

Chapter 8

Human Rights Literacy (HRL) to Promote and Sustain Attitudes and Behaviours Supportive of Social Justice

Chaminda Chiran Jayasundara

University of Kelaniya, Sri Lanka

ABSTRACT

This chapter explores what Human Rights Literacy (HRL) involves and how it establishes and develops improved rights of the citizens supportive to social justice in the society. People with different cultural backgrounds have the fundamental right to be literate members of society. However, due to various cultural influences, this right is somewhat restricted to certain individuals. For example, girls' education has become controversial in some lands. There are still instances in some cultures where people of all walks of life, such as LGBTI, Blacks, Indigenous people, migrants, etc., are helpless in the face of their rights. Thus, legal literacy and its unique component of human rights literacy are essential to ensure the protection of human rights. A theoretical framework is eventually drawn up by summarising the findings of the study.

INTRODUCTION

This chapter discusses the placement of HRL to protect human rights in a changing global environment and unexpected and expected actions that could lead to human rights violations. Among the desired actions, diversity, resentment, inherited difference, marginalisation, and violence are the main factors. These actions relate to living realities within the gap between history, cultures of memory and human rights ideals. HRL is structured between the ideals of human rights and the non-realisation of rights in everyday life. Given the crucial role that the United Nations aspires to play in HRL, the lack of essential tools, institutions, processes, and significant education on the consequences of democracy increases the

DOI: 10.4018/978-1-7998-8363-0.ch008

likelihood of becoming a victim of human rights violations. The classroom-based counselling platform is one of the leading centres for international human rights culture due to its unique ability to evoke moral empathy. Accordingly, Human Rights Education (HRE) promotes HRL, that is, history, values, concepts, engagement with key documents and organisations essential to democratic values and aspirations, especially the principles of human dignity, equality, non-compliance and justice. Teacher education should contribute to the HRL of teachers so that they can move towards equality. Teachers are not the only professionals positioned to promote equality, and no one needs to be a professional to be an agent of change. Therefore, HRL can motivate students entering careers and professions to transition wherever they face human rights issues in general. Literacy is never the primary objective of education but a vehicle for the public good, at which the oppressed can reach a critical juncture, often looking out for legal assistance for redressing the affected individuals. Through a comprehensive literacy project, those engaged in learning in the teacher-student / student-teacher dialogue can easily face HRL challenges, violations and analyse society. They gain knowledge of human rights positions in the global arena and derive generative themes from being studied from narratives of their own experiences. HRL education allows people to become fully human, understand structures, and gain a better understanding of the functions of society that limit them on the path to liberation. However, any HRL programme needs to be critically examined from a fundamental perspective to protecting human rights and be in line with the needs of the rights of the abused individuals.

The Motivation of the Chapter

This chapter explores what HRL involves and how it establishes and develops improved rights of the citizens supportive to social justice in the society.

METHODOLOGY

A two-pronged methodology was undertaken: The Systematic Literature Review (SLR) approach (Rousseau et al., 2008) to perform a first selection of the most related papers to be included in the analysis, and Citation Network Analysis (Hummon & Doreian, 1989) to perform a second selection based on citations to delve into the process of knowledge creation, transfer and development. A new methodology was derived from the combination of these two methods: Systematic Literature Network Analysis (SLNA). These two methodologies, i.e. SLR and CNA, are integrated into the research process as illustrated in Figure 1 described by Colicchia and Strozzi (2012).

ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

Notions of the Literacy

Literacy is defined as “the ability to read and write” (Barber and Oxford Reference Online, 2005); thus, literacy means becoming a full member of the written language community (Zariski, 2011). However, from a practical point of view, being literate means going beyond the basic ability to read and write. The International Adult Literacy Survey (Kirsch, 2001) defines it as the ability to understand and use

24 more pages are available in the full version of this document, which may be purchased using the "Add to Cart" button on the publisher's webpage:

www.igi-global.com/chapter/human-rights-literacy-hrl-to-promote-and-sustain-attitudes-and-behaviours-supportive-of-social-justice/291395

Related Content

Constitutional Knowledge, Rights-Based Development, and Citizenship in Zimbabwe: Past, Present, and Future

Innocent Chirisa, Emma Maphosa, Abraham Rajab Matamanda, Wendy Wadzanayi Mandaza-Tsoriyo and Kudzai Chatiza (2022). *Research Anthology on Citizen Engagement and Activism for Social Change* (pp. 1039-1055).

www.irma-international.org/chapter/constitutional-knowledge-rights-based-development-and-citizenship-in-zimbabwe/295040

The Heritage and Education Research Network: Place Value on Cultural Heritage in Europe

Olaia Fontal and Marta Martínez (2020). *Handbook of Research on Citizenship and Heritage Education* (pp. 174-197).

www.irma-international.org/chapter/the-heritage-and-education-research-network/246781

Equipping Higher Education Leaders to Manage Corporate Interests

Morgan R. Clevenger (2020). *Examining Social Change and Social Responsibility in Higher Education* (pp. 179-196).

www.irma-international.org/chapter/equipping-higher-education-leaders-to-manage-corporate-interests/243250

Understanding and Facing Migration Through Stories for Influence

Angela K. Salmon and Kiriaki Melliou (2021). *Handbook of Research on Promoting Social Justice for Immigrants and Refugees Through Active Citizenship and Intercultural Education* (pp. 205-231).

www.irma-international.org/chapter/understanding-and-facing-migration-through-stories-for-influence/282314

E-Government in Vietnam: Situation, Prospects, Trends, and Challenges

Ngo Tan Vu Khanh, Ma Thanh Dan and Gwangyong Gim (2020). *Open Government: Concepts, Methodologies, Tools, and Applications* (pp. 1915-1934).

www.irma-international.org/chapter/e-government-in-vietnam/235261