and human rights in the official curriculum, it impacts their comprehensive implementation of human rights.

**Figure 1**

*Predicted 3I (Introduction, Interpretation, and Implementation) Model*



## **Data collection**

The study used the quantitative research method to conduct a survey to test for any significant association between predetermined factors. Our selection criteria were social science teachers from primary and secondary Indian schools in Kuwait, who were asked through a questionnaire to respond to a series of statements and questions on HRE. We used purposive or selective sampling based on knowledge of a population, its elements, and the purpose of the study. The ethical norms of voluntary participation, anonymity and confidentiality of participants were maintained. The obtained quantitative empirical data were statistically processed using the SPSS and LISREL statistical programs. The results are presented using statistical parameters and tables.

In the framework of the survey, 184 questionnaires were distributed among the approximately 210 total social science teachers from 26 Indian schools in Kuwait (6-10 questionnaires for social science teachers per school). Of these 111 (60.3%) questionnaires were resolved and returned (Table 1); of which, 96 (86.5%) were filled by female teachers, and 15 (13.5%) were filled by male teachers. The largest number of respondents 49 (44.1%) were in the age group of 31 to 40; followed by 43 (38.7%) respondents in the age group from 41 to 50 years. The respondents in the age group above 51, was 9 (8.1%), and those in the age group of 21-30 were 10 (9%). Of all the respondents, 76 (68.5%) had a master's degree; while 34 (30.6%) respondents had a bachelor's degree, and 1 (0.9%) had a doctoral degree. Work experience of respondents included 18 (16.2%) with up to 5 years, 34 (30.6%) with 6 to 10 years, 27 (24.3%) with 11 to 15 years, 16 (14.4%) respondents with 16- 20 years, 12 (10.8%) with 21- 25 years and only 4 (3.6%) had more than 25 years of work experience as schoolteachers.

**Table 1**  
*Socio-demographic characteristics*

	<b>f</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>Gender</b>		
Women	96	86,5
Man	15	13,5



<b>Age</b>		
	<b>f</b>	<b>%</b>
21-30	10	9
31-40	49	44,1
41-50	43	38,7
above 51	9	8,1
<b>Education</b>		
Bachelor's degree	34	30,6
Master's degree	76	68,5
Doctoral degree	1	0,9
<b>Work experience</b>		
up to 5 years	18	16,2
6-10 years	34	30,6
11-15 years	27	24,3
16-20 years	16	14,4
21-25 years	12	10,8
more than 25 years	4	3,6
<b>Total</b>	<b>111</b>	<b>100</b>

Teachers were asked to rate their responses in nominal and ordinal scales. For the ordinal scale, the five-point Likert scale was used which indicates the level of agreement or disagreement with the statement. The questionnaire was divided into several parts to analyse the 3I model. The first part aimed to examine whether teachers are sufficiently introduced to HR and HRE in the official curriculum. The second part attempted to determine a teacher's interpretation of HRE by checking their awareness of HR and knowledge of official HR documents. The third part tried to ascertain teachers' application of HRE in actual curriculum. Limitations to the research included teacher reluctance to respond to the survey due to the burden of teaching load, too many surveys requests (from researchers and publishers) and hesitation to address any queries pertaining to proliferation of Human rights violations, that may be construed as too sensitive or subject to state censorship policies, due to fear of reprisal. Consequently, the researchers were not able to include queries pertaining to the core beliefs and attitudes of teachers, as well as their

classroom discussion on specific human right violations in Kuwait, which might have considerable impact on the hidden curriculum.

### **Data Analysis**

In the test analysis, we tried to validate the item difficulty, reliability, and discrimination. We used internal reliability, where there is a multiple-item measure in which each respondent's answers to each question are aggregated to form an overall score (Bryman, 2012). Item reliability test reveals that for a small number of items, Cronbach alpha is between 0.6 and 0.9, which indicates good internal consistency. The validity of the questionnaire (Abu-Bader, 2011) item used was measured with Pearson's correlation coefficient where most of the correlations between selected variables were from moderate to strongly correlated (from  $r=0.446$  to  $r=0.842$ ,  $p<0.01$ ).

Based on item answers measured with Likert scale, we calculated the item difficulty index, which measures the proportion of respondents who answered the item correctly. The proportion value (p-value) ranges from 0.0 to 1.0, where high p-value indicates that most respondents answered the item correctly. We calculated item difficulty index through the division of the arithmetic mean of an item and maximum value of the rating scale or calculating the proportion of individuals passing an item. Based on the analysis, we found out that p-value for our items is between 0.7 and 0.96; therefore, we can infer that our items were easy to answer. Item discrimination values (correlation between an item and the entire item battery ranging between -1 to 1 that shows the extent to which the success of an item corresponds to the success of the whole test) in our case were all above 0.3 hence we could deduce that the test produced a strong and positive correlation. Structural equation modelling (SEM) was used as a multivariate statistical analysis technique to analyse the structural relationship between measured variables (indicators) and latent variables (constructs) (Hooper et al., 2008; Joreskog & Sorbom, 1993), especially in exploratory analysis. Since the scales were developed by the authors, and they involved testing multiple hypothesized paths simultaneously rather than separately, the use of SEM was a preferred choice. Further the authors felt that using a nested SEM was unnecessary since there was limited multilevel data collection and any attempt

at ‘nesting’ would provide uncorrelated variables rendering “the resulting fit index both inappropriate and meaningless” (Widaman & Thompson, 2003).

The Goodness of Fit Statistics ( $\chi^2 = 64,18$ ,  $df = 50$ ,  $p = .000$ ,  $GFI = 0.91$ ,  $AGFI = 0.87$ ,  $CFI = 0.96$ ,  $NFI = 0.85$ ,  $RMSEA = 0.047$ ,  $TLI = 0.875$ ) shows that our model fits the distribution of the population. We have also checked standardized RMR where in our case the Goodness of Fit Statistics ( $GFI = 0.91$ ,  $AGFI = 0.920$ ,  $CFI = 0.96$ ,  $NFI = 0.85$ ,  $RMSEA = 0.057$ ,  $standardized\ RMR = 0.078$ ) shows that our overall model fits the distribution of the population. All analyses described below were carried out using statistical program SPSS.

## Results

In the first part of our analysis, correlations between variables were done using Bivariate correlation method and Pearson’s correlation coefficient. A strong positive correlation was observed between variable ‘*I’m familiar with UDHR*’ and ‘*I’m familiar with Convention on the Rights of a Child*’ ( $r = 0.655$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ). Correlation shows that those respondents who are familiar with the UDHR are also familiar with the Convention on the Rights of the Child. Also, a strong positive correlation was observed between variables ‘*There is insufficient emphasis on HR in textbooks and curriculum*’ and ‘*In the curriculum, HR are not sufficiently specified as chapters/Units*’ ( $r = 0.653$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ). Correlation between these two variables shows that respondents who agree that there is an insufficient emphasis of HR in textbooks and curriculum, also agree that HR is not sufficiently specified in the official curriculum. The strong moderate correlation is also observed between variable ‘*HR are important in school and daily life*’ and variables ‘*Teachers allow students to express their views in class.*’ ( $r = 0.539$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ) and ‘*I always emphasize HR in class.*’ ( $r = 0.500$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ) and ‘*HR are necessary in everyday life*’ ( $r = 0.491$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ). The correlations between these variables show that respondents who believe that HR are important in school, are aware that HR are necessary in everyday life and emphasize HR in class, allowing students to express their views. Also, a strong moderate positive correlation is indicated between variable ‘*In schools, HR, responsibilities and duties are not much represented*’ and ‘*There is insufficient emphasis on HR in textbooks and curriculum*’ ( $r = 0.485$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ). The results show that respondents who agree that in schools, HR,

responsibilities, and duties are not much presented also agree that HR focus in textbooks and curriculum is limited.

The second part of the analysis was based on our predicted 3I model (Figure 1) that obtained empirical data and testing of research hypotheses and was carried out in two stages. In the first stage, exploratory factor analysis in SPSS was used to identify the structure of the relationship between the variable. In exploratory factor analysis, the empirical data is explored to discover and detect characteristic features and interesting relationships without imposing any definite model on the data. Exploratory factor analysis was used where four factors were calculated from the correlation matrix. Factor 1 collected the variables about how teachers recognize HR in the official curriculum. Factor 1 was named the *Official Curriculum (F1\_OC)*. Factor 2 represented variables based on whether official HR documents are known to teachers. Based on variables connected we named Factor 2 *HR documents (F2\_HRD)*. Factor 3 represented the variables of teachers' awareness and understanding of HR. Factor 3 was named *Awareness of HR (F3\_AHR)*. Factor 4 collected the variables that presented teachers' action or actual application of HR in the classroom. Factor 4 was named *Actual curriculum (F4\_AC)*. Reliability of construct or factors were checked by Cronbach's Alpha. The reliability of constructs showed that Cronbach's Alpha was between 0.6 and 0.8, which for a low number of items is considered reliable.

Descriptive statistics (Table 2) show that teachers who participated in a survey both understand and are aware of HR – factor 3 (M=4.12 and SD=0.66) and that they emphasize human rights and duties and responsibilities of HR in the actual curriculum – factor 4 (M=3.69, SD=0.56). Data also reveals that not all teachers are introduced to HR documents – factor 2 (M=3.43, SD=1.04) and that in their perspective HR are not adequately presented in the official curriculum – factor 1 (M=3.36, SD=0.86). From these statistics, we can surmise that teachers have some awareness of HR and realise that focus on HR within in the school official curriculum is negligible.

**Table 2**

*Descriptive statistics of the used factors or constructs*

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Min	Max	M	SD	Skewness	Kurtosis
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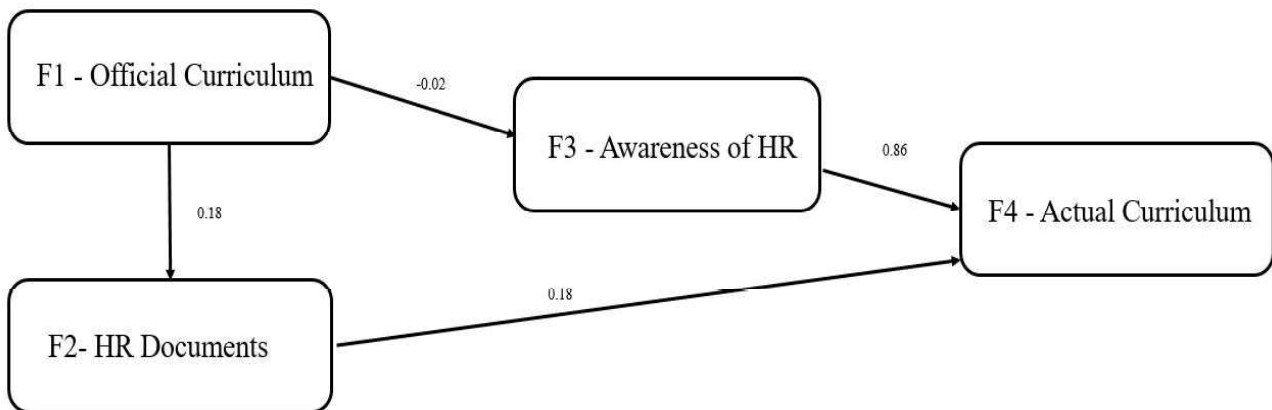
F1_Official Curriculum	1.00	5.00	3.36	.86	-.443	-.494
F2_HR Documents	1.00	5.00	3.43	1.04	-.656	-.759
	Min	Max	M	SD	Skewness	Kurtosis
F3_Awareness of HR	1.00	5.00	4.12	.56	-1.562	1.798
F4_Actual Curriculum	1.00	5.00	3.69	.66	-.931	.858

A five-point scale of agreement was used for items included in factors (5 = Strongly Agree, 4 = Agree, 3= Neutral 2 = Disagree, 1 = Strongly Disagree)

After determining the factors, the LISREL program was used to combine exploratory factor analysis with structural equation modelling. We applied theoretical concepts and constructs to a predicted 3I model and conducted a specific analysis of the relationship between factors. The goodness of fit test was used to test whether sample data fits the distribution of the population and determines whether or not sample proportions match the theoretical values. In our case the Goodness of Fit Statistics (GFI=0.91, AGFI=0.87, CFI=0.96, NFI=0.85, NNFI=0.95,  $\chi^2/df=1.24$ ) shows that our model fits the distribution of the population.

Figure 2 shows what the effect of each factor was. The most significant pathway is between *F3- Awareness of HR* and *F4 – Actual curriculum* ( $\beta=0.86$ ). The pathway shows that teachers are aware of the importance of HR and that it affects their actual curriculum. A less-significant pathway is between *F2 – HR documents* and *F4 - Actual Curriculum* ( $\beta=0.18$ ) which shows that teachers introduction to HR documents influences their actual curriculum. The pathway between *F1 - Official curriculum* and *F2 – HR Documents* ( $\beta=0.18$ ) also shows that teachers recognize that HR are not adequately addressed in the official curriculum and their knowledge is based on their introduction to HR documents. The non-significant pathway is between factors *F1 - Official curriculum* and *F3 – Awareness of HR* ( $\beta=-0.02$ ) which indicates that teachers recognize that HR are not adequately addressed in the official curriculum, but this does not impact their actual curriculum.

**Figure 2**  
*Structural equation model*



Note. Chi-Square=62.22, df=50, P-value=0.11512, RMSEA=0.047

## Discussion

Most research on international schools has been limited to definition of their meaning, purpose and growth (Bunnell et al., 2016; Hayden & Thompson, 1995; Leach, 1969; Terwilliger, 1972), leadership, accreditations and curriculum standardisation (Blyth, 2017; Hammad & Shah, 2018; Tarc, 2018) as well as challenges of international school teachers (Bunnell, 2021; Osler & Skarra, 2021; Waldron & Oberman, 2016; Struthers, 2019). This research attempts to address the lacuna in research on the factors impacting teachers' effectiveness in HRE particularly in international schools in countries where HR violations exist. It aimed to verify some factors impacting the implementation of HRE from the teachers' perspective, by checking the linear relationship between factors relating to HR content in the official curriculum, introduction to and awareness of HR among Indian school social science teachers and the implementation of HRE in actual curriculum, based on the predicted 3I model (Figure 1).

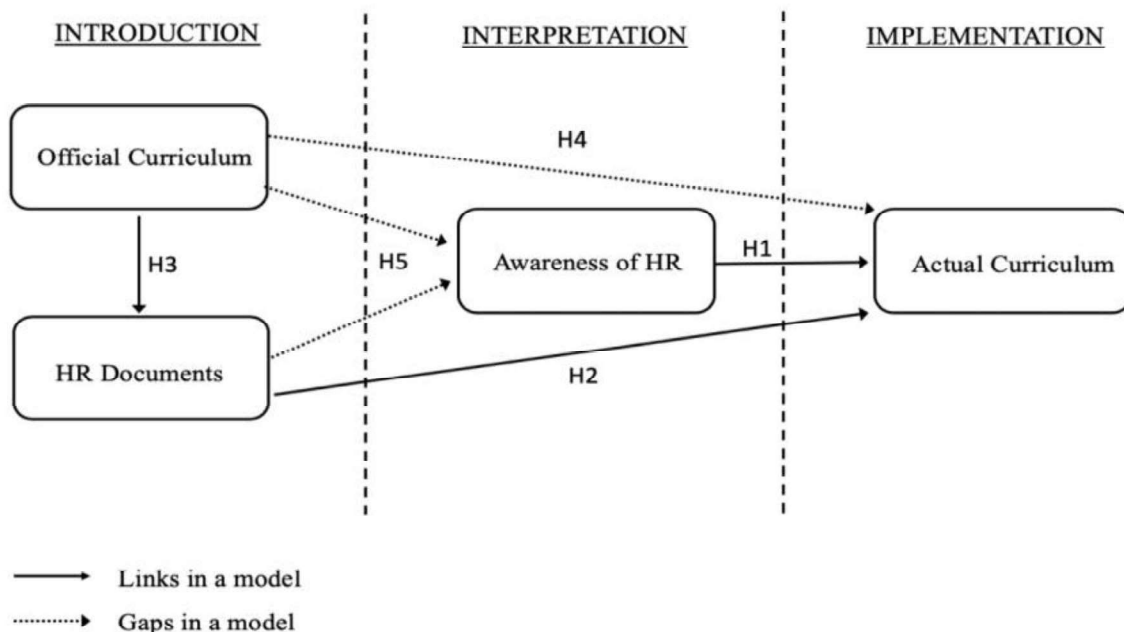
Our structural model shows the links and gaps within the predicted 3I model (Introduction, Interpretation, and Implementation) (Figure 3). The results indicate that teachers who are aware of the importance of HR in school education, often emphasize the duties and responsibilities of HR in the

classroom and may allow students to express their views in class and. They also try to incorporate HR concepts into their lesson plans as a plan of action. This correlates that teachers who are introduced to HR documents either during their studies or through self-learning, also emphasize HR in actual curriculum that is indicative of the teachers’ key role in influencing actual curriculum and validates Hypothesis 1 and Hypothesis 2.

Hypothesis 3 aims to discern the link between official curriculum and teachers’ introduction to HR documents. The pathway shows that teachers recognize that HR are not sufficiently addressed in the official curriculum and therefore feel the necessity to depend on their knowledge of HR and HR documents to supplement teaching of HR. The Structural Equation Model depicts that because teachers recognize that HR are not adequately addressed in the official curriculum there is no direct pathway link to their actual curriculum, thereby Hypothesis 4 is not substantiated. In addition, there is no pathway linking the official curriculum and teachers’ introduction to HR documents to the teachers’ awareness and understanding of HR, which signifies that Hypothesis 5 is also not substantiated.

**Figure 3**

*Links and gaps in 3I model*



The present study enables a better understanding of teachers' perspective on HRE in the Indian school curriculum and helps us determine the best practices for enhancing teacher effectiveness in HRE. While teachers realized the importance of HRE, some of them were constrained by their limited awareness of HR and lack of familiarity with all HR documents. This suggests the need for additional pedagogical training through pre-service and in-service programs for teachers through workshops and conference participation, exposure to recent HRE models, case studies, and transactional strategies that are more relative to contemporary concerns in their classrooms.

The research findings suggest that although some attempts have been made to address HRE in the Indian educational ethos, through the efforts of the CBSE and NCERT and NHRC, there still exist considerable lack of clarity or missing information on HR for teachers within the course curriculum. This points to considerable gaps in the effective translation of official curriculum to the actual curriculum in practice by teachers, especially related to specific international settings. These results highlight the need for vital transformations in HRE such that the curriculum is transparent and clear to teachers. Further, teachers also need to be supported through updated teaching material, teacher's manuals, and latest methodologies in delivering result-oriented outcomes.

Reluctance of the teachers to respond to questions that they deemed as 'too sensitive' indicate the fear of repercussions to any criticism or opposition to national policies, even while they consistently witness considerable violation of HR in their social environment. Therefore, even though some teachers opined that they do provide opportunity for interactive student discussions, sensitive issues on HR are likely to be side-stepped. The limitations in total number of working days for schools in Kuwait is also a factor that impacts the teachers' prioritization of certain courses over others, such as mathematics and sciences, which particularly impacts the social sciences more so in the case of HRE which remains relegated to the backburner.

### **Conclusion**

The main aim of HRE is to build a universal culture of HR by developing a comprehensive curriculum that emphasizes HR documents, guidelines,



responsibilities, and safeguard mechanisms, while at the same time focuses on developing among students the necessary skills for the promotion and protection of HR in their everyday life, within their social settings. While the UN through official declarations endorsed the broad guidelines for effective HRE, the state actors have the responsibility of further delineating national educational policies. In the case of international schools, this responsibility not only rests with the accrediting educational institution but also with the education department of the host country, although the expectations of each regarding HRE may not be in sync.

Achieving the goals of education depends on the school ethos, implementation of the pedagogical process, respect for ethical norms and school rules embodied in the school handbook, national and international policy expectations and most importantly on the teachers. These factors ultimately influence the attitudes and behaviour of students and through them affect the wider community and social environment. To that effect, there needs to be total transparency and clarity of the official curriculum within the entire school community. Consequently, if we want to integrate HR into the value system of the student community, it is necessary to ensure that the application of HR is perceived in all aspects for school education.

The CBSE (India) has made repeated attempts to develop curriculum frameworks for the effective dissemination of HRE. Yet our study reveals that in the perspective of teachers in international schools, HRE may not be clearly and adequately addressed in the official curriculum. This lack of clarity may be interpreted as void or confusing and therefore neglected by teachers in the actual curriculum. Therefore, we contend that when planning the official curriculum, attention should be focused on clarity, transparency, simplification and incorporation of teacher's handbooks to standardize better the teacher-learning process.

While it is the teacher's responsibility to achieve the curriculum objectives embodied in learning material, through appropriate and carefully chosen teaching methods using their skills and training, in these international schools teachers themselves are caught within a duality in their comprehension and perception of HR. Some teachers may have been exposed to HR documents during their educative phase, but this is often not supplemented through adequate teachers' training, nor through in-service workshops, therefore, teachers may not be specifically and explicitly familiar with the current

methodologies of teaching HRE, especially in the diverse learning environment witnessed in international schools.

Teachers who serve as role models for students should be intricately familiar with all aspects of HRE if they are expected to effectively influence students' attitudes and behaviour. Variations in official and actual curriculum arise because teachers teach topics from unique personal perspectives and may choose to emphasize the topics that they prefer or topics that match their views and even chose to ignore what is against their beliefs or hurts their own sensibilities. Therefore, consistent feedback mechanisms need to be established to ascertain that stated HRE goals are achieved irrespective of bias and subjectivity of teachers.

Noting considerable lacuna in academic research on teachers effectiveness and HRE in school curriculum especially in international schools, this paper investigated key factors determining the effective implementation of HRE by teachers in Indian schools in Kuwait using the 3I model (Introduction, Interpretation, and Implementation), wherein the focus was on teachers' perception, awareness and understanding of HRE in the official curriculum, and its application in the actual curriculum within the classroom. However, the role of the hidden curriculum in HRE albeit undeniable was not studied as it remains beyond the scope of this paper. Further the specificity of the population studied and the strong regional focus, restrains broader generalisation and application of the findings, although this points to the need for further research relating to other population groups both within and outside the region. Another limitation of the paper was the reluctance of the teachers to respond to questions that they considered 'too sensitive for discussion' due to fear of consequences relating to any criticism of national public policy particularly regarding HR violations and laws that perpetuated such violation. Better correlation of theory and practice might be possible in such nations with more open acceptance of conversations on HR issues.

The authors also suggest future research on specific areas of HR in the school curriculum as well as effectiveness of teachers training in HRE on students learning, particularly in the context of international schools. It would also be challenging to include an analysis of the implemented curriculum in HRE and focus on the impact of core ethical values, beliefs, and behaviour of teachers in international schools, which may have a significant impact on the hidden curriculum. Unless HRE is addressed holistically through multiple

parameters, it would be impossible to influence young minds towards mutual respect and eliminate HR abuses. Only through effective implementation of HRE, can generations of students be transformed towards human rights consciousness that would enable them to critique abuse in the societies they live in, and engage in proactive debate and dialogue.

### **Acknowledgments**

The APC was funded by the Slovenian Research Agency (ARRS) project » YO-VID22: Youth wellbeing and support structures before, during and after the COVID-19 pandemic« (grant agreement No. J7-4597).

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