

International Human Rights Education: An evaluation of treaty compliance in British Columbia's Kindergarten to Grade 12 Social Studies school curriculum

By

Lesley Barbara Friedmann
B.Ed., University of Victoria, 1996

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Supervisory Committee

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Abstract

In this thesis I probe into British Columbia's (BC) Kindergarten to Grade 12 Social Studies curriculum to determine how adequately it adheres to Canada's international treaty obligations. I give particular attention to the duties regarding dissemination of information *about*, *through*, and *for* human rights principles and norms that are contained within the United Nations (UN) 1989 Convention on the Rights of the Child (Convention) and the UN 2011 Declaration of Human Rights Education and Training (DHRET). To accomplish this, I first develop a compliance assessment tool that is based on international human rights legal standards. This tool is then used in a normative inquiry into BC's current Social Studies curriculum to assess the extent to which its educational aim, and its conception of the learner, learning process, learning environment, teacher's role, and evaluation satisfies the international human rights education law requirements that are articulated in the treaties that Canada has ratified. The knowledge that is generated from this investigation is of value to BC's Ministry of Education and members of the public who are involved in BC's curriculum development and revision, because it creates a benchmark from which to "take more active measures to systematically disseminate and promote" (UN, 2012, paragraph 25) knowledge about international human rights in BC's schools.

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List of Abbreviations

BC - British Columbia

CEDAW - UN Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women

Charter - Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms (1982)

Convention - United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989)

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

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

IRP - Integrated Resource Package

PLO - Prescribed Learning Outcome

UDHR - United Nations Declaration of Human Rights (1948)

UN - United Nations

UN Charter - United Nations Charter (1945)

UNCRC - United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child

UNGA - United Nations General Assembly

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Chapter 1 - Introduction

*“Establishing lasting peace is the work of education;
all politics can do is keep us out of war.”*

Maria Montessori

1.1. Context

Curriculum is the foundation of education; all formal learning experiences evolve from it. Embedded within a complex and dynamic matrix of relationships, curriculum is defined as the explicit or implicit “set of interactions designed to facilitate learning and development and to impose meaning on experience” (Miller & Seller, 1990, p. 3). The dimensions of curriculum include what it is we intend to accomplish, the experiences required to achieve this, and the manner in which they will be enacted in the field (Foshay, as cited in Short, 1991, p. 89). The integration of these three dimensions can be either consistent, or contrary with the beliefs and assumptions that underpin them. In a reductionist approach, curriculum is dislodged from the complex web of social interconnectedness, and it fails to consider the dynamic changes implicit within the pluralistic society that surrounds it (Miller & Seller, 1990). An integrated orientation, on the other hand, respects and values the interdependent relationship between variables and phenomena within an education system, while at the same time it considers how they function within the larger social context (Miller & Seller, 1990).

Subsequently, curriculum development and enactment demands that close attention be paid to adopting an orientation that is best suited for its dimensions. For instance, if a particular set of skills is being taught to a class of Emergency Medical Responders (EMR), then it is necessary to adopt a reductionist approach to curriculum to ensure the teacher transmits life saving facts and skills that students must master (Miller & Seller, 1990); the difference between life and death may depend greatly on how adequately the EMR technician is able to administer

first aid to a person suffering from a heart attack. Each technician must be able to apply a sequence of procedures in a mechanical way, and every responder must follow the same method. By adopting this type of “competency-based learning orientation” (1990. p.6), the practice of curriculum functions to ensure consistency and excellence within this selected set of skills. On the other hand, a curriculum that considers complex social interconnectedness would favour a “transformation metaorientation” (1990. p.8-9) along with the “transaction position” (1990, pp.6-8). For example, the daily community meeting in a middle school Montessori classroom not only provides the students with opportunities to problem solve ways to strengthen their connections with each other through dialogue and debate, but it also becomes a venue for personal growth as children seek greater social cohesion. Students are viewed and respected as individuals who together are able to fulfil a vision of social transformation where they become more harmonious with their environment, rather than attempting to exert control over it (1990. p.8). Mostly, the community meeting is led by students, who encourage their peers to discuss social topics that impact them either individually or as a group. Oftentimes, students are expected to suggest solutions to problems, which the class is then required to deliberate upon to determine their adequacy. Leaders are expected to ensure students communicate their ideas and opinions respectfully, and listen to their classmates during this process. Unlike the transmission approach, which maintains a separation between the learner and the curriculum, a transformative approach to curriculum will incorporate students within it instead, and a transaction worldview will provide students opportunities to solve problems within this more integrated learning environment. In this instance, the student and the curriculum are more closely connected. To determine which orientation has been adopted, a formal examination of curriculum must occur.

Curriculum inquiry seeks to find reliable answers to perplexing questions regarding curriculum. By employing practical inquiry forms to conceive, express, justify, and enact educational programs, the purpose of curriculum inquiry is not only to add to the existing

knowledge in the field of curriculum, but also to influence education decision-making (Short, 1991, pp. 1-9). In the province of British Columbia (BC) the “Ministry of Education sets the education standards for students in grades K to 12 through the provincial curriculum” (BC, Curriculum, N.D). Under the Canadian Constitution, the BC government is legally responsible for education (Canada, 1982, Section 93). This includes the development and revisions of its curricula. Through “extensive ongoing consultation, thorough research and exploration of possibilities, thoughtful decision-making and detailed planning” (BC, N.D), the BC Ministry of Education collaborates with various education partners and the public to revise and improve its curricula so that it can better meet the needs of all students within its jurisdiction.

At the same time, curriculum is a public¹ affair, and any activity within its realm is a social endeavor, where individuals deliberate together on its purpose, substance, and practice towards a negotiated outcome. But, for citizens in a liberal democratic society to overcome curriculum’s integration challenge, they must first engage with issues and questions relating to curriculum and its place in society, confront any subsequent questions, and commit to a resolution that takes into account multiple opinions. In doing so, particular attention must be paid to its elements, which includes the curriculum’s underlying aim, and the manner in which the learner, learning process, learning environment, teacher’s role, and evaluation are conceived. Underpinning this is a moral political acceptance that each citizen has equal claim in public debate, and together, everyone is responsible to locate any overlapping consensus to resolve disagreements fairly (Gutmann, 2001; Hoffe, 2001; Rawls, 1988). Trust is vital in this process. It means that certain human rights assurances and protections are respected for everyone, including those engaged in, or impacted by curriculum: public and government stakeholders, educators, learners, and citizens at large. However, for citizens to participate in “fair social cooperation” (Rawls, 1988, p. 270), they must assent to a political conception of justice that

¹ The use of the word “public” here refers to all of BC’s residents; for them, BC’s education system is a commonly shared interest and of public concern to everyone.

upholds human rights in high priority. Only then can any joint effort towards a shared consensus regarding the purpose, substance, and practice of curriculum be achieved. Key to this is an increased public awareness about human rights standards and principles, the values that underpin them, and the actions required to protect them, which is achieved through education.

Since its inception after the Second World War, the UN has been determined to “reaffirm faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person, in the equal rights of men and women and of nations large and small” (UN, 1945) to ensure everlasting international peace and security. Through the adoption of several human rights treaties that UN member States have ratified, countries became partners in an international effort to establish a universal culture of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. Part of the process is the periodic assessment conducted by UN treaty bodies to determine the progress taken by a member State to implement its international human rights law obligations that are contained within the treaties it has ratified. This includes an evaluation of how adequately the treaty principles and provisions are disseminated amongst the general population.

The context of this study is set within international human rights law, and Canada’s subsequent international human rights treaty obligations. Particular attention is paid to those obligations pertaining to the dissemination and awareness-raising of human rights that are included in the 1989 Convention on the Rights of the Child (Convention) and the UN Declaration on Human Rights Education and Training (DHRET). The latter document was adopted by the General Assembly without a vote² in 2011, and subsequently endorsed by Canada.

²Most international human rights treaties and declarations require a passing vote by the United Nations General Assembly. On rare occasions, the significance of a treaty or declaration absolves it from having to pass this vote.

1.2. Problem

The UN Committee on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) raised issues about Canada's failure to adequately disseminate information about international human rights in its last periodic review of Canada's implementation efforts in 2012 (UNCRC, 2012). Under its review of Canada's fulfilment regarding its dissemination and awareness-raising duties in Paragraph 24, the UNCRC made claims that Canada has made "little effort to systematically... integrate child rights education into the school system" (2012, p.5). As a result, in Paragraph 25, it urged Canada "to take more active measures to systematically disseminate and promote the Convention, raising awareness among the public at large, among professionals working with or for children, and among children" (2012, p.5). While it did point out that Canada could do so through "the development and use of curriculum resources on children's rights, especially through the State party's extensive availability of free Internet and web access providers, as well as education initiatives that integrate knowledge and exercise of children's rights into curricula, policies, and practices in schools" (2012, p.5), it is unclear to me what data sources the Committee used to substantiate these findings, and it does not clearly define what it means by *active measures* or how to *systematically integrate* child's rights education into the Canadian school system.

Even though Canada as a whole was reviewed by the UNCRC, the distribution of legislative powers regarding education in Canada is a provincial duty³ (Canada, 1982, Article 93). Accordingly, each province is obligated to make laws regarding education. Because of this distribution of legislative powers, it is important to zoom into Canada's provincial education systems to ascertain how adequately Canada is fulfilling its dissemination duties with regards to

³Education is, however, the responsibility of the federal government in the areas of Indigenous education (i.e. band-run schools) and military schooling.

international human rights promotion. Specifically, a focus on school curriculum⁴ as one of the possible active measures Canada can use to systematically integrate human rights norms and principles into its society can provide a more comprehensive benchmark than less formal and sporadic programs that may be offered by communities or the private sector.

In conjunction with the UNCRC's 2012 review of Canada's implementation progress, Morris and Davidson (2012) also conducted a study to better understand how adequately international human rights are being actively promoted in BC. They echoed the UNCRC's findings, stating that there is a "surprising dearth" (p. 60) of international human rights education and training in all BC sectors, including in its schools. Even though the investigative scope of the UNCRC was for all of Canada, and Morris and Davidson focused primarily on BC, both studies concluded that there is a lack of adequate dissemination of international human rights knowledge, principles and norms in Canadian schools. Morris and Davidson did identify two threshold questions to assess for compliance in BC's schools, which include what content is being taught, and its scope, or accessibility within society (2012, p. 59). However, they state clearly that they "did not evaluate individual programs or courses as to content or educational methods" (2012, p. 60). Furthermore, neither study conducted a more in-depth inquiry into BC's entire education curricula to determine if and where it fails to systematically integrate human rights education, and what measures, if any, are taken to actively disseminate knowledge *about*, *through*, and *for* human rights in BC's schools. Furthermore, there is no evidence that the UNCRC or Morris and Davidson examined the educational aim of any of BC's curricula, or their underlying elements, which includes their conception of the learner, learning process, learning environment, teacher's role, and evaluation, and compared them with those required by the human rights treaties that Canada is obligated to fulfil regarding the dissemination of human rights principles and norms. So, while these studies have identified an *overt* failing to provide an

⁴ School curriculum, in this instance, pertains to the entire Kindergarten to Grade 12 BC school curriculum. It consists of various versions of legally enforced curricula from different time frames, that are either in use, or being transitioned in or out of BC's education system.

adequate education *about, through, and for* human rights in BC's schools, could it be that there is some adherence to these treaty duties that have not yet been identified, only because the parameters of what it means to systematically integrate human rights education into schools have not yet been clearly defined, or the methods used to gather the appropriate data to ascertain this seemingly explicated? As such, could it be that BC's education curricula do contain aspects that comply with Canada's human rights dissemination duties?

In this thesis I define *systematic integration* as the active measures taken by BC's curriculum developers to disseminate information *about, through, and for* human rights via BC's Kindergarten to Grade 12 curriculum. Since the development of curriculum is a deliberate social and political activity conducted by stakeholders from the public sector and governmental officials, its compilation is not just random. Rather, because a school curriculum represents a current snapshot of the most prevalent societal beliefs and attitudes regarding what BC citizens believe children should learn at the time of writing, it becomes, in and of itself, a meticulously designed active measure that can be used to assess UN Member State human rights education compliance.

1.3. Purpose

The Convention, as a whole, defines specific standards that are derived from an international human rights normative framework, with specific protections for children, who have been identified by the international community as "entitled to special care and assistance" (UN, 1989, Preamble). Like all human rights treaties, its core cross-cutting principles include *non-discrimination and equality, participation, access to remedy, access to information, accountability, the rule of law, and good governance*. Three additional cross-cutting principles are unique to the Convention's fifty-four articles: devotion to the *best interests of the child*; the

right to *life, survival and development*; and respect for the *views of the child*. As with any treaty, ratification of the Convention makes it legally binding under international customary law, whereby a UN Member State assumes the duty to respect, protect, and fulfil the rights contained within the treaty for all individuals within its jurisdiction. The UN Member State also assumes a duty to disseminate information *about, through, and for* human rights. This obligation is extrapolated upon in Articles 29 and 42 of the Convention, and expanded upon extensively in the DHRET (2011). I refer to it as human rights education in this thesis.

At the other end of the equation are the active measures used by a UN Member State to ensure it respects, protects, and fulfils its international human rights treaty obligations. The duty charging a UN Member State to disseminate and raise awareness about international human rights principles and norms are derived from the Convention's Article 42, which states that UN Member States must "undertake to make the principles and provisions of the Convention widely known, by appropriate and active means, to adults and children alike" (UN, 1989, Article 42). The purpose of this study is to determine how BC's Kindergarten to Grade 12 school curriculum systematically integrates information *about, through, and for* human rights. The study is limited to an examination of BC's Social Studies curriculum in particular, since this curriculum is designed to "give students the knowledge, skills, and competencies to be active, informed citizens who can think critically, understand and explain the perspectives of others, make judgments, and communicate ideas effectively" (BC, 2015A, p.1). Unlike the purpose of the Math, Science, and Language Arts, the aim of the Social Studies curriculum has the greatest potential to fulfil Canada's dissemination obligations. I elaborate on this point at length in this thesis.

I review BC's Social Studies curricula from two different time frames: (1) the 1997, 2005 and 2006 *Integrated Resource Packages* that serve as the curriculum that provincially licensed teachers are required by law to comply with, and (2) the 2015 newly released grades K-9 curriculum, along with its corresponding draft grades 10-12 version. At time of writing, the

former of the 2015 iteration is in a three-year phase-in period, while the latter of the same is still undergoing review. I do not, however, assess how adequately teacher practice adheres to the requirements for human rights education in BC's Kindergarten to Grade 12 Social Studies classrooms.

This study treats BC's Kindergarten to Grade 12 Social Studies curriculum as an active measure. I examine this particular curriculum to understand whether it systematically integrates information *about, through, and for* human rights, and then this information is assessed to determine how adequately it complies with the standards regarding human rights education that are outlined in the Convention, and expanded upon in the DHRET. Specifically, six curricular framework areas outlined by Miller and Seller (1990) are examined to determine compliance:

- Is its **educational aim** designed to empower persons with knowledge *about* human rights principles and norms; values *through* a rights-respecting learning environment; and behaviours *for* human rights so that all persons are equally capable and supported to partake in the global effort to establish a “foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world” (UN, 1945; UN, 1948; UN, 1989) as required by the Convention (Article 29.d), and the DHRET (Article 2.2.a-c)?
- Are all **learners conceived of** as rights-bearing citizens who are entitled to “know, seek and receive information about all human rights and fundamental freedoms” (UN, 2011, Article 1.1) without distinction of any kind? Furthermore, is each learner's inherent human dignity, self-worth, and right to development respected in accordance with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UN, 1948), the Convention (UN, 1989), and Article 5 in the DHRET (UN, 2011)?
- Is its **conception of the learning process** in keeping with, and respectful of the “evolving capacities of the child” (UN, 1989, Article 5), and does learning progress from a concrete experiential stage of knowledge acquisition, through an

analytical stage, and culminate with more sophisticated and abstract types of competencies?

- Does its **conception of the learning environment** support, to the maximum extent possible, the cognitive, emotional, and physical developmental needs of all learners (UN, 1989, Article 6.2), so that they can be adequately prepared to live a “responsible life in a free society, in the spirit of understanding, peace, tolerance, equality of sexes, and friendship among all peoples, ethnic, national and religious groups and persons of indigenous origin” (1989, Article 29.1.d)?
- Is the **conception of the teacher’s role** supportive of a mutually respecting relationship between learners and educators, whereby the teacher models the cross-cutting human rights principles of *non-discrimination* and *equality*, *participation*, *access to remedy*, *access to information*, *accountability*, *the rule of law*, and *good governance*, and ensures the Convention’s unique principles of devotion to the *best interests of the child*; the right to *life, survival* and *development*; and respect for the *views of the child* are fulfilled for all learners? Does the educator take into account the learner’s “specific needs and conditions” (UN, 2011, Article 3.3), and provide an age-appropriate education *about* human rights, that models the core human rights principles *through* the creation of a supportive, rights-respecting learning environment that motivates *for* human rights (UN, 2011, Article 2.2.a-c)?
- Is the **conception of how learning should be evaluated** consistent with international human rights principles, and respectful of the child’s human inherent dignity? Does evaluation of the learner comply with the human rights principles of *non-discrimination* and *equality*, *access to information*, *accountability*, and respect for the *views of the child*?

This study is designed to answer these questions: it highlights aspects that are embedded within each of the above six curricular elements to determine whether they comply with Canada's treaty obligations to disseminate information *about, through, and for* human rights to children. This investigation is also intended to identify areas where there is a lack of adherence to these norms and principles. I achieve this objective by first describing what is meant by human rights education. I then conduct a methodological translation of the prescriptive, values based, and legalistic language of international human rights education treaty standards into a monitoring mechanism that is then used to assess BC's Kindergarten to Grade 12 Social Studies curriculum to determine whether it complies with these treaty obligations. I examine the curriculum's substance and purpose to find structural, procedural, and outcome evidence that supports Canada's fulfilment of this duty. Particularly, I look for information about Canada's federal and provincial political and legal structures through which it can actively disseminate information *about, through, and for* human rights. I also assess the efforts BC's Ministry of Education has made to systematically integrate human rights education into the curriculum's aims, and through its conception of the learner, learning process, learning environment, teacher's role, and evaluation. Finally, I review the curriculum to find any indication that the recommendations made by the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child following its last review of Canada in 2012 have been accounted for.

In this thesis, the compliance of a UN Member State to its dissemination treaty obligations is generally defined as the manner in which a UN Member State has acted to implement the legal and moral requirements for HRE for each person within its jurisdiction. This includes an education *about* the rights afforded to each individual, *through* the values that underpin these rights, and *for* the protection of human rights (UN, 2011, Article 2.2.a-c). While I recognize that Canada's implementation of its treaty obligations is on a continual progression towards complete compliance, the scope of this thesis is a one-shot look at BC's Social Studies

curriculum at the time of publication in 1997, 2005, 2006, and 2015 to examine how adequately the curriculum already adheres to Canada's treaty obligations.

1.4. Significance

Education about international human rights is a crucial ingredient for the successful implementation of Canada's treaty obligations; without it there can be no compliance. Moreover, human rights education has also proven to develop each child's "moral imagination to recognize and respect another as essentially like oneself" (Flowers, 2003). Two studies have also demonstrated that human rights education has the capacity to equip children with the competencies required to participate as informed citizens in the global discourse on critical issues of concern such as human rights violations, peacekeeping, resource distribution, poverty and human development, environmental challenges, immigration, labour issues, and cultural diversity (Howe & Covell, 2005, 2013). This includes being able to scrutinize governing bodies and those in power to hold them accountable for their domestic and international policies, and to take initiative for "further independent investigation into concepts, movements, and local struggles" (Bajaj, 2011, p.492) so that each child can be empowered to take transformative social action as they create a universal culture of human rights (2011, pp.490-492).

In Canada's last report as a UN Member State to the UN Human Rights Council Working Group following its most recent Universal Periodic Review (2013A), it claims that its values of freedom, democracy, and human rights, characterize the Canadian society; they are its strength, and strong political, legal, and social frameworks across the country are in place for their protection and promotion (UN, 2013A, Paragraph 1,4). However, while "Canada views diversity as a strength and source of national identity and pride" (2013A, Paragraph 88), it recognizes that "no society is free from discrimination, and [it] acknowledges that there is more work to be done to foster social inclusion" (2013A, Paragraph 88). To further combat racism and

xenophobia, federal, provincial, and municipal governments have instituted various legislative, education, policy, and awareness-raising mechanisms to promote knowledge about international human rights norms and principles that Canada has assumed into law through ratification (2013A, Paragraph 92-95). However, the UNCRC (2012) expressed concern that “awareness and knowledge of the Convention remains limited amongst children, professionals working with children, and the general public” (UN, 2012, Paragraph 24). If Canada is to further its commitment to the values of inclusion, equality, freedom, and democracy, it must invest in its young citizens to ensure that they are adequately equipped with “knowledge and understanding of human rights norms and principles, the values that underpin them and the mechanisms for their protection” (UN, 2011, Article 2.2.a).

The UN mandate to ensure States respect, protect, and fulfill their international treaty duties “depends, in large measure, on the availability of appropriate tools for policy formulation and evaluation” (UN, 2012, Forward) driven by an “intolerance for immunity and impunity, and of support for transparency and accountability” (Andreopoulos, 2002, p.242). This involves the development of qualitative and quantitative assessment frameworks to evaluate degrees of State compliance and identify critical areas of concern regarding human rights violations. This work contributes to the body of knowledge regarding how seriously our society takes its international human rights treaty obligations, especially as they pertain to human rights education for global citizenship, coexistence, and transformative action as represented through the BC Social Studies curriculum.

1.5. Limitations

In this study I examine BC’s Kindergarten to Grade 12 Social Studies curricula, which were last published in 1997 (Grade 8-10 curriculum), 2005 (Grade 11 curriculum), and 2006 (Kindergarten to Grade 7 curriculum). I also inspect the newly released Kindergarten to Grades

9 Social Studies curriculum (2015), which is currently being phased in by the BC government until it becomes fully implemented and legally required in 2017, and the draft Grades 10-12 Social Studies curriculum (2015). However, in doing so, I project a 2015 philosophical lens onto documents from 1997, 2005, and 2006 to determine how closely these curricula versions adhere with Canada's treaty obligations to disseminate information *about, through, and for* human rights. It may be argued that it is unfair to impose this lens onto documents that are close to seventeen years old. However, I claim that BC Social Studies curriculum development teams should have been aware of the existence of the Convention, given that Canada had ratified it, and subsequently incorporated it into the country's law in 1990. As such, from a historical perspective, the Convention's legal standards should have been widely known by all members of the Canadian public, including those responsible for BC's 1997, 2005, 2006, and newly released 2015 Social Studies and draft curricula. Even so, to ensure my thesis withstands the historical test of fairness, I will compare these Social Studies curriculum documents with those prescribed for human rights education that are grounded within the DHRET, not to suggest that they are deficient in terms of this document, but only to suggest places for future compliance. Furthermore, this attitude towards suggesting further future compliance even exceeds across the whole analysis; it is not limited to portions affected by the DHRET only.

The limitations with the newly released 2015 Kindergarten to Grade 9 Social Studies curriculum, and its proposed Grades 10-12 draft, is that, at the time of writing this thesis, they have not been fully incorporated as a legal document to which BC's licensed teachers must comply. However, their value to this thesis is that they represent the most current iteration of governmental and public thinking on the topic of Social Studies education in BC. Because of this, these new curricula are included in my study; they are evidence of the most recent effort made by BC citizens to comply with its treaty obligations. While some of the features present in the 1997, 2005, and 2006 curricula are not present in the newly revised 2015 curriculum and

draft, the objective of this thesis is to examine the overall aims of BC's entire Social Studies curriculum as a whole.

1.6. Study Overview

In 1990 Canada ratified the Convention, and by doing so, it assumed the legal obligation to progressively realize the Convention's fifty-four rights for every child in Canada. One of these duties is to educate children *about* human rights, the values that underpin their principles and the mechanisms used to protect them for global citizenship; to instill in them values *through* a rights-respecting learning environment for peaceful coexistence; and to empower them with behaviours *for* human rights, so that all children can take transformative action to promote and encourage respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, and establish a "foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world" (UN, 1945; UN, 1948; UN, 1989; UN, 2011).

In chapter 2 I describe the human rights education normative framework a UN Member State is required to fulfil for each person within its jurisdiction so that I can later use this information to determine how adequately BC's Kindergarten to Grade 12 Social Studies curriculum complies with its international human rights dissemination obligations. I provide an overview of the legal duties pertaining to this obligation, its purpose, and the core human rights principles that underlie human rights education. In this chapter, I have adopted Bajaj's model for human rights education, which includes three broad categories: an education *about* human rights for global citizenship; an education *through* human rights for peaceful coexistence; and an education *for* human rights for transformative action (Bajaj, 2011). While each category is distinguished from the others, they are not mutually exclusive. Rather, I maintain that they augment each other and form a complete model of human rights education that has the capacity to respond to any perceived needs pertaining to a "particular education system, program, or school" (Bajaj, 2011, p.489) that seeks to narrow the gap between the UN Member State's

dissemination duties to educate *about, through, and for* human rights, and its current level of compliance, or lack thereof, to this duty.

A critical catalyst in the process of human rights education's transformative potential is the "emerging global ethos of accountability" (Andreopoulos, 2002, p.239). Various human rights indicators are used by UN treaty bodies, Non-Government Organizations (NGO), and members of academia and the public to evaluate and assess the progressive implementation of human rights a UN Member State is legally obligated to fulfil, respect, and protect for all persons within its jurisdiction. In Chapter 3, I develop a human rights indicator to help me determine how adequately Canada is fulfilling its human rights education duties, particularly for children in BC's Kindergarten to Grade 12. I first identify all relevant treaty standards and cross-cutting principles that relate to human rights education, so that I can extract the embedded attributes of this duty. These are then conceptually reflected in one of three categories of indicators: structural, process, or outcome, which form the accountability mechanism used to assess curricula compliance in this study.

Prior to conducting my investigation to determine treaty compliance to human rights education, in Chapter 4 I conduct an in-depth overview of both versions of BC's Kindergarten to Grade 12 Social Studies curriculum. In this descriptive chapter, I limit my review to the combined 1997, 2005, and 2006 former Social Studies curriculum, and the recently revised 2015 version. After delving into the content contained in each curricula version, I examine the manner in which their learning standards are organized, followed by an analysis of their educational aims, and their conception of the learner, learning process, learning environment, teacher's role, and evaluation.

Chapter 5 is devoted to a curriculum inquiry to ascertain whether Canada is taking active measures to fulfil its duty to promote awareness and understanding about the Convention through a systematic integration of human rights education into BC's Kindergarten to Grade 12 Social Studies curriculum. Through the application of the human rights indicator I developed in

Chapter 3, I first assess Canada's commitment to incorporate relevant human rights education into its legal and governmental structure. I then examine the process of assimilating human rights education into the curriculum through its aims, and via its conception of the learner, learning process, learning environment, teacher's role, and evaluation to determine whether the curricula are progressing towards greater compliance. I then look at the recent active means BC's Ministry of Education has taken to comply with the UNCRC's last recommendations to Canada regarding the dissemination of human rights knowledge and awareness in BC schools.

Chapter 6 integrates the information from all previous thesis chapters, and concludes this thesis. In it I determine how BC's Kindergarten to Grade 12 Social Studies curriculum complies with Canada's treaty duty to disseminate information *about, through, and for* human rights. I first provide a summary of my findings from the curriculum inquiry I conducted in Chapter 5. In an ensuing discussion, I focus on predetermined structural, procedural, and outcome human rights indicators to highlight how BC's Kindergarten to Grade 12 Social Studies curricular aims, and its conceptions of the learner, learning process, learning environment, teacher's role, and evaluation comply with the human rights education obligation to educate for global citizenship, peaceful coexistence, and transformative action. I also seek for evidence pertaining to any lack of adherence to this particular duty, and I infer reasons for why this may be the case. Finally, I make several recommendations that I believe BC's Ministry of Education should consider implementing to ensure it becomes more closely aligned with Canada's human rights education treaty duties. I also provide an item for further study, and my concluding remarks.

Chapter 2 - Human Rights Education

2.1. Legal Duty

Human rights are generally understood as “norms that help protect all people everywhere” (Nickel, 2014). They are inherent to humans regardless of “nationality, place of residence, sex, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, language, or any other status” (OHCHR, N.D). Actions of respect, protection, provision, and facilitation are required to secure these rights for everyone (Howe & Covell, 2005; Nickel, 2014; UN, 1948, 1989, 2011), and they are “expressed or guaranteed by law, in the form of treaties, customary international law, general principles and other sources of international law” (OHCHR, N.D). Ratification legally binds a UN Member State to fulfil, protect, and respect these human rights for all persons within their jurisdiction.

Compliance to this legal duty is intricately intertwined with knowledge of it; it is impossible to be compliant without a clear understanding of what is expected. Since its inception after the Second World War, the UN affirmed its “faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person, in the equal rights of men and women and of nations large and small” (UN, 1945). These declarations formed the foundation from which subsequent human rights treaties were created. They defined the standards required to ensure everlasting international peace and security (UN, 1945, Article 1), and charged all persons with the responsibility to build a universal culture of human rights that is inspired by a global commitment to a humane social order, and motivated by a belief that every person has the capacity and responsibility to affect change. The subsequent unanimous adoption of the DHRET by the UN General Assembly in 2011 confirmed a global consensus that an education that instills knowledge about human rights and fundamental freedoms is essential for the “maintenance of peace, security and the promotion of development and human rights” (UN, 2011, Preamble).

Inherent to these international human rights instruments are standards regarding the dissemination of knowledge about them for all persons within the UN Member State's jurisdiction. More specifically to the purpose of this thesis are the duties a UN Member State has upon ratification of the Convention, which is that it must "undertake to make the principles and provisions of the Convention widely known, by appropriate and active means, to adults and children alike" (UN, 1989, Article 42). This involves taking effective and deliberate measures to implement education programs that raise awareness *about* human rights principles and norms, that model values of respect *through* human rights, and that instill positive behaviours *for* human rights protection and realization so that each person can further promote "stable and harmonious relations among communities" (UN, 1993, paragraph 78; UN, 2011, Article 2.2.a).

Even though the federal government of Canada ratified the Convention in 1990, the responsibility for education in Canada falls under provincial legislative powers, including the responsibility to develop and conduct education programs, and, more specifically, to promote an understanding of human rights through BC's Human Rights Code (BC, 2014, Article 5; Canada, 1982, Article 93). Provincial governments have the power to decide whether they will institutionalize international human rights education initiatives to better comply with Canada's international human rights law obligations, or place financial or logistical obstacles that impede the effective dissemination of information *about*, *through*, and *for* human rights. Although all education initiatives are within provincial jurisdiction, but nowhere does Canada or the province of BC stipulate in its domestic law that it must disseminate knowledge regarding the *international* human rights treaties that Canada has ratified.

Given these jurisdictional challenges, one of the key components to instituting human rights education initiatives within BC is to develop an "ethos of accountability" (Andreopoulos, 2002, p.242) between its Ministry of Education, the federal government, and UN treaty bodies. Creating this ethos requires cooperation between each of these governing bodies in dealing with critical policy issues, including human rights education (2002, p.245). Through a back and

forth interaction the Canadian federal government and each province act to progressively implement the international human rights education law obligations that Canada has assumed through ratification, and UN treaty bodies provide feedback on how adequately it is doing so every four-and-a-half years in its periodic review of Canada's treaty compliance. But, progress towards full implementation can only occur if there is a clear understanding of what constitutes human rights education as defined in the Convention and the DHRET, and the presence of a *bona fide* mechanism in Canada's political and social structures to implement these treaty obligations.

2.2. Purpose of Human Rights Education in Schools

The first role of school education in general has been historically connected with human development. Since the emergence of the industrial era, public schooling's promise was that it would "forge social cohesion and foster nation-building, as well as train members of a modern labor force that would spur national economic development" (Cardenas, 2005, p.365). While Dewey pointed out that this should serve as schooling's guiding principle (Schechter, 2011), this understanding of schooling is limited to the individual child's growth. During the twentieth century, core concepts of cognitive and psychoanalytical theories of development were consolidated with Dewey's and Piaget's views of development as the aim of schooling. These concepts formed the principles of progressive education, which had at its core the values of individuality and autonomy, and are aimed at replacing former authoritarian structures of schooling. In the latter part of the twentieth century, "developmentally appropriate practice" (2011, p.252), formulated by the National Association for the Education of Young Children, built on this notion. However, critics argue that the emphasis on individual autonomy as the aim of schooling separates children from their social world. As a result, the emphasis on the development of individual capacities has been at the expense of schooling's "mission for social

change” (2011, p.253). The emphasis on Dewey’s views regarding development as the purpose of schooling did, however, acknowledge that “the trajectory of individual growth is defined in terms of participation in the forward movement of social change” (Schechter, 2011, p.256), where schools serve as the venue through which societal values and ideals may be conveyed, practiced, and then transformed. In this way, schooling becomes a tool to augment each person’s ability to participate in social processes of change over time.

This second aspect of schooling is of central importance in a society in which individual rights of equality and liberty are constitutionally coded in its international law obligations and constitution, and where “education’s relation to culture is now seen to be not just about reproduction or selection of ‘the best that *has* been thought and said’, but about preparing for a world that will be different from the past” (Yates, 2009, p.22): one that is free of harmful conflict. As such, schooling must not only develop “the child’s personality, talents and mental and physical abilities to their fullest potential” (UN, 1989, Article 29.1.a), but, since the end of World War II, the international community deemed education, which includes schooling, as the tool by which to prepare children to live a “responsible life in a free society” (UN, 1948; UN, 1966; UN, 1989, Article 29.1.d). Rather than schooling being only utilized by “governments as a prominent part of their economic and social policy” (Yates, 2009, p.17), it must, concurrently equip citizens with the necessary civic capacities to deliberate respectfully with each other within an ever expanding public arena. From this perspective, the function of schooling in society is not only viewed as a means to increase gross national product, personal wealth, or technological advancement. It should also develop personal freedoms that furnish its citizens with the competencies required to participate in local and global public discussion and scrutiny, to critically challenge human rights abuses and demand justice and accountability (Cardenas, 2005, p.364; Sen, 1999, p.3). This has formed the fundamental purpose of human rights education.

Central to human rights education is an underlying worldview that recognizes “the inherent dignity and ...the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family [as] the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world” (UN, 1945). Only a formal school education that promotes “respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms” (UN, 1989, Article 29.1.b), and that is aligned with the international human rights normative framework is considered adequate to comply with international human rights education standards. It must encompass an education *about* “human rights norms and principles, the values that underpin them and the mechanisms for their protection (UN, 2011, Article 2.2.a); it must be an “education *through* human rights, which includes learning and teaching in a way that respects the rights of both educators and learners” (2011, Article 2.2.b); and it must be an education *for* human rights, “which includes empowering persons to enjoy and exercise their rights and to respect and uphold the rights of others” (2011, Article 2.2.c). Through experiential learning, where education is understood as the “practice of liberty” (Andreopoulos, 2002, p.243), the access to knowledge about human rights must raise awareness, appreciation, and sensitivity of one’s moral actions and their consequences for others. The result is that “access to knowledge transforms individuals from passive recipients to potential agenda setters” (2002, p.243).

2.3. Core Human Rights Principles

The international human rights normative framework that has evolved since the adoption of the UDHR in 1948 embodies core principles that must be respected, protected, and fulfilled by a UN State Member for the individuals within its jurisdiction. For example, the International Bill of Human Rights, which includes the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948), the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (1966), and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (1966) with its two Optional Protocols, represent a “common standard of achievement for all peoples and nations” (UN, 2012, p.14), while other

conventions, such as the Convention and its Optional Protocols, were adopted by the UN to promote and protect the rights of specific populations or issues. All share core, cross-cutting principles that are universal, inalienable, interdependent, interrelated, and indivisible, which include *non-discrimination* and *equality, participation, access to remedy, access to information, accountability, the rule of law* and *good governance*. These universal protections fall under international customary law, and they are designed to ensure “recognition of the inherent dignity and of the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family” (UN, 1948; UN, 1989). But, the child, “by reason of his physical and mental immaturity, needs special safeguards and care, including appropriate legal protection, before as well as after birth” (UN, 1959). For this reason, the Convention includes additional principles specifically designed to protect children. Like the International Bill of Human Rights, *non-discrimination* and *equality* constitute a core cross-cutting principle of the Convention. But a UN Member State is also obliged to devote itself to the *best interests of the child*; to respect the *views of the child*; and to ensure the child’s right to *life, survival, and development*; these three core cross-cutting principles are unique to the Convention. Its first six articles elaborate on the legal parameters of all four principles.

The Convention prohibits discrimination against any child within a UN Member State’s jurisdiction on the basis of “the child’s or his or her parent’s or legal guardian’s race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national, ethnic or social origin, property, disability, birth or other status” (UN, 1989, Article 2.1). This core principle underpins each of the Convention’s fifty-four articles, and it must be respected for every child, where “a child means every human being below the age of eighteen years” (1989, Article 1) of age. Furthermore, appropriate measures must be taken by the UN State Party to protect its children from “all forms of discrimination or punishment on the basis of the status, activities, expressed opinions, or beliefs of the child’s parents, legal guardians, or family members” (1989, Article 2.2).

The duty for “public or private social welfare institutions, courts of law, administrative authorities or legislative bodies” (UN, 1989, Article 4) to always take the best interest of the child into consideration constitutes another core principle of the Convention. This includes the specific measures a UN Member State must undertake to ensure each child’s economic, social and cultural rights to the “maximum extent of their available resources and, where needed, within the framework of international co-operation” (1989). Because matters concerning education typically fall under the administration of a UN Member State’s federal or provincial government ministries, this core principle also applies to them; it is incumbent upon them, therefore, to always take into account the best interests of each child under their guard.

The fact that the Convention exists as a legally formulated human rights instrument specifically for children signifies an endorsement of each child’s status as a rights-bearing citizen by the international community. This grants a legal entitlement to the child to exercise all the rights contained within the Convention. It also charges members of the child’s family or community, legal guardians, or anyone legally responsible for the child with the responsibility to provide appropriate direction in how the child exercises these rights “in a manner consistent with the evolving capacities of the child” (UN, 1989, Article 5). This cross-cutting human rights principle is particularly pertinent when it comes to the UN Member State’s obligation to respect, protect and fulfil the Convention’s participation rights for all children, because of their entitlement, under international customary human rights law, to express their views freely in all matters affecting them, where “the views of the child [are] being given due weight in accordance with the age and maturity of the child” (1989, Article 12.1).

The duty to ensure the child’s right to life, survival, and development constitutes a fundamental human rights principle that impacts each of the Convention’s provision, protection, and participation rights. While the Convention states explicitly that the UN Member State must “recognize that every child has the inherent right to life” (UN, 1989, Article 6.1), it also expands this principle to include an obligation to “ensure to the maximum extent possible the survival and

development of the child” (1989, Article 6.2). Standards on how to progressively implement this principle for every child within a UN Member State’s jurisdiction are expanded upon throughout the Convention. Of particular relevance to this thesis are the guidelines regarding the development of the child, which are outlined in Articles 28 and 29 of the Convention, and broadened even further in the DHRET.

The Convention’s all encompassing principles of non-discrimination and equality, devotion to the best interests of the child, respect for the views of the child, and the assurance of the child’s right to life, survival, and development also permeates the obligation of UN Member States to guarantee that they will make the principles and provisions contained within the Convention available to all children (UN, 1989, Article 42). What “appropriate and active means” (1989, Article 42) they apply to progressively implement this duty depends largely on how clearly they understand the educational aim of human rights education, and how the learner, learning process, learning environment, teacher’s role, and evaluation are conceived of throughout a curriculum that is intended to educate *about*, *through*, and *for* human rights.

2.4. Model for Human Rights Education

The adoption of the DHRET in 2011 represents a “global consensus” (Morris & Davidson, 2012, p.5) that “everyone has the right to know, seek and receive information about all human rights and fundamental freedoms” (UN, 2011, Article 1.1); the principle of non-discrimination and equality means that a UN Member State must guarantee that everyone within its jurisdiction be provided with an education about human rights without distinction of any kind. The DHRET states that the purpose of human rights education in the immediate term is for “the prevention of human rights violations and abuses” (2011, Article 2.1), where the final objective is to empower individuals to build and promote a universal culture of human rights (2011, Article 2.1). However, this normative framework does not provide a UN Member State with the specific

guidelines on how to achieve this goal. Rather, the body of research in the field of human rights education offers various models that can be studied and then applied instead.

Human rights education acts to link the educational duty to develop each child's personality and talents with the State's responsibility to prepare the child to live a responsible life in a free society. Even though it "defies definitions because its creative potential is far greater than we can imagine" (Flowers, 2003, p.17), there exists a broad consensus within the academic community regarding its core components (Bajaj, 2011, p.482). Accordingly, human rights education must include both "*content and process related to human rights*" (2011, p.482), taught in a participatory learning environment. Its goals must be reached through the application of educational experiences that incorporate knowledge acquisition, attitudinal or values based learning, and opportunities to take action. For this reason, human rights education is better explained through an examination of the manner in which it educates *about, through, and for* human rights within a rights-respecting normative framework that is referenced to the Convention and the DHRET, and contextualized within human rights principles of *non-discrimination and equality, participation, access to remedy, access to information, accountability, the rule of law, and good governance*, and the Convention's unique principles of devotion to the *best interests of the child; the child's right to life, survival and development; and respect for the views of the child*.

The implementation of human rights education that fulfils a UN Member State's obligation to actively "make the principles and provisions of the Convention widely known" (UN, 1989, Article 42) for all children within its jurisdiction includes the application of various models within the international human rights education community. Some approaches to human rights education gear themselves more towards educating adult professionals working with victims of human rights violations. For example, many Non-Government Organizations (NGO), such as Save the Children, work to alleviate the deprivation of children in war-torn areas, and the adults working in the field must acquire proficient knowledge about international human rights

instruments. Other approaches to a rights based education may be applied to help educators guide children in social situations such as discrimination and bullying within a school environment. An example of this would be the conflict resolution four step application of WITS: Walk away, Ignore, Talk it out, and Seek help that is used in BC's schools.

Bajaj (2011) has identified a model that incorporates three broad categories, which include a human rights education for global citizenship, peaceful coexistence, and transformative action (Bajaj, 2011, p.489). Sorting human rights education this way helps scholars better understand its "vision, methodology, and approach" (2011, p.490). In this thesis, I have adopted Bajaj's practical educational framework, because I think it is most closely aligned with the normative standards to educate *about, through, and for* human rights that is outlined in the Convention and elaborated upon in the DHRET. While each of Bajaj's three framework components are distinguished one from the others, they are not mutually exclusive. Rather, I maintain that they augment each other and form a complete model of human rights education that has the capacity to respond to any perceived needs pertaining to a "particular education system, program, or school" (Bajaj, 2011, p.489) that seeks to narrow the gap between the UN Member State's dissemination duties and its current human rights education practice, or lack thereof. What follows is a theoretical inquiry into Bajaj's three models of human rights education to generate essential knowledge about their content, level of affiliation, underlying ideology, and desired outcome.

2.4.1. Human Rights Education for *Global Citizenship*

The processes of increased global interconnectedness within an ever expanding international arena has given rise to an education *about* human rights for global citizenship, which repositions learners "as members of a global community instead of simply as national citizens" (Bajaj, 2011, p.490). Its goals are to equip children with the necessary competencies to participate in the global discourse on critical issues of concern such as the environment, the

economy, and social justice. This includes also being able hold UN Member States accountable for their domestic and international policies as they “spur further independent investigation into concepts, movements, and local struggles” (2011, p.492). The underlying ideology of an education for global citizenship is grounded within a vision of global interconnectedness. It maintains a relationship-centred approach that is rooted within the universal principles of equality, freedom, and human dignity, and builds the necessary competencies required to nurture and protect them within an ever-expanding, de-territorialized web of relationships (Bajaj, 2011; Sawatsky, 2008).

Human rights education for global citizenship must encompass a three step learning process: concrete, knowledge-based learning, whereby children learn to identify the international human rights to which they are entitled to as outlined in the Convention and other international human rights instruments and treaties; an analytical stage of learning, in which children examine the underlying values of these rights; and an application step, in which they are empowered to uphold and protect the rights of all persons. This progressive learning process corresponds well with the DHRET’s standards regarding an education *about* human rights, which stipulates that human rights education must include “providing knowledge and understanding of human rights norms and principles, the values that underpin them and the mechanisms for their protection” (UN, 2011, Article 2.2.a).

Knowledge of Human Rights

Imparting information *about* international human rights norms and principles is the first concrete stage of learning for global citizenship. Rooted within the international human rights normative framework, its content must be “explicitly grounded in human rights principles...[and take] its authority and relevance from these universal values” (Flowers, 2003, p.14). In this concrete stage of learning, children must be able to identify the rights accorded to them as they are articulated in the Convention and its three Optional Protocols; they should know that the

international community has deemed specific standards necessary for their survival, well being, development, and protection. They must be aware that their country is obligated, under international human rights customary law, to ensure each child is provided for, and protected by the adults in their country. All children must be able to appreciate that the Convention's participation rights accord them with a right to civic participation within a well defined, rights-respecting set of parameters.

While the starting point of a human rights education for global citizenship is making children aware of their provision, protection, and participation rights as they are articulated within the Convention, children must become increasingly more familiar with the international human rights normative framework, the essence of their cross-cutting principles and norms, special procedures of the Human Rights Council, and the history of the international human rights framework. This would include the International Bill of Rights⁵ and other conventions and protections that are entitled to other peoples, such as the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (2007). Particularly, they must develop increased "awareness, understanding and acceptance of universal human rights standards and principles, as well as guarantees at the international, regional and national levels for the protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms" (UN, 2011, Article 4.a).

Values that Underpin Human Rights

An education *about* human rights must include acquiring an appreciation for values that underpin international human rights (UN, 2001, Article 2.2.a). In this analytical stage of learning, children must be able to internalize how and why the cross-cutting principles and norms that underpin the international human rights framework are integral to "developing a universal culture

⁵ The International Bill of Rights includes the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948), the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (1966), and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (1966).

of human rights” (UN, 2011, Article 4.b).⁶ Included in this are the overarching principles of *non-discrimination and equality, participation, access to remedy, access to information, accountability, the rule of law and good governance* that underpin all human rights instruments, and the principles of devotion to the *best interests of the child; the right to life, survival and development; and respect for the views of the child*, which were specially formulated for the Convention.

The interconnected global landscape consists of people from different ethnicities, nationalities, religions, social statuses, and cultures. In an inclusive social construct, the diversity of individuals and peoples is acknowledged and utilized in a positive way; it is based on equitable participation and respect for difference. To preserve a diverse social mosaic, children must learn to respect, understand, and accept the uniqueness of individuals and groups of peoples. However, some situations may intentionally, or unintentionally, exclude, limit and discriminate against individuals and peoples. To overcome these types of social injustices, children must become aware of the various systemic and attitudinal prejudices, biases, and assumptions that may underpin them. They must also become sensitized to the multiple types of discriminatory practices that transcend regional, national, and international boundaries, and analyze the ways they violate the international human rights principles or norms they have learnt are everyone’s entitlement. Vibrant global citizenship relies on its citizens developing this “critical consciousness” (Bajaj, 2011, p.490), which is rooted within international human rights values of “respect for all human rights and fundamental freedoms for all without distinction” (UN, 1945). Doing so empowers its membership with the necessary competencies and skills to engage as informed global citizens in public and private scrutiny as they take action to help realize these human rights principles for all people.

⁶ In a detailed analysis of the relationship between human rights education and the cross-cutting principles underpinning human rights can be found in Chapter 3 - Table 3-*Norms and Cross-Cutting Principles of Human Rights Education*.

Mechanisms for Human Rights Protection

The final requirement for an education *about* human rights for global citizenship is that it must teach children the “mechanisms for their protection” (UN, 2011, Article 2.2.a). *Access to remedy* is a central guiding principle in this stage of human rights education. It involves a comprehensive understanding of regional, national, and international government structures, judicial and legal systems, and the UN human rights procedural system in order for the child to learn how human rights standards have been codified in international and national legal systems, and how violations of these standards may be remedied.

In an effort to strengthen the implementation of human rights treaties, a UN Member State will undergo a *universal periodic review* (UPR) every four-and-a-half years that is conducted by the Office for the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR). In addition, each UN treaty body also reviews the implementation of human rights standards specific to the treaty it represents. All reviews constitute a “cooperative mechanism based on an interactive dialogue between the State reviewed and the Human Rights Council” (UN, 2012, p.15) in an effort to improve the actions a UN Member State takes to respect, protect and fulfil its treaty obligations. For example, whole UN Member State periodic reviews are conducted by the UN Commission on Human Rights. The Committee on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) is a treaty body that enforces the Convention. Children must become familiar with the UN human rights system, and they must also understand the purpose of these periodic reviews; doing so means increased knowledge about their responsibility, as members of a global community, in helping realize a universal culture of human rights.

This fundamental aspect of human rights education, whereby children must not only be empowered with knowledge of their rights and their underlying values, they must also become fully aware of how, and to whom, to submit complaints, appeals, and petitions regarding human rights violations that involve them directly fulfils the principles of *accountability* and *access to information*. Children must learn that, as rights-bearing global citizens, they are partners in a

commitment to strengthen a global culture of human rights for all nations and peoples (UN, 2011, Preamble). An education for global citizenship involves teaching children about the international human rights legal structure that is currently in place for them to use as they pursue social justice and peace. With regards to children's rights, they must be taught that, under the Convention's Third Optional Protocol, the UNCRC is "able to hear complaints from children, groups of children or their representatives against any State that has ratified the Protocol" (UNICEF, N.D.). They must also learn that the UNCRC has the power to "launch investigations into grave or systematic violations of children's rights and States are able to bring complaints against each other" (N.D). And, if their country has not ratified the Convention's Third Optional Protocol, then children must know that they are entitled to petition their government to do so.

A human rights education for global citizenship fulfils a UN Member State's responsibility to disseminate knowledge *about* human rights. This first obligation involves providing children with comprehensive knowledge about their international human rights, especially those contained within the Convention. Children must also learn to appreciate the values that underpin these rights by analyzing their core cross-cutting principles of *non-discrimination* and *equality*, *participation*, *access to remedy*, *access to information*, *accountability*, the *rule of law* and *good governance*. Finally, in the last stage of an education *about* human rights, children must be made aware of the regional, national, and international public and legal structures currently available for them to access as they act, as global citizens, to promote a universal culture of respect for human rights, equality, and freedom. Human rights education for global citizenship "presents international standards as the ideal" (Bajaj, 2011, p.490), whereby learners participate as active, vibrant citizens in an interconnected global community.

2.4.2. Human Rights Education for *Peaceful Coexistence*

War is a violent method used to determine who gets to be in control. Its outcome leads to loss of life or serious degradations to basic human survival and developmental rights. However, to cease this form of violence does not constitute peace (Fiala, 2010; Galtung, 1969; Montessori, 1949), because the absence of personal violence associated with this type of “*negative peace*” (Galtung, 1969) does not lead to a positively defined condition of wholeness, in which there is “solidarity, mutual respect, and satisfaction of needs” (Fiala, 2010). In this case, positive peace occurs when the needs of all humans are respected and satisfied. The pursuit of this condition occurs when people actively seek to narrow the gap between what is with a potential of optimal fulfilment for all persons (Galtung, 1969). The process that facilitates the decrease in this distance exists when there is an “egalitarian distribution of power and resources” (1969), and where conflict is embraced as an opportunity to collaborate creatively to overcome the social injustice that is implicit in hegemonic structures (Gur-Ze’ev, 2001; Redekop, 2002). Furthermore, in a condition of “*positive peace*” (Fiala, 2010; Galtung, 1969), the basic human needs for meaning, security, social belonging, recognition, and agency (Redekop, 2002) are satisfied for all persons within society. Achieving this social condition of positive peace is the purpose of an education *through* human rights for peaceful coexistence, which, according to Bajaj (2011), is an approach best suited to reduce “prejudice and stereotypes” (p.493) between individuals and groups of people.

While an education *about* human rights is designed to provide the necessary tools for people to participate effectively within the global arena, it does not fulfil the duty to educate *through* human rights. This next level of human rights education “includes learning and teaching in a way that respects the rights of both educators and learners” (UN, 2011, Article 2.2.b), so that each can develop “respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, and the principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations” (UN, 1989, Article 29.b). Human rights education for peaceful coexistence, according to Bajaj (2011), is intended to prepare the child to

respectfully overcome situations where interpersonal and inter-group conflict emerges in a “spirit of understanding, peace, tolerance, equality of sexes, and friendship among all peoples, ethnic, national and religious groups and persons of indigenous origin” (UN, 1989, Article 29.d). It is intended to stimulate the “moral imagination that enables one human being to recognize and respect another as essentially like oneself” (Flowers, 2003, p.16) as children act to “develop friendly relations” (UN, 1945, Article 1.2).

Underlying an education for peaceful coexistence is an ideology that is rooted within principles of diversity and pluralism⁷, and “based on respect for the principles of equal rights and self-determination of peoples” (1945, Article 1.2). This is to ensure individuals recognize that equality, inalienable rights, and inherent human dignity are the foundation of global freedom, justice and peace (1948, Preamble). This process involves instilling in the learner a deep regard for human dignity, especially when this concept is expanded beyond the intuitive and elusive sense of self-respect and esteem for others, to include the rights of all persons to self-determination (Dupre, 2013; Ober, 2012). This appreciation of human dignity is the foundation from which true healing and reconciliation between individuals and groups can be achieved for greater social cohesion (Bajaj, 2011, p.491).

Whereas human rights education for global citizenship may be more readily incorporated within the regular school curriculum, because it is primarily concerned with the dissemination of knowledge *about* human rights, the venue for human rights education for peaceful coexistence “concerns all parts of society, at all levels and all forms of education, training and learning, whether in a public or private, formal, informal or non-formal setting” (UN, 2011, Article 3.2). Accordingly, the assimilation of a positive values system to support behaviours for peace building depends on the child being completely immersed within a rights-respecting

⁷ Boyd (1996) identifies a moral tension between attempting to uphold both diversity and commonality, especially in lieu of increased cultural diversity that now characterizes many societies. Accordingly, the health of multicultural societies depends on “democratic reciprocity” (1996), which involves accepting that there exists reasonable moral pluralism, *and* that, at the same time, there are generalizable, morally binding parameters on how individuals and peoples should interact with each other.

environment. Children must learn to recognize that the social justice associated with positive peace is not the same as the more formal operations of law and legal proceedings in which justice is served (Clayton & Opatow, 2003; Sawatsky, 2008). They must learn to identify that, within the narrowly punitive⁸ approach of the latter, individuals are disempowered, because the process of imposing this type of justice subsequently violates multiple human needs (Redekop, 2002). For instance, the need to freely associate with others is greatly impeded when individuals are incarcerated, especially in cases of solitary confinement, or, in extreme cases, the death penalty violates the right to life. Children must also understand that the deprivation of human needs can ignite emotional reactions such as anger, fear, depression, grief, and shame, and have implications for one's well-being and identity (Clayton & Opatow, 2003, Redekop, 2002).

However, when an education *through* human rights provides opportunities for learners to engage in the co-creation of justice for the purposes of reconciliation and peace, participants not only collaborate to address the harms caused to others, they also overcome conflicts by actively listening to each other so that they can better meet each other's needs (Sawatsky, 2008). Howe and Covell (2005, 2013) found that when children attended schools in which educators taught *through* human rights, children became more cooperative, inclusive, sensitive, and respectful of others, and they used "rights discourse" to solve incidents of teasing, bullying, and conflict (Covell, 2013). As children came to respect their rights and understand that they share these rights with all children, they created a fair, safe, and respectful school environment consistent with the rights of children articulated in the Convention (2013). This research demonstrates that an education for peaceful coexistence has the capacity to narrow the gap between the actual and the potential by empowering people to actively dismantle the systems of oppression that are at the root of conflict in the pursuit of social justice for positive peace.

⁸ Not all law is punitive. For example, mediation or awarding settlement for damages are usually restorative processes with potential for positive outcomes. However, my use of the word 'punitive' here is to emphasize that, for the most part, the judicial system does not seek to narrow the distance between what is, and what could be, as is the case in actions taken for positive peace.

Human rights education for peaceful coexistence draws from the language of international human rights to promote ways to adequately address the root causes of conflicts between individuals, groups, and multi-ethnic nation states so that all people can enjoy a life of equality, free from discrimination (Bajaj, 2011, p.491; Flowers, 2003, p.17). A problem may, however, occur when we are expected to “learn and teach about all human rights in surroundings where some of them are violated, as, for instance, in smaller, patriarchally organized communities where women’s rights are denied” (Lohrenscheit, 2002, p.183). These instances pose a challenge to implementing an education *through* human rights for peaceful coexistence, because the society surrounding the child is not one that models a culture of respect for human rights.

A “safe and enabling environment” (UN, 2011, Article 7.2), on the other hand, is an inclusive one that models the human rights principle of non-discrimination and equality so that children can become more sensitive to the harmful effects of “racism, stereotyping and incitement to hatred, ...and the prejudices that underlie them” (2011, Article 4.e). Howe and Covell (2005) found that when children are immersed within this kind of rights-respecting society they become increasingly more empathetic and understanding of the rights of everyone, regardless of who they are. This is particularly the case when “the methods used to teach human rights [are] consistent with human rights values, [and when they respect] individual and cultural differences while affirming universal principles” (Flowers, 2003, p.14). Learners must be supported to “draw inspiration from the diversity of civilizations, religions, cultures and traditions of different countries” (UN, 2011, Article 5.3) to discern situations that overtly, or inadvertently, cause harm to others.

A human rights education for peaceful coexistence satisfies a UN Member State’s responsibility to educate *through* human rights. This second obligation involves immersing children within a rights-respecting environment to increase their awareness about human rights, and to ultimately inspire them to take action for social cohesion (Bajaj, 2011; Covell, 2013).

Children can only become socially conscious if they are treated as dignified, rights bearing citizens. In other words, if the purpose of education is to authorize the child to act responsibly to promote freedom and equality as they seek to guarantee peace and security in the world, then the overarching institutional design of education must incorporate an education *through* human rights, in which the international human rights principles and norms are protected for every person, so that everyone can enjoy participating as dignified persons placed at the centre of control.

2.4.3. Human Rights Education for *Transformative Action*

A final component of human rights education is that it must educate children *for* human rights. It does not suffice to instill knowledge *about* human rights *through* an education that models their underlying values and principles. For human rights education to fully satisfy its international human rights law obligations, it must be for “transformative action” (Bajaj, 2011, pp.491-494), which “includes empowering persons to enjoy and exercise their rights and to respect and uphold the rights of others” (UN, 2011, Article 2.2.c) so that they can actively pursue “freedom, justice and peace in the world (UN, 1948, UN, 1989).

Underlying an education for transformative action must be a consensus that social injustice constitutes the subversion of the rights of subordinate individuals or groups by dominant ones, and that actions can be taken to restore justice, which includes various “waged persistent struggles” (Baxi, as cited in Andreopoulos, 1997, p.142) to uproot deeply entrenched cultures of power. This radical political approach depends completely on individuals being able to exercise their political and civil rights freely for authentic reform. In the case of children, a UN Member State must not only respect, protect, and fulfil each child’s “right to freedom of expression, [which includes the] ...freedom to seek, receive and impart information and ideas of all kinds” (UN, 1989, Article 13.1), it must also “assure to the child who is capable of forming his

or her own views the right to express those views freely in all matters affecting the child” (1989, Article 12.1). Otherwise, learners may become discouraged when they come to realize that the actions they are taking to narrow the gap between existing human rights violations and international treaty guarantees are not having any impact (Lohrenscheit, 2002, p.183).

A central element of human rights education for transformative action is that it must cultivate each child’s ability to perceive a world devoid of social injustice as a condition worth pursuing. However, to do so depends on whether the child “possesses the *means or instruments or permissions* to pursue what she would like to do” (Sen, 2005), and it also depends on how adequately the child’s capabilities have been developed to act *for* human rights from the education she has received *about*, and *through* human rights.

Westheimer and Kahne (2004) expand the notion of what constitutes socially responsible participatory behaviours, and identified three types of citizens who all embody this virtue. The “personally responsible” (2004) and “participatory citizen” (2004) has good character, attitudes and behaviours that contribute to an ability to solve social problems and actively participate to improve society by taking leadership positions within established systems and community structures. However, a society that adheres to ideals of freedom, equality, and dignity requires that its “justice- oriented citizens” (2004) assume the duty to inquire, scrutinize, and amend pre-existing systems and structures that replicate patterns of injustice over time (Hyslop-Margison & Pinto, 2007; Westheimer & Kahne, 2004). If we require that children act responsibly to question the root causes of social injustice as they act to dismantle systems of oppression, then, along with educating *about* and *through* human rights, children also need to be provided with authentic opportunities to combat and eradicate “all forms of discrimination, racism, stereotyping, and incitement to hatred, and the harmful attitudes and prejudices that underlie them” (UN, 2011, article 4.e).

Since an education *for* human rights is rooted in “concepts of agency and solidarity” (Bajaj, 2011, p.493), it serves to satisfy the human “identity need to take meaningful, significant

action” (Redekop, 2002, p.41) to intervene and help remedy situations of social injustice, whether inflicted on self or others. Through a human rights education for transformative action, learners must be supported and encouraged to critique larger oppressive social realities that cause harm, and be offered opportunities to scrutinize public institutions, so that they can hold them accountable for actions they may be taking which result in human rights violations. Through active engagement, marginalized and privileged learners should be encouraged to collaborate to take transformative social action, and help establish a local and global social order that is founded on the international human rights principles of *accountability* and *good governance*. But, learners may experience challenges in taking this kind of transformative action as agents of change, if they are confronted with multiple encounters of human rights violations. A human rights education for transformative action must provide children with the necessary tools to help them find meaningful ways to realize a universal culture of human rights (Lohrenscheit, 2002, p.183). The successful implementation of a comprehensive human rights education that includes this action-oriented component must be attentive to these, and other challenges, if it is to be used as a tool for social reform that advances social justice, equality, and freedom.

One of the active measures a UN Member State can take to fulfil its international human rights dissemination duties is to ensure its citizens receive a human rights education for global citizenship, peaceful coexistence, and transformative action. For it to comply with the human rights education standards set forth within the treaties a UN Member State has ratified, it must be referenced to, and contextualized within, international human rights instruments and their cross-cutting principles of *non-discrimination* and *equality, participation, access to remedy, access to information, accountability*, the *rule of law*, and *good governance* must underpin all of human rights education’s curricular elements.

First, the primary educational aim of human rights education must be to educate *about*, *through*, and *for* human rights so that everyone can develop the capabilities to participate

effectively as empowered, rights-respecting individuals in a global effort to establish a “foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world” (UN, 1945; UN, 1948; UN, 1989). All learners must be conceived of as rights-bearing citizens, whose inherent human dignity and worth must always be respected. Because everyone is entitled to “know, seek and receive information about all human rights and fundamental freedoms” (UN, 2011, Article 1.1), human rights education must be accessible and available to everyone without distinction of any kind. Since its pedagogy must also be in keeping and respectful of the “evolving capacities of the child” (UN, 1989, Article 5), learning experiences must progress from a concrete experiential stage knowledge acquisition, through an analytical stage, and culminate with an application stage. The educator must take into account the learner’s “specific needs and conditions” (UN, 2011, Article 3.3), and provide an age-appropriate education *about* human rights, that models the core human rights principles *through* the creation of a supportive, rights-respecting learning environment that motivates *for* human rights. Human rights education must be understood as a “lifelong process that concerns all ages” (2011, Article 3.1). Therefore, evaluation of the knowledge acquired *about* human rights, the values obtained *from* a being immersed within a rights-respecting learning environment, and the behaviours acquired to cultivate a universal culture of human rights must not only be in keeping with “the best interests of the child” (UN, 1989, Article 3.1), it must also be consistent with international human rights principles. Learning must, ultimately, be evaluated to determine how adequately the individual can partake in the global peace-building effort.

A critical catalyst in the process of human rights education’s transformative potential is the “emerging global ethos of accountability” (Andreopoulos, 2002, p.239). While the above overview outlines the theoretical parameters and standards that a UN Member State is required to fulfill regarding its dissemination and awareness-raising duties, the next stage is to develop an assessment tool to indicate how adequately its practice of human rights education complies with international human rights standards.

Chapter 3 - Human Rights Indicator

3.1. Overview

The UN mandate to ensure that UN Member States respect, protect, and fulfill their international treaty duties “depends, in large measure, on the availability of appropriate tools for policy formulation and evaluation” (UN, 2012, Forward) driven by an “intolerance for immunity and impunity, and of support for transparency and accountability” (Andreopoulos, 2002, p.242). This involves the development of qualitative and quantitative assessment frameworks, or indicators, to evaluate and assess degrees of UN Member State compliance, and identify critical areas of concern regarding human rights violations. These frameworks are intended to bridge between the international human rights normative standards and the practices a UN Member State takes to implement these statutes domestically for all people within its jurisdiction. But, due to their inherent prescriptive, values-laden, and legal nature, human rights principles and standards are not always easily transformed into tangible and operational applications that can be readily assessed and evaluated. To achieve this accountable objective, individuals and groups involved in the process of evaluation and assessment of UN Member State treaty compliance must first identify appropriate human rights indicators, which bridge the gap between theory and practice (UN, 2012, p.2). They function to transform the prescriptive, values based human rights legalistic language into a message that is “more tangible and operational” (2012, p.2).

An indicator is defined as “that which serves to indicate or give a suggestion of something” (Oxford English Dictionary, N.D). There are many different kinds of indicators to measure or assess a variety of phenomenon. Those used within the context of international treaties are intended to “*assess and monitor the promotion and implementation of human rights*” (UN, 2012, p.16). Essentially, a human rights indicator is a “piece of information used in

measuring the extent to which a legal right is being fulfilled or enjoyed in a given situation” (Green, 2001, p. 1065). It replaces a typical human needs-based indicator, which “only examines the state of a situation and not the right to that situation” (de Beco, 2008, p.28). A human rights indicator is designed to provide “specific information on the state or condition of an object, event, activity or outcome that can be related to human rights norms and standards” (UN, 2012, p.16) that is contextually referenced to the universal human rights normative framework. It is also used to help a UN Member State during the interpretive phase following the adoption of a treaty into its legal system, and to assess the adequacy of its progress towards ensuring the enjoyment of human rights by all of its citizens. Because human rights indicators are the concrete, practical tools a UN Member State can use to comply with its international treaty obligations, they are integral to the “broader process of systematic work to implement, monitor and realize rights” (UN, 2012, p.2).

Human rights indicators serve as “powerful tools for creating a culture of accountability and transparency in the pursuit of socially valued progress” (UN, 2012, p.1). Quantifying and qualifying treaty compliance is particularly necessary when a UN Member State undergoes a *Universal Periodic Review (UPR)* every four-and-a-half years by the UN Human Rights Council, or by other UN treaty bodies, such as the Committee on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). They play a major role in ensuring transparency and accountability throughout the cooperative dialogue that occurs between UN Member State, the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), stakeholders, UN agencies and programmes, and civil society organizations during the application of this important human rights protection mechanism. Their role in part of this international human rights monitoring system represents one of the active measures a UN Member State can take to implement its treaty obligations.

3.2. Building Country Ownership

The UN monitoring mechanism, which includes its treaty bodies, special procedures mandate holders and the Universal Periodic Review, make use of both indicators and statistics to assess and evaluate UN Member State compliance. They can assume a quantitative, fact-based or objective form that measures observable facts, objects or events, such as those used to measure how many children have access to free education, or the statistics on illiteracy rates. However, in this study I apply both objective and subjective *qualitative* approaches (UN, 2012, p.18) instead to assess curricular information that is expressed beyond the quantitative form to determine current compliance regarding the dissemination of knowledge *about, through, and for* human rights in Canada as seen through its BC provincial SS curriculum. Its narrative form is either derived directly from the observable and verifiable prescriptive language of the curriculum, or scholarly perceptions, opinions, and judgments that relate to its curricular elements.

Monitoring methodologies to assess and evaluate the implementation of human rights are based either on *performance* indicators or *compliance* indicators (UN, 2012, pp.19-20). While the objective of the former type of indicator is to allow for the “verification of changes produced by development intervention relative to what was planned” (2012, p.19), compliance indicators are contextualized within the human rights normative framework; they are intended to “capture the extent to which the obligations flowing from those standards are being met and are yielding outcomes that can be associated with improved enjoyment of human rights” (2012, p.20). Because this study’s purpose is to determine human rights education compliance, the indicators selected to assess this must be derived directly from the human rights standards relating to the dissemination of knowledge *about, through, and for* human rights.

The “journey from standard-setting to effective implementation depends, in large measure, on the availability of appropriate tools” (UN, 2012, p.III) to evaluate the implementation of a UN Member State’s dissemination obligations. However, Navi Pillay, the

UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, points out (UN, 2012) that, even though the international community recognizes the importance of indicators to measure and assess treaty compliance in general, their use has not, as of yet, become systematic (2012). She urges the international community to continue to strengthen the accountability measures it takes through analytical, methodological, and legal framework reviews to ensure humans are always placed at the centre of policy development. As such, a UN issued publication: *Human Rights Indicators* (2012) - which is intended to satisfy a “growing demand from various stakeholders, including national and international human rights activists and policy makers” (p.1) - offers practical information on how to develop indicators that measure and assess human rights compliance. However, although the guide’s articulated *Illustrating the Framework* (2012, pp.88-101) offers examples of indicators for some rights, the rights to an education *about, through, and for* human rights is not one of them. Due to the fact that there seems to be no specific indicator developed to evaluate UN Member State’s dissemination compliance, the rest of this chapter is dedicated to this task, and the method for constructing this indicator is drawn directly from this UN document.

3.2.1. Human Rights Education Normative Framework

The first step in the process of constructing indicators for the purposes of assessing evidence of human rights education in curricular content is to identify all relevant treaty standards relating to this duty to which the UN Member State, through ratification, must comply. Two international human rights treaties and instruments, in particular, define the standards for the dissemination of information *about, through, and for* human rights to children: the Convention (1989) and the DHRET (2011). Canada ratified the Convention in 1990, and the DHRET was endorsed by Canada immediately following its adoption by the UN General Assembly (UNGA) in 2011. The complete standard for each is detailed in Table 1 below:

	Dissemination & Awareness Raising	Education About Human Rights for Global Citizenship	Education Through Human Rights for Peaceful Coexistence	Education For Human Rights for Transformative Action
Convention Standards (1989)	States Parties undertake to make the principles and provisions of the Convention widely known, by appropriate and active means, to adults and children alike. (UN, 1989, Article 42)	States Parties agree that the education of the child shall be directed to the development of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, and for the principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations. (UN, 1989, Article 29.1.b)	States Parties agree that the education of the child shall be directed to the development of respect for the child's parents, his or her own cultural identity, language and values, for the national values of the country in which the child is living, the country from which he or she may originate, and for civilizations different from his or her own. (UN, 1989, Article 29.1.c)	States Parties agree that the education of the child shall be directed to the preparation of the child for responsible life in a free society, in the spirit of understanding, peace, tolerance, equality of sexes, and friendship among all peoples, ethnic, national and religious groups and persons of indigenous origin. (UN, 1989, Article 29.1.d)
DHRET Standards (2011)		Human rights education and training encompasses 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. (UN, 2011, Article 2.2.a)	Human rights education and training encompasses education through human rights, which includes learning and teaching in a way that respects the rights of both educators and learners. (UN, 2011, Article 2.2.b)	Human rights education and training encompasses education for human rights, which includes empowering persons to enjoy and exercise their rights and to respect and uphold the rights of others. (UN, 2011, Article 2.2.c)

Table 1-Human Rights Education Convention and DHRET Normative Framework

Additional norms are provided by UN treaty bodies in their Concluding Observations following a review of the UN Member State's progressive implementation of its treaty obligations. In the case of the Convention, the UNCRC last made general comments about Canada's dissemination and awareness-raising progress in its last review of Canada in 2012:

- General Comment 24: The Committee is especially concerned that there has been little effort to systematically disseminate information about the Convention

and Integrate child rights education into a school system.

- General Comment 25: The Committee urges the State Party to take more active measures to systematically disseminate and promote the Convention, raising awareness among...children. In particular, the Committee urges the State Party to expand the development and use of curriculum resources on children's rights, especially through the State Party's extensive availability of free Internet and web access providers, as well as education initiatives that integrate knowledge and exercise of children's rights into curricula, policies, and practices in schools.

In addition, Table 2 includes a list of other cross-cutting Convention (1989) rights entitled to each child that are not specific to human rights education, but which are still relevant and need to be considered in the development of indicators to assess human rights education compliance. These include:

Treaty Standard	
Provision Rights	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • States Parties shall respect and ensure the rights set forth in the present Convention to each child within their jurisdiction without distinction of any kind. (UN, 1989, Article 2.1) • State Parties shall undertake all appropriate legislative, administrative, and other measures for the implementation of the rights recognized in the present Convention. (UN, 1989, Article 4)
Development Rights	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • States Parties shall ensure to the maximum extent possible the... development of the child. (UN, 1989, Article 6.2) • Persons legally responsible for the child shall ... provide, in a manner consistent with the evolving capacities of the child, appropriate direction and guidance in the exercise by the child of the rights. (UN, 1989, Article 5) • States Parties recognize the right of the child to education, and with a view to achieving this right progressively and on the basis of equal opportunity. (UN, 1989, Article 28.1) • States Parties agree that the education of the child shall be directed to the development of the child's personality, talents and mental and physical abilities to their fullest potential. (UN, 1989, Article 29.1.a)
Protection Rights	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In all actions concerning children, whether taken by public...institutions, ...the best interests of the child shall be a primary consideration. (UN, 1989, Article 3) • States Parties recognize that a mentally or physically disabled child should enjoy a full and decent life, in conditions which ensure dignity, promote self-reliance and facilitate the child's active participation in the community. (UN, 1989, Article 23.1)
Participation Rights	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The child shall have the ...freedom to seek, receive and impart information and ideas of all kinds, ...either orally, in writing, or in print, in the form of art, or through any other media of the child's choice. (UN, 1989, Article 13.1) • States Parties shall assure to the child who is capable of forming his or her own views the right to express those views freely in all matters affecting the child. (UN, 1989, Article 12.1) • States Parties recognize the rights of the child to freedom of association and to freedom of peaceful assembly. (UN, 1989, Article 14)

Table 2- Additional Convention Standards that Relate to Human Rights Education

The construction of a human rights indicator must also take into account the principles in which international human rights are rooted within, along with the overarching characteristics of human rights; the importance of their function within the context of international human entitlements must be well understood for a human rights indicator to adequately assess or evaluate UN Member State compliance. Taken together, the blending of human rights, the principles that underpin them, and their universal, inalienable, interrelated, interdependent, and indivisible unique characteristics are intended to ensure the full realization of human rights and fundamental freedoms for all people without distinction of any kind.

According to the UN, human rights norms, along with their underlying principles of non-discrimination and equality, participation, access to remedy, access to information, accountability, the rule of law, and good governance, are universal, “regardless of political, economic or cultural systems” (UN, 2012, p.11) through which they are enacted upon. They cannot be “alienated from an individual or group” (2012, p.11), and their interrelatedness functions to ensure that any “improvement in the realization of one human right is a function of the realization of the other human rights” (2012, p.11). Their interdependence assures that the “level of enjoyment of any one right is dependent on the level of realization of the other rights” (2012, p.11), and “improving the enjoyment of any right cannot be at the expense of the realization of any other right” (2012, p.11). Some rights, such as economic, social and cultural rights, may be realized differently according to the availability of resources, while other rights, such as civil and political rights, must be respected and protected by the UN Member State immediately upon ratification. Regardless, the development of an indicator to assess and evaluate the successful realization of all human rights depends on extracting the essence, or attributes from their normative framework. In the case of the rights expanded upon within the body of this section, I have identified them as more pertinent within the context of human rights education, but they are not exclusively so; all human rights must be recognized as equally important in the realization of a UN Member State’s duty to disseminate information *about*, *through*, and *for* human rights.

One of the challenges in identifying the attributes of the human rights education normative framework is understanding how their underlying principles manifest through the various duties to educate *about*, *through*, and *for* human rights. Blending human rights education treaty standards with human rights cross-cutting principles, alongside reference to the 1945 UN Charter goals renders a much greater in-depth appreciation and understanding of a UN Member State’s human rights education duties.

Within the prescribed context of an education *about* human rights for global citizenship (Bajaj, 2012), all individuals are equally necessary in the collective effort required to prevent and remove threats to peace, and to suppress aggressive acts that threaten “international peace and security” (UN, 1945, Article 1.1). To achieve this UN Charter goal, everyone must be able to access information about human rights norms and principles, their underlying values, and the mechanisms to protect them (UN, 2011, Article 2.2.a). Part of the duties of global citizenship is that each one of us is responsible to incorporate individual and collective accountability actions to secure a universal culture of human rights in which international treaties are respected, protected, and fulfilled for all peoples. This entails being able to scrutinize regional, national, and international judicial systems and governments to ensure their actions are referenced to, and contextualized within, international human rights norms and principles.

Combining the prescriptive norms for an education *through* human rights for peaceful coexistence with human rights principles must enable each person’s capacity to “develop friendly relations among nations [that is] based on respect for the principle of equal rights and self-determination of peoples” (UN, 1945, Article 1.2). This means that each person’s inherent dignity and inalienable rights must be protected without distinction of any kind, such as “race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status” (UN, 1948, Article 2). All peoples must be permitted to act independently to determine their own fate. They must be offered ways to access remedies and information that encourages, supports and models rights-respecting actions they can take to reconcile differences peacefully with each other in a trustworthy, transparent environment. Since peaceful coexistence depends on everyone’s commitment to take “appropriate measures to strengthen universal peace” (UN, 1945, Article 1.2), the enforcement of law must incorporate rights-respecting methods to distribute justice. For peaceful coexistence, all domestic and international governing bodies must endorse, through their policies, respect for each person’s inherent

dignity and equal and inalienable rights, since doing so is the “foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world” (UN, 1948, Preamble).

For each of us to participate in the global collective effort to solve international economic, social, cultural, and humanitarian issues, an education *for* human rights must be one that promotes and encourages for transformative action. It must empower all persons with knowledge and information about regional, national, and international human rights protection mechanisms so that each person can, without distinction of any kind, develop the capability to build friendly relations among peoples and nations, and uphold justice for global peace and security. Since all people are responsible to assure these UN Charter goals, domestic and international laws must respect the right of each person to seek, receive, and impart information for these purposes, and governing bodies must be scrutinized to ensure their policies and actions adhere to, and comply with international customary human rights laws.

Table 3 below is a summary of human rights education norms blended with cross-cutting human rights principles.

	Education <i>About</i> HR for Global Citizenship	Education <i>Through</i> HR for Peaceful Coexistence	Education <i>For</i> HR for Transformative Action
Non-Discrimination & Equality	Each person is equally necessary in the maintenance of international peace and security	Each person's inherent dignity and inalienable rights must be protected for friendly relationships to develop	Each person is responsible to promote and encourage respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms without distinction of any kind
Participation	Collective international cooperation is required to maintain peace and security	Self-determination means that each person is free to act independently to determine his/her own fate	Transformative action for peace and security involves cooperation in solving international human rights problems
Access to Remedy⁹	Effective prevention and removal of threats to peace and security depends on being able to access remedy	Conflict resolution and reconciliation are rights respecting measures people can take to strengthen universal peace	Actions to solve international human rights problems depends on being able to access the international human rights protection mechanism
Access to Information	Access to information about human rights norms and their underlying principles is the precursor to global peace and security	Transparency and freedom to information builds trustworthy relationships	Actions must be taken to ensure everyone has the right to access information freely
Accountability	The international community is accountable to respect, protect, and fulfil its treaty obligations	Peaceful coexistence depends on each one of us assuming our duty to strengthen peace	Responsible actions for international peace and security involves assuming individual & collective ownership
Rule of Law	International customary law, national judicial systems, and regional laws must protect human rights	Rights-respecting legal structures model pathways to reconciliation and justice	The rule of law must ensure the right to freedom of expression is realized for everyone
Good Governance	Good governance is that which complies with international human rights norms and principles	Good governance is that which embodies values of respect for human dignity, human rights, and fundamental freedoms without discrimination	Governing bodies must ensure that policies protect international human rights and promote & support peace and security

Table 3-Norms and Cross-Cutting Principles of Human Rights Education

⁹ Under international human rights law, victims of gross human rights and humanitarian violations have a right to access remedies that provides them with “equal and effective access to justice, adequate, effective and prompt reparation for harm suffered, [and] access to relevant information concerning violations and reparation mechanisms” (UN, 2006, Item 11, a-c)

3.2.2. Attributes of Human Rights Education Standards

Up to this point, I have identified the specific standards for human rights education from within the international normative human rights framework, which includes norms from the Convention, the DHRET, the UNCRC's concluding observations. I have also provided an analysis of the manner in which the cross-cutting human rights principles manifest through human rights education. The next step in building a human rights indicator requires that I extract a limited number of embedded attributes from within these legal narratives. These serve to link between the legal standard and the indicators used to assess UN Member State treaty compliance. The objective in this next step towards creating a human rights indicator is to identify the standards' essence, and extract from them characteristics that are mutually exclusive one from another (UN, 2012, p.31).

In the case of interpreting the normative framework underpinning human rights education for the purposes of extracting their underlying attributes, I have adopted a more generic approach. It is based on "notions of *adequacy, accessibility, availability, adaptability, acceptability, and quality*" (2012, p.32), since the progressive implementation nature of meeting a UN Member State's dissemination duties falls more naturally into the category of economic, social, and cultural rights, rather than the alternative civil and political ones.¹⁰ I found it helpful to refer to the Charter of the United Nations goals that the international community committed to in 1945, which is to "maintain international peace and security" (UN, 1945, Article 1.1) by developing "friendly relations among nations" (1945, Article 1.2) through "international cooperation in solving international problems of economic, social, cultural, or humanitarian character" (1945, Article 1.3). Therefore, for the right to receive information *about, through, and for* human rights, taking into account primarily Articles 29.1.b-d and Article 42 of the Convention,

¹⁰ While the overall duty to disseminate information about, through, and for human rights is considered to be more within the category of economic, social, and cultural rights, the subcategories of human rights education includes both types of rights: economic, social, and cultural, as well as civil and political rights.

and Articles 2.2.a-c of the DHRET, along with UNCRC 2012 comments 24 and 25, seven attributes were identified, which are summarized in Table 4 below.

Duty	Attribute
Dissemination & Awareness Raising	1. Capacity to have faith that an education <i>about, through, and for</i> international human rights principles and norms is necessary for global peace and security.
Education <i>About</i> Human Rights for Global Citizenship	2. Capacity to maintain international peace and security. 3. Availability of information about human rights norms and principles, particularly those relating to the Convention.
Education <i>Through</i> Human Rights for Peaceful Coexistence	4. Capacity to develop friendly relations amongst all peoples. 5. Adequacy of the educational methods used to model respect through human rights norms and principles.
Education <i>For</i> Human Rights for Transformative Action	6. Capacity to promote and encourage respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. 7. Accessibility of authentic opportunities in which children are able to exercise their rights and uphold the rights of others.

Table 4-Attributes of Human Rights Education

One attribute underlies the obligation to disseminate knowledge *about, through, and for* human rights: faith that establishing a universal culture of human rights is necessary to maintain global peace and security (see no. 1 in Table 4). This includes developing “friendly relations among nations” (UN, 1945, Article 1.2) and achieving “cooperation in solving international problems” (1945). Included in this attribute is also the UDHR (1948) stipulation that “every individual and every organ of society” (Preamble) must “strive by teaching and education to promote respect” (1948) for human rights and fundamental freedoms, and that UN Member States must take active measures to make the provisions and principles of the Convention widely known (UN, 1989, Article 42). I have extracted the attributes of the subsequent three human rights education duties from this all-encompassing main one; each human rights education duty includes an attribute that relates directly to the UN Charter goals (UN, 1945, Article 1.1-3), and one that is an action-based attribute, which, I think, represents a more concrete focus of the human right standard.

For the purposes of maintaining international peace and security, it is essential to ensure that the indicators used to assess human rights education compliance for global citizenship incorporate attributes that assess how adequately an education *about* human rights is capable of realizing this goal. This also includes whether there is an availability of adequate information disseminated about international human rights norms and principles, the values that underpin them, and the mechanisms for their protection. The capacity to develop friendly relations among peoples and nations, on the other hand, depends on developing indicators to assess how adequately an education *through* human rights is capable of instilling values of respect for the “principle of equal rights and self-determination of peoples” (UN, 1945, Article 1.2) for peaceful coexistence. Finally, the indicators to assess whether an education *for* human rights empowers for transformative action must stem from attributes relating to ability and accessibility. While the former must be to promote and encourage respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, the latter must assess for the accessibility of authentic opportunities in which children are able to exercise their rights and uphold the rights of others. These seven attributes provide the link between the international normative human rights education framework and the indicators I will use to assess compliance.

3.2.3. Indicators to Assess for Human Rights Education

The process for building country ownership involves the final step of selecting indicators. These must conceptually reflect the attributes of the human rights standard they are assessing or measuring, and they fall into one of three categories: structural, procedural, or outcome indicators. Even though the UN human rights indicator guide (2012) does not offer specific structural, process or outcome indicators to assess for human rights education compliance, I have followed their recommended method to formulate one that, I believe, is comprehensive enough for the purposes of this study. Since this study is an inquiry into curriculum, the three

types of indicators I develop will need to assess for compliance as it is reflected through six curricular elements: the aims of curriculum, and its conception of the learner, learning process, learning environment, teacher's role, and evaluation.

Structural Indicators

Structural indicators help “monitor and in some cases even expedite the incorporation of relevant human rights provisions into the country’s legal framework” (UN, 2012, p.77); they are concerned with existing national and regional legal and governmental frameworks that may be used by the UN Member State to implement its treaty obligations. With regards to assessing a UN Member State’s commitment to its dissemination duty to provide information *about, through,* and *for* human rights, a structural indicator must be able to illustrate the date of entry into force, and the coverage of the right to education, which includes human rights education, in the Constitution or other forms of superior law. Indicators in this category to assess for entitlement and civic status must also point out which core international human rights treaties the country has ratified that obligate it to disseminate information *about, through,* and *for* human rights norms and principles.

Structural indicators must also be formulated to “seek information that shows how the State’s commitment, as reflected in the enactment of domestic human rights law, is translated into an enforceable programme of action stemming from that standard” (2012, p.77). Structural indicators are most appropriately used in the assessment of compliance to the principles of non-discrimination and equality. They are also valuable tools to establish whether each person’s civic status is considered to be one that is rights-bearing, who is “born free and equal in dignity and rights” (UN, 1948, Article 1). In the case of human rights education, these indicators are intended to assess declared public policies, such as the BC Kindergarten to Grade 12 Social Studies curriculum, to determine how comprehensively their curricular elements comply with the

cross-cutting principle of non-discrimination and equality by ensuring the provision of human rights education on the basis of equal opportunity. These factors are particularly important in determining the status of the learner, which is reflected through the curricular element that relates to the conception of the learner. Civic status is also an important factor for realizing a rights-respecting social order, because transformative action to uphold social justice needs agents who are valued by society as rights-bearing citizens entitled to act for human rights. It also implies that the notion of human rights consists not only of entitlements, but also of the responsibility that each one of us has to help realize these rights for everyone.

Four structural indicators will be applied in this study, to demonstrate that BC's Kindergarten to Grade 12 Social Studies curriculum represents a legal active measure implemented by a UN Member State through which it can disseminate information *about*, *through*, and *for* human rights:

1. International human rights treaties relevant to the duty to disseminate information *about*, *through*, and *for* human rights norms and principles that Canada has ratified.
2. International human rights treaties relevant to the duty to respect, protect, and fulfil each child's inherent dignity and inalienable rights that Canada has ratified.
3. Date of entry into force and coverage of the right to education (including human rights education) in the Canadian Constitution or other forms of superior law.
4. Date of entry into force and coverage of domestic laws for implementing a human rights education on the basis of equal opportunity.

Procedural Indicators

While structural indicators identify the “duty bearers and their roles; mandated activities of relevant institutions; ...policies and programmes related to desired outcomes; [and] ...national or global best practices and domestic gaps in the implementation of rights” (2012, p.78),

process indicators “link institutional mandates to results/outcomes” (2012, p.78). Their primary objective is to “identify all the measures¹¹, by way of policies and programmes, to attain outcomes that can be related to the realization and enjoyment of rights” (2012, p.79). This also includes identifying disparities in public policies, such as curricula, that, if addressed, may lead to greater treaty adherence. As is the case with structural indicators, process indicators must be able to assess for human rights education compliance, particularly as they manifest progressively through curriculum’s six elements: its aims, and its conception of the learner, learning process, learning environment, teacher’s role, and evaluation.

Most indicators in this category consist of “flow indicators” (2012). They assess program output as well as link between structural and outcome indicators; they are particularly relevant when monitoring human rights education compliance. Since curriculum represents a legal active mechanism implemented by a UN Member State through which it can disseminate information *about, through, and for* human rights, the development of these process indicators must be directly related to the six curricular elements to maintain a focused approach to its inquiry. This, in turn, provides the methodological framework to determine human rights education treaty compliance.

The UN 1945 Charter goals define the overall aims of human rights education, with an all-encompassing one underpinning the dissemination *of* human rights duty, along with the more specific aims underpinning the duty to educate *about, through, and for* human rights. These goals were expressed by the international community in response to the devastation following World War II. Determined to “save succeeding generations from the scourge of war, ...to affirm faith in fundamental human rights, [and] in the dignity and worth of the human person, [and] ...to establish conditions under which justice and respect for the obligations arising from treaties and

¹¹ The UN uses “measures”, however, in this thesis, this term may cause ambiguity to how I determine compliance. Therefore, I will use the word “mechanism” or “means” instead.

other source of international law can be maintained” (UN, 1945), the overall objective of education must, therefore, be to “further the activities of the United Nations for the maintenance of peace” (UN, 1948, Article 26.2). Its curriculum must be aimed towards the development of each child’s capacity to become a peace-builder. More specifically, for each child to become a global citizen, the curriculum must be directed towards promoting an understanding of international human rights principles and norms, the values that underpin them, and the mechanisms to protect them for the maintenance of international peace and security. For peaceful coexistence, its objective must be to advance “understanding, tolerance¹² and friendship among all nations, racial or religious groups” (1948). Finally, for the purposes of securing everyone’s right to enjoy a “social and international order in which the rights and freedoms set forth in [international human rights treaties] can be fully realized, a human rights education curriculum must be aimed to empower for transformative action. Derived from this is a process indicator to assess whether BC’s SS curriculum aims align with these UN Charter goals.

The realization of the UN Charter goal to maintain international peace and security reflects an accumulation of multiple process indicators in the area of dissemination of information *about, through, and for* human rights. For instance, process indicators to monitor for curricular compliance must examine the way the learning process is conceived of from within the curriculum. For the purposes of aspiring towards the UN Charter goals, the learning process must progress from an initial acquisition of knowledge about human rights principles and norms, followed by an analysis of the values that underpin them, and end with an application stage, which involves transformative action for human rights. For this reason, process indicators must examine the curriculum to determine whether it is directly referenced to, and contextualized

¹² The UDHR and subsequent UN treaties use the word “tolerance,” however, in my opinion, there is a conceptual friction between this term and the notion of “positive peace:” to tolerate someone does not immediately translate into acceptance or a mutually respecting relationship. Rather, one can tolerate another, but only for the sake of avoiding conflict.

within, the international human rights normative framework. The learning process involved in enabling learners to move from the concrete to abstract forms of knowing must also be examined to determine how it incorporates methodological elements that consider the evolving capacities of the child (UN, 1989, Article 5), because doing so is rights-respecting and in keeping with the child's best interests (1989, Article 3).

To assess whether the curriculum has the capacity to meet the UN Charter goal of developing "friendly relations among nations based on respect for the principles of equal rights and self-determination of peoples" (UN, 1945, Article 1.2), process indicators must examine the curriculum's conception of the teacher's role and how it impacts the learning environment to determine how compliant the curriculum is with its duty to educate *through* human rights for peaceful coexistence *for* transformative action. Since the indicators used in this case serve to assess the progressive nature in realizing these particular duties, they fall into the category of process indicators. To fulfil above particular UN Charter objective, the curriculum must be analyzed to determine whether, and how, its directives for educators implementing the curriculum under review are grounded within notions that promote fairness, trust, and respect for human dignity. This is achieved by examining the curriculum's conception of the learner and learning environment.

The curriculum must make provisions for learners and educators to engage collectively and respectfully, as rights bearing citizens, to solve domestic and international social justice concerns, and uphold human rights and fundamental freedoms for global peace and security (UN, 1945, Article 1). As such, indicators must be able to help the inquirer determine whether the curriculum has made adequate provisions for both learners and educators to engage freely with each other as they cooperate to build this universal culture of human rights. The structural indicators identified above serve to assess whether learners are conceived of as bearers of rights who are equally entitled to, and responsible to participate in the establishment of international peace and security. Process indicators, however, function to assess the curriculum

to better understand how it empowers teachers to become human rights ambassadors, so that they can create a learning environment that models respect for each person's inherent dignity and fundamental freedoms. This involves an inquiry into curriculum to determine whether, and how children are supported and encouraged by educators to express opinions in matters that concern them (UN, 1989, Article 12), and whether each child's rights to freedom of expression, thought, and conscience (1989, Articles 13, 14) are assured through curricular provisions. Furthermore, the curriculum must be surveyed to ascertain whether it provides educators with disciplinary guidance that is consistent with the evolving capacities of the child and in keeping with human rights norms and principles, and whether restrictions imposed on the freedom of expression, association, and assembly are referenced to, and contextualized within the international treaties the UN Member State has ratified.

The application of process indicators to assess for curricular information that relates to the conception of how student learning should be evaluated is also implicit within an education *through* human rights, for the methods employed by the educator to verify this must be grounded within similar notions of fair judgment for them to be rights-respecting. They fall into the category of process indicators, because, like the other curricular elements examined in this study, the outcome of administering evaluation methods that are in compliance with a UN Member State's treaty obligations is, ultimately, to support its UN Charter goals. Process indicators must, therefore, examine curriculum to determine whether it incorporates various objective and subjective evaluations strategies an educator can apply to aptly and fairly judge students' acquired knowledge, values, and behaviours. This gathered information must then be assessed to determine whether it has the capacity to further the UN Charter goals in the areas of global citizenship, peaceful coexistence, and transformative action. Furthermore, indicators must also be able to be used to investigate the curriculum under review to ascertain whether the implementation of evaluation strategies allows learners to demonstrate learning through the

application of various media, such as “orally, in writing, or in print, in the form of art, or through any other media of the child’s choice” (UN, 1989, Article 13.1).

The efforts made by a UN Member State to progressively implement its human rights education obligations are best monitored through the application of process indicators, which flow directly out of the structural indicators. While the latter capture the formal commitment of the duty-bearer, the former demonstrate the active means still employed by the respective UN Member State in fulfilling these commitments. Process indicators assess efforts over time. For this reason, they are best used to assess for human rights education compliance through an examination of curricular elements. In keeping with the above considerations regarding the development of these indicators, what follows is a list of process indicators I will apply in my curriculum inquiry:

1. Curricular aims are to develop each child's capacity to become a peace-builder towards:
 - a. The maintenance of international peace and security.
 - b. The development of friendly relations amongst peoples.
 - c. Promoting and encouraging respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms.
2. The curriculum’s conception of the learner, learning process, learning environment, teacher’s role, and evaluation are that they:
 - a. Provide information *about* international human rights principles and norms, the values that underpin them, and the mechanisms used to protect them for global citizenship.
 - b. Provide adequate guidance to ensure school discipline is administered *through* international human rights for peaceful coexistence.
 - c. Offer authentic opportunities for children to exercise their participation rights *for* transformative action, and provide guidance in the exercise of these rights in a manner that is in compliance with international human rights norms and principles.

- d. Incorporate rights-based educational teaching methods that aim to develop the child's capabilities to become a peace-builder, and be consistent with the evolving capacities of the child.
- e. Contain rights-consistent evaluation methods that incorporate multiple avenues for the child to demonstrate his or her learning.

Outcome Indicators

A final category of indicators involves those “related to the enjoyment of the attribute of the right or the right in general” (UN, 2012, p.79). They flow directly from structural indicators, and through process indicators. Since they are more like “summary indicators” (2012, p.79), there may be just a few of them that are “common across several attributes of a right” (2012, p.79). For the purposes of this study, I have identified two outcome indicators that originate from the UNCRC's 2012 Concluding Observations regarding Canada's Convention implementation progress (UNCRC, 2012, Item 25). Both tie into two cross-cutting principles: participation and freedom of information. In particular, the UNCRC urged Canada to “expand the development and use of curriculum resources on children's rights” (UNCRC, 2012, Item 25) through the Internet, and by implementing “education initiatives that integrate knowledge and exercise of children's rights into curricula” (2012, Item 25). Since these are more action oriented directives that originate from the UN Member State's duty to disseminate information *about*, *through*, and *for* human rights, they must be assessed for compliance. However, given that they represent a practical active mean or mechanism that Canada can take to fulfil its human rights education obligations, compliance to these recommendations is best assessed through the application of outcome indicators.

To be educated *about* human rights for global citizenship, *through* human rights for peaceful coexistence, and *for* human rights for transformative action depends entirely on

ensuring each person's right to freely access information, particularly about the international human rights normative framework. This means that everyone, without distinction of any kind, must be able to "seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers" (UN, 1948, Article 19; UN, 1989, Article 13.1). Outcome indicators to assess whether Canada has taken the UNCRC's prescribed "active measures to systematically disseminate and promote the Convention" (UNCRC, 2012, Item 25) through the country's "extensive availability of free Internet and web access providers" (2012, Item 25) must examine school curricula to determine if, and how, it serves as a comprehensive resource for learners and educators to access information about international human rights norms and principles, the values that underpin them, and the mechanisms to protect them. Outcome indicators must also compare past curricula with post 2012 revised curricula to ascertain whether curricular elements in the more updated version demonstrate greater compliance with regards to the integration of "knowledge and exercise of children's rights" (2012, Item 25) into school curricula as per the UNCRC prescriptions. This final assessment draws on information gathered from the application of all the indicators used in this study.

Two outcome indicators will be applied in this study to assess for human rights education compliance:

1. Curriculum makes provisions for teachers and children to access information about international human rights norms and principles via the Internet and other educational resources.
2. New curricula revisions indicate that efforts have been taken to further integrate knowledge *about, through, and for* human rights into school curriculum.

Accountability mechanisms to monitor UN Member State treaty compliance depends on a methodological translation of the prescriptive, values based, legalistic language of the international human rights normative framework into concrete and practical indicators. The activation of this mechanism is used to assess a variety of phenomena relating to the realization

of human rights. In the specific case that relates to assessing for the presence of human rights education, contextually relevant structural, process, and outcome indicators must be developed, which can then be applied to curriculum to determine the progressive implementation of this particular duty by a UN Member State. The development of an indicator to assess for this involved the systematic translation of the international human rights normative framework, with specific attention paid to those relating to human rights education. From this, particular attributes are extracted, which then served as the foundation for the structural, process, and outcome indicators that are used to assess compliance. This compliance assessment framework serves to bridge between the international human rights dissemination standards and their actual realization by the UN Member State as is evident through an examination of its constitutionally endorsed education curricula. The next chapter inquires into BC's Kindergarten to Grade 12 Social Studies curriculum, since it represents one of the active mechanisms a UN Member State can take to progressively implement its duty to systematically integrate information about international human rights into its school system.

Chapter 4 - BC Social Studies Curriculum

An education curriculum represents one of the active steps a UN Member State can take through which it can fulfil its treaty duty to disseminate information *about, through, and for* human rights. The purpose of this study is to assess BC's Kindergarten to Grade 12 Social Studies curriculum to determine whether it complies with Canada's international treaty obligations regarding the provision of a human rights education for global citizenship, peaceful coexistence, and transformative action. To determine this, I delve into all the curriculum's aim and its conceptions of the learner, learning process, learning environment, teacher's role, and evaluation.

In this inquiry, I draw from the work of Miller and Seller (1990) in the area of curriculum study, which demonstrate some of the philosophical, psychological, and social contexts that underpin the purpose and substance of curriculum. Accordingly, "at the root of individual perception is a particular world view or model of reality...[and] such models of reality shape each educator's personal belief structure about the purposes and methodologies of education" (1990, p.4). In these authors' view, curriculum's purpose and substance may be influenced by one of three meta orientations: *transmission, transaction, or transformation* (1990, pp.3-15). In a curriculum designed to *transmit* specific content, values, and skills that learners must master in order for them to function in society, specific learning objectives and authoritative teaching methods will be incorporated to ensure curricular content flows from the curriculum to the student only; the student in a *transmission* perspective is detached from the curriculum (1990, pp.5-6). A *transaction* position imposed on curriculum, on the other hand, views learners as capable of reconstructing knowledge through the application of problem solving strategies; educational opportunities in this position, therefore, are rooted within the scientific method, and are designed to develop various social and academic cognitive capacities (1990, pp.6-8). A holistic worldview centred on personal and social *transformation* characterizes a third position

developers may impose on curriculum to ensure that learners acquire the necessary skills to act as agents of change (1990, pp.8-9). In this case, learning experiences are interdisciplinary activities aimed towards the child as a whole; they focus on the social interrelatedness of phenomena, personal perception, and intrinsic motivation (1990, pp.167-169).

Various features of each of these orientations may be present in the same curriculum, either as what the curriculum's development team originally intended, or what becomes apparent from each writer's subconscious alignment to a particular worldview. For instance, the same feature (i.e. lectures) may have a different purpose in each orientation. Furthermore, the interpretation of the curriculum by each reader is also influenced by a particular worldview. Since curricular elements may not necessarily fit neatly into either a transmission, transaction, or transformation world view, aspects of each orientation may be present in each curricular element, either as stated intent, or through the analysis of curricular substance. As such, the inquiry of curricular content, aims, and its conception of the learner, learning process, learning environment, teacher's role, and evaluation is impacted by all these determinants. In this examination, therefore, I seek to understand which of the three worldviews *predominates* BC's Kindergarten to Grade 12 Social Studies curricular elements, so that I can then determine how adequately it complies with Canada's international treaty obligations to disseminate information *about, through, and for* human rights.

4.1. The BC Social Studies Curriculum

4.1.1. Overview

BC's provincially legislated Kindergarten to Grade 12 curriculum for all subjects consists of multiple curricula in various stages of revisions and implementations. In August 2015, the BC's Ministry of Education released its newly revised curriculum for Kindergarten to Grade 9, which replaces previous versions after an initial phase-in process. The recent process to revamp BC's Kindergarten to Grade 12 curriculum began in 2010, whereby informal and formal

consultations with various stakeholders throughout the province lead them to design a “more flexible curriculum that prescribes less and enables more, for both teachers and students” (BC, 2012, p.2). In a press release, Mike Bernier, BC’s Minister of Education, said “school districts and teachers have the option this year to implement the new kindergarten-to-Grade-9 curriculum on a partial or complete basis” (Globe & Mail, 2015). Furthermore, this newest Kindergarten to Grade 9 version not only constitutes the legally binding curriculum that BC’s teachers must abide by, it must be fully implemented by educators by the beginning of the 2016 school year (2015). The Grades 10 to 12 curriculum is still in its draft stage, but, according to Bernier, the Ministry of Education intends to introduce it in September 2016, with the plan to have the entire Kindergarten to Grade 12 revised curriculum phased in by the end of the 2017-18 school year (2015).

The entire 1995 to 2015 BC curriculum is organized into various academic disciplines and subject areas; these include the core disciplines of *Mathematics*, *English Language Arts*, *Arts Education*, *Science*, *Core French*, and *Social Studies*, and other learning areas, such as *Physical and Health Education*, *Applied Design*, *Skills and Technologies*, and *Career Education* (BC, 2015K). This type of categorization of content into traditional subjects or disciplines “focuses on breaking down school subjects into small units so that the student can master specific skills and content” (Miller & Seller, 1990, p.42) within each subject area. Furthermore, a “subject-oriented curriculum divides subjects into two categories: required (‘core’) courses and electives” (1990, p.43). For example, BC’s Ministry of Education offers a core curriculum, which educators are obligated to teach to all of the province’s school age children, and elective courses, such as *Social Justice 12*, *Punjabi 5-12*, *Tourism 11-12*, *Carpentry Level I*, *Dance 11 and 12: Performance and Choreography*, or *Law 12* (BC, N.D.c), are examples of optional courses that students may also choose to take, or schools may decide to offer.

This study delves into the province’s Social Studies curriculum, which draws from “disciplines within the humanities and social sciences, primarily history, geography, political

science, and economics, with contributions from other disciplines such as sociology, psychology, and anthropology” (BC, 2015B). Since these disciplines “focus on human activities, behaviours, and interactions with both other humans and the environment” (2015B), their topics correspond well with the topics that are emphasized in an education *about, through, and for* human rights. At the time of writing this thesis, past Social Studies curricula are either in use or being transitioned in or out of BC’s education system. What follows is an examination of all current, draft, phased-out, and phased-in Social Studies curricula and their accompanying documents. This includes the following Social Studies curricula:

- 2006 Kindergarten to Grade 7;
- 1997 Grades 8 to 9;
- 2006 Grade 10;
- 2005 Grade 11;
- 2015 Kindergarten to Grade 9;
- 2015 Grade 10 to 12¹³ (Draft).

In this thesis, the reference to *former*, or *previous* versions of the Social Studies curricula pertains to those issued between 1997 to 2006, whereas reference to the *newly revised*, or *redesigned* curriculum relates to the latest 2015 phased-in and draft versions.

4.1.2. Curricular Content and Learning Standards

Curricular content consists of the topics within a particular discipline that “students are expected to know and do at the end of an indicated grade or course” (BC, N.D.b). While educators have some flexibility in deciding how to deliver this educational content, as licensed educational professionals in BC, they are duty bound to abide by the legally prescribed learning

¹³ There was no Social Studies 12 curriculum before the 2015 revision, because it was broken down into disciplines at this level: History, Law, Geography, Anthropology, Philosophy, Social Justice, etc. Hence its exclusion here.

standards that constitute an integral part of curricular content. These standards serve two functions: 1) they govern *how* students are expected to know curricular content, and 2) they direct student evaluation to determine *how well* the content has been learned. The disciplinary content in Social Studies is similar for all curricula versions; it consists of “key historical, geographical, political, economic, and societal factors, ...and how these different factors relate to, and interact with each other” (BC, 2015A, p.2; BC, 2015G, p.1). This content must be understood by learners for them to become “educated citizens” (BC, 2015B). However, the organization of content is different in each version of BC’s Social Studies curriculum.

In the 1997, 2005, and 2006 Kindergarten to Grade 12 curriculum version, curricular content is organized into numerous prescribed learning outcomes with shared foci (BC, 1997; BC, 2005; BC, 2006A; BC, 2006B). For instance, content that is contained within the *Skills and Processes of Social Studies* category provide students with a framework to solve problems and issues, present information, and practice active citizenship to help them become “responsible, thoughtful citizens” (BC, 2006B, p.12). In the *Identity, Society, and Culture* category, students learn to define the “similarities and differences within and across cultures over time (2006B), while the study of *Governance* is intended to expand their appreciation regarding the rights and responsibilities of active citizenship at the community, national, and world levels. This category is also designed to develop students’ “basic understanding of political and legal structures and processes, through which [they] can gain an appreciation of the purpose of governance in a variety of societies” (2006B). Content in these curricula also includes a study of “basic economic concepts and systems... [and] the impact of technological innovation on individuals, society, and the environment” (2006B). Finally, in the *Human and Physical Environment* category, content relating to resource development, sustainability, and environmental stewardship is intended to enhance students’ understanding about the natural world and the relationship between people and their environment (2006B).

Content in the former Kindergarten to Grade 12 Social Studies curriculum, or *Integrated Resource Package*, is communicated through numerous statements that detail the attitudes, skills, and knowledge that students are expected to master at the end of any given year. The prescriptive tone used to convey this content is consistent with a transmission worldview, which dictates an extensive list of behavioural outcomes a student is expected to master by the end of a specific course or grade level. Since “mastery of school subjects and inculcation of students in social norms are the major goals of the position” (Miller & Seller, 1990, p.56), educators are discouraged from pursuing particular student interests or topics of local relevance (BC, 2015A, p.1). Another shortcoming of the earlier curriculum was the large amount of curricular content, which caused teachers to rush through a “long list of factual details in an attempt to cover all the required topics” (2015A), which means they are unable to delve more deeply into a few key topics. Generally, students, in this orientation, are viewed as receptacles of disciplinary knowledge, mostly from authoritative sources, such as teachers and textbooks.

Curricular content in the newly revised Kindergarten to Grade 9 Social Studies curriculum, on the other hand, is structured around a “Know-Do-Understand model to support a concept-based competency-driven approach to learning” (BC, 2015F, pp.3-5). The Ministry of Education has already determined that content in the Grades 10 to 12 curriculum will also be organized in a similar fashion (BC, 2015L). This model consists of three elements: 1) essential topics and knowledge that each student should *know* by the end of a grade level; 2) specific curricular competencies that students are expected to *do* over time; and 3) big ideas, or key concepts, that students must *understand* at the completion of the curriculum (BC, 2015F).¹⁴ Even though the first element corresponds with the prescribed learning outcomes outlined in the former curriculum, the redesigned curriculum expands the notion of these learning standards to

¹⁴ The conceptual difference between *knowing* and *understanding* is vague in the Know-Do-Understand model of learning. I presume that this model means that learning occurs when there is a union of knowledge acquisition and action, because it states that knowledge is “built around higher-order standards and key ideas, [which allows] for more in-depth exploration of topics to gain deeper understanding” (BC, 2015F, p.4).

include those which “emphasize higher-order concepts over facts to allow for a more in-depth exploration of topics (BC, 2012, p.3). In this “concept-based, competency-driven approach” (BC, 2015F, pp.4-5) to curriculum design, content is organized to include key concepts, principles, and generalizations that are combined with specific skills, processes, and strategies to engage students, and foster learning that is deeper and more meaningful. Together, they represent the various tasks students are expected to competently know, do, and understand within the field of Social Studies (2015F).

Unlike the extensive list of measurable outcomes used to organize content in the former BC Social Studies curriculum, the Ministry of Education claims that the integration of learning standards, such as curricular competencies and key concepts in the revised 2015 Social Studies curriculum, supports the construction of meaning and knowledge, and promotes the development of complex intellectual skills and mental processes through experiential, inquiry- and project-based learning experiences (BC, 2015; Miller & Seller, 1990). Because of this, the organization of curricular content is mostly influenced by a transaction orientation, which is partially rooted within John Dewey’s theory that “intelligence is developed through the individual’s interaction with the social environment, particularly through solving problems” (Miller & Seller, 1990, p.65). Therefore, even though the curriculum’s “Know-Do-Understand” organizational model includes a *content* area of learning that details the “essential topics and knowledge [that must be taught] at each grade level” (BC, 2015F, p.3), the integration of content within a concept-based, competency-driven curriculum means that knowledge is not viewed as “fixed or immutable, as in the transmission position” (Miller & Seller, 1990, p.111). Instead, knowledge is “built around higher-order standards and key ideas, allowing more in-depth exploration of topics to gain deeper understanding” (BC, 2015F, p.4). Essentially, it is “viewed in relation to the knower and, particularly, in relation to the *procedures* the knower used to explore and verify knowledge” (Miller & Seller, 1990, p.111). As such, the newly formulated curriculum “balances the study of factual information with the development of conceptual understanding

and disciplinary skills” (BC, 2015F, p.4); students are offered opportunities to “think critically and creatively” (2015F) as they reconstruct knowledge through the application of problem-solving strategies that are designed to “foster deeper, more transferable learning” (2015F).

Similar Social Studies content is categorized differently in each curriculum version, because a different orientation underpins the organization of their learning standards. The former curriculum’s prescribed learning outcomes are organized to ensure traditional disciplinary knowledge about Social Studies skills, values, and processes are relayed to students; a transmission position underpins the organization of its learning standards. In the 2015 curriculum, on the other hand, Social Studies content is arranged into a “Know-Do-Understand” model, which integrates disciplinary and interdisciplinary topics, competencies, and concepts. The organization of learning standards in this manner stems from a transaction worldview where the focus is on generating “knowledge as process [through] various inquiry procedures” (Miller & Seller, 1990, p.10).

4.2. Curricular Elements

In this study, the reference to *curricular elements* pertains to Miller and Seller’s (1990) categorization of curricular substance into aims and goals, and conceptions of the learner, learning process, learning environment, teacher’s role, and evaluation (p.5).

4.2.1. Educational Aims

Curricular aims “provide overall direction or guiding images for curriculum development, [and they] ...reflect a well-developed position that is rooted in a particular conception of philosophy, psychology, and society” (Miller & Seller, 1990, p.175). The development of curricular substance, or the educational experiences that the curriculum intends to offer (Foshay, as cited in Short, 1991, p.89) depends on this initial phase of setting aims. Once identified, they direct the overall objectives or goals of the curriculum, which then govern how the learner, learning process, learning environment, teacher’s role, and evaluation are

conceived of within the curriculum (Miller & Seller, 1990). Curricular aims are articulated in the *Rationale* section of BC's curriculum, which "defines the area of learning, identifies the disciplines upon which [learning] is based and explains the significance of the area of learning to students and society" (BC, 2015C, p.6).

Both past and newly revised versions of BC's Kindergarten to Grade 12 Social Studies curriculum identify *citizenship* as a primary aim of Social Studies. The older curriculum, as stated in each of the four respective *Rationale* sections, makes a specific, well-articulated claim that "the aim of Social Studies ...is to develop thoughtful, responsible, and active citizens who are able to acquire the requisite information to consider multiple perspectives, ...to make reasoned judgements" (BC, 1997, p.1; BC, 2005, p.11; BC, 2006A, p.11), and "defend a position (BC, 2006B, p.3). In the newly revised 2015 curriculum's *Rationale* section, BC's Ministry of Education reaffirms that the "main purpose of the Social Studies curriculum is to develop graduates who have the knowledge, skills, and competencies to be active, informed citizens" (BC, 2015B). It goes on to define "an informed citizen [as someone who] understands key historical, geographical, political, economic, and societal concepts, and [who understands] how these different factors relate to and interact with each other" (2015B). The preamble to this purpose statement explains that these aims support the development of "well-educated citizens who are able to think critically and creatively and adapt to change..., who accept the tolerant and multifaceted nature of Canadian society, and who are motivated to participate actively in our democratic institutions" (2015B). While the aims of both curricula versions state that active, engaged citizenship includes the acquisition of specific skills and knowledge, the 2015 curriculum further acknowledges that *informed* citizenship includes the development of specific competencies that enable students to "think critically, understand and explain the perspectives of others, make judgments, and communicate ideas effectively" (BC, 2015A, p.1) so that they can be better equipped to respond to the demanding, 21st century world they are entering (2015A, p.1).

The articulation of curricular goals follows the curriculum's statement of aims; they provide the "context for the area of learning and make clear its contribution to the development of educated citizens" (BC, 2015F, p.5). Since they communicate information about "what students should learn and understand in an area of learning, [curricular goals] may be used as criteria for selecting content, instructional approaches, and assessment strategies and techniques" (BC, 2015C, p.4). In this intermediary step, "aims are broken down into general growth patterns, which may or may not be age-related" (Miller & Seller, 1990, p.179). For instance, the goals in the former curriculum inform the development of the curriculum's prescribed learning outcomes, which are based on Bloom's broad developmental taxonomy, where prescribed learning outcomes in the cognitive, affective, and psychomotor domains of learning become increasingly more and more complex at different levels of learning (BC, 2006A, p.27; Miller & Seller, 1990, pp.181-182). Bloom's hierarchy of learning begins with a basic level of knowledge acquisition, and proceeds through increasingly more complex levels of learning, which include comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis, and a final evaluation level (Miller & Seller, 1990, pp.181-182). The curricular goals that guide the development of the prescribed learning outcomes in the former curriculum are organized according to this particular framework. Particularly, they are intended to encourage and enable students to understand their "rights, roles, and responsibilities within their family, the community, Canada, and the world" (BC, 2006A, p.11; BC, 1997, p.1;), and "the practices of active Canadian citizenship" (BC, 2005, p.11).

The newly designed curriculum is deliberately designed with fewer learning outcomes, which are organized into its *Know-Do-Understand* model. Even so, they still detail the "essential topics and knowledge [that students are expected to know] at each grade level" (BC, 2015F, p.3), because they represent the legal requirements all licensed teachers must comply with in BC. While the language used to articulate this content is non-prescriptive, the goals that inform them are similar to the previous curriculum's articulated goals. For example, corresponding

content that relates to learning about “the rights and responsibilities of citizenship and the democratic system of government” (BC, 2015B) is *not* broken down into prescribed learning outcomes that dictate what students should know, comprehend, apply, analyze, synthesize, and, finally, evaluate at each grade level, like in the former curriculum. Instead, curricular goals draw from the *Know-Do-Understand* model’s curricular competencies and big ideas to direct learning that enables students to discover “how decisions are made at the individual, group, local, provincial, and national levels, and how to get involved in the political process and express their opinions effectively” (2015B).

Sometimes learning goals from curricular aims may focus on the development of mental processes that are rooted within John Dewey’s belief that “the aim of education is growth, ...[which] involves the reconstruction of experience and knowledge” (Miller & Seller, 1990, p.64). They may be further underpinned by Jean Piaget’s psychological cognitive developmental theories, or Lawrence Kohlberg’s theme of moral development (1990, p.179). Accordingly, “development results from the interaction between the student and a stimulating intellectual environment” (1990, p.7), particularly within a cooperative social context where individuals work collaboratively to solve problems together (1990, p.65). BC’s 2015 curriculum recognizes the value in offering students opportunities to develop these capacities; the “Know-Do-Understand” model is designed to “foster higher-order thinking” (BC, 2015F, p.3) that is intended to “build deeper understandings” (BC, 2015B) through “experiential, inquiry-based, project-based and other forms of active learning” (BC, 2015C, p.2). While the goals of the former curriculum do include language to indicate that students will understand, become familiar with, explore, and acquire knowledge about Social Studies content (BC, 2005, p.11; BC, 2006A, p.11), their abbreviated format means that the prescriptive and numerous learning objectives that follow in the body of the curriculum must detail the multiple behaviours students are expected to engage in for them to master the curriculum’s content and fulfil its aims.

The newly designed curriculum goals, on the other hand, demonstrates an orientation shift towards understanding human growth as going beyond Bloom's linear taxonomy, since they are rooted within a constructivist vision that "posits that learning occurs as students are actively involved in a process of meaning and knowledge construction" (BC, 2015C, p.2). Curricular goals, in this case, reflect how students are expected to acquire knowledge about Social Studies content to understand events that have shaped our social world, human interactions with each other and the environment, responsible citizenship, and global economic systems (BC, 2015B). While Bloom's taxonomy provides a breakdown of what it means to understand, it does not, however, address the notion of knowledge construction. Rather, this process is expanded upon through constructivism. *But*, these goals also expand the notion of human development to include the Social Studies concepts students will understand, and the competencies students will acquire for them to become educated citizens (2015B). They articulate how students will develop the necessary cognitive and moral competencies to participate in a democratic society, which includes the capacity to consider and respect multiple perspectives, values, and points of view; gather and analyze information critically; make informed decisions; and communicate their opinions effectively (2015B).

The assumptions that underpin the aims and goals of both curricula versions are predominantly rooted within a transaction orientation, which "has its philosophical roots in experimental pragmatism, particularly in the work of John Dewey, whose work provides the philosophical underpinnings of inquiry approaches to curriculum" (Miller & Seller, 1990, p.62). The aims and goals of both curricula are intended to ensure that each student is able to acquire the necessary knowledge and skills about essential topics in Social Studies. While the former curriculum offers more concise goals, which then get elaborated upon in the curriculum's prescribed learning outcomes, the newly designed BC Social Studies curriculum recognizes that an educated citizen must be able to understand the key concepts and ideas implicit in active citizenship. However, even though the former curriculum uses a more rigidly prescriptive format

to communicate its purpose statements, it also provides opportunities for students to “reflect critically upon events and issues in order to examine the present, make connections with the past, and consider the future” (BC, 2006, p.11). Because of this feature, the predominant orientation underlying the aims and goals of both curricula versions is rooted within a transaction orientation, because both curricula versions maintain that knowledge is constructed through the application of Social Studies inquiry skills, attitudes, and processes that enable students to “inform their judgments, shape their opinions, solve problems, and guide their actions” (BC, 2006, p.11; Miller & Seller, 1990, p.10). Furthermore, the introduction of aims and goals that focus on communication, thinking, and social and personal core competencies in the revised Social Studies curriculum means that students are provided with even more opportunities to “explore and better understand their own identity, perspectives, and values as well as develop the competencies that encourage active, informed citizenship” (BC, 2015). This is another example of how a transaction position underpins these aims and goals, because they “emphasize knowledge as process in various inquiry procedures” (Miller & Seller, 1990, p.10), where students are expected to “consider different perspectives and ideas with an open mind, and disagree respectfully with those who have different opinions or points of view” (1990).

The declared aim of both BC’s former and newly revised Social Studies curricula is to develop the educated citizen.¹⁵ This all encompassing educational aim defines the goals of the curriculum, which serve to promote the construction of knowledge and understanding about what is required for students to become active, responsible citizens within a democratic society. In the case of BC’s Kindergarten to Grade 12 Social Studies curriculum, “intelligence goals [are]

¹⁵ Unlike the Mathematics curriculum, which aims to “ensure that our citizens are numerate and embody mathematical habits of mind” (BC, 2015R), or the English Language Arts curriculum, which aims to equip students with the “language and literacy skills [required] for success in school, community, career, and life” (BC, 2015S), the primary aim of the Social Studies curriculum is to “develop active and informed citizens” (BC, 2015B). While Mathematics and English Language Arts promote specific dimensions of the educated citizen, which are informed by each respective discipline, the citizenship aim of Social Studies is intended to promote the child’s understanding of “key historical, geographical, political, economic, and societal concepts, and how these different factors relate to and interact with each other” (2015B) by integrating elements from many different disciplines, which makes Social Studies a more generic subject by comparison.

developed through the individual's interaction with the social environment, particularly through solving problems" (1990, p.65), which incorporates various "experiential, inquiry-based, project-based and other forms of active learning" (BC, 2015C, p.2). These goals reflect a constructivist theory of learning that can be traced to Dewey's pragmatic belief "that the scientific method can be applied to a broad range of problems" (Miller & Seller, 1990, p.7). Seen this way, the aims and goals of BC's Kindergarten to Grade 12 curriculum are mostly¹⁶ rooted within the philosophical, scientific orientation that underpins the transaction position, whereby an individual is viewed as "rational and capable of intelligent problem solving" (1990, p.6). This transaction orientation defines the overall direction of BC's Kindergarten to Grade 12 Social Studies curriculum, which then also impacts the manner in which the learner, learning process learning environment, teacher's role, and evaluation are conceived of within it.

4.2.2. Curricular Conceptual Elements

Curriculum is comprised of various interconnected conceptual elements that are designed to help it realize its aims and goals (Miller & Seller, 1990, pp. 3-5). The orientation underpinning curriculum's intent defines its direction, and impacts how the learner, learning process, learning environment, teacher's role, and evaluation are conceived within it (1990, pp.3-5). Since the previous section demonstrated that the aims and goals of BC's provincial Kindergarten to Grade 12 Social Studies curriculum are rooted within a transaction orientation, this section examines the curriculum to demonstrate how this worldview manifests through each curricular conceptual element.

¹⁶ I say "mostly" at this point, because there are still some transmission features in the former curriculum's goals, such as the tone used to articulate its prescribed learning outcomes.

The Learner

BC's Kindergarten to Grade 12 Social Studies school curriculum's main aim is to "develop graduates who have the knowledge, skills, and competencies to be active, informed citizens" (BC, 2015B). All BC's curricula, including the Social Studies syllabus, are directed to meeting the educational needs of all children ages five to eighteen in the province of BC. While "each student is [recognized as] an individual learner, with his or her own learning style and unique gifts" (2015B), BC's Ministry of Education states that *all* learners within its jurisdiction are equally entitled to have "access to learning, achievement, and the pursuit of excellence" (BC, 2015F, p.10). Particularly, BC's education system must "enable all learners to develop their individual potential and to acquire the knowledge, skills and attitudes needed to contribute to a healthy, democratic and pluralistic society and a prosperous and sustainable economy" (BC, 2008A, p.4). The practice of inclusion means that the unique needs of each learner must be addressed by BC's education system, regardless of the child's social, cultural, or linguistic origins. These principles are reflected throughout the Social Studies curriculum: stipulations to assure the right of every child to an education models inclusion, which then encourages and enables learners to "demonstrate respect for human equality and cultural diversity" (BC, 2006, p.11) by "considering multiple perspectives, [and] respecting different values and points of view" (BC, 2015B).

The new BC Social Studies curriculum "places learners at the centre of the learning landscape" (BC, 2015J, p.2). According to the BC Ministry of Education, the newly designed curriculum is even more inclusive than the former one, because it facilitates a more personalized, creative approach to learning where students are able to become increasingly more responsible for their learning (2015J). Central to this is a view that, to become "educated citizens" (BC, 2015F, p.2), learners must be involved in educational activities that go beyond the acquisition of facts only. Instead, they must also understand "big ideas" (BC, 2015F, p.4), and acquire the necessary competencies for active and informed citizenship (BC, 2015B). While

both Social Studies curricula versions do not conceive the learner to be a recipient of knowledge only, they do view the learner as someone who must *develop* and *acquire* specific Social Studies related capacities to be “thoughtful, responsible, and active citizens who ...consider multiple perspectives and make reasoned judgments” (BC, 2006A, p.11). In this case, the curriculum conceives the learner “as someone attempting to develop conceptual frameworks and problem-solving skills within a specific discipline” (1990, p.111), which is firmly underpinned by a transaction orientation.

Social Studies learning tasks that support and promote informed, active citizenship must engage, encourage, and provide learners with opportunities to “develop new frameworks” (Miller & Seller, 1990, p.111) through “thoughtful inquiry from a base of knowledge and values drawn from multiple perspectives” (BC, 2006A, p.12), and through “considering multiple perspectives, respecting different values and points of view, gathering and critically analyzing information, making informed decisions, and effectively communicating their views” (BC, 2015B). The provision of these tasks takes into account the developmental needs of diverse learners, because it allows for more personalized and creative approaches in which learners are able to take greater responsibility for their learning (BC, 2015J). Two conceptions about the learner evolve from this, and both are rooted within a transaction orientation. Firstly, the learner must be offered opportunities to solve problems and engage in inquiry-based learning tasks to develop the necessary capabilities to be an educated citizen. And secondly, since all learners progress through various developmental phases, the provision of learning tasks must consider the evolving capacities of each learner; they must be appropriate to the learner’s level of development. As such, control of learning tasks is shared by both the educator and learner, whereby the former exercises his professional judgment to create a flexible learning environment which “encourages motivation, curiosity and active engagement” (2015J) of the latter.

The premise that “learning occurs as students are actively involved in a process of meaning and knowledge construction” (BC, 2015C, p.2) that involves “experiential, inquiry-based, project-based and other forms of active learning” (2015C), implies that all learners share similar mental process characteristics, because these learning behaviours all employ some type of linear, sequential problem-solving strategy (Miller & Seller, 1990, p.112). However, BC’s renewed provincial curriculum also acknowledges that all students have “individual interests and passions” (BC, 2015C, p.6). Research conducted by BC’s curriculum development team found that flexible learning environments provide the best situations for... [learners] ... to meet their interests, learning needs and aspirations” (BC, 2015J, p.2). For this reason, the curriculum makes provisions for teachers to offer a more flexible learning environment for students to engage in.

BC’s Social Studies curricular conception of the learner is rooted within a transaction orientation. The view of the learner in this position is that she fluctuates between active agency and a more passive mode of functioning (Miller & Seller, 1990, p.5). The curriculum acknowledges that the learner is entitled to acquire the necessary skills, competencies, and knowledge to become an educated citizen. Learners are central to this learning landscape, and thoughtful, responsible citizenship depends on their ability to engage in all areas of their learning. However, curricular learning standards retain control over learning tasks, and the educator’s professional knowledge about human development determines when the learner gains access to them. Furthermore, while the curriculum makes provisions to meet the individual needs of each learner, the curriculum’s general position is that all learners share similar mental processes, and informed, active citizenship depends on developing them.

The Learning Process

Curricular learning experiences include the incorporated methods used to facilitate learning the curriculum's content. In the case of BC's Social Studies curriculum, its overall purpose is to "develop graduates who have the knowledge, skills, and competencies to be active, informed citizens" (BC, 2015B). The former curriculum delineates what these skills and processes are more clearly and concisely in its *Skills and Processes of Social Studies* prescribed learning outcomes (BC, 2005, p.12; BC, 2006A, pp.11-12; BC, 2006B, p.4). Accordingly, learners must be able to "construct new knowledge, learn how to develop and communicate reasoned arguments and convictions" (BC, 2005, p.12), and "reflect critically upon events and issues" (BC, 2006A, p.11) through inquiry and problem-solving learning methods. Accordingly, "informed, deliberative, [and] active citizenship" (BC, 2005, p.12) depends on this. The framework used throughout both curricula versions to support these skills and processes includes providing learners with the ability to "identify and apply solutions to problems and issues; gather, interpret, analyse, and present information; practice active citizenship" (BC, 2006A, p.11); and "develop the competencies needed for participation in a democratic society" (BC, 2015B). The newly revised curriculum expands on the abbreviated format outlined in the former curriculum to include competency learning processes that develop the learner's ability to consider multiple perspectives, respect different views and values, make informed decisions, and communicate ideas effectively (2015B).

The general learning process involved in developing the skills and processes of Social Studies is rooted within "*constructivism*, [which] is a theory of learning that posits that learning occurs as students are actively involved in the process of meaning and knowledge construction... [through] ...experiential, [and] inquiry-based ... learning" (BC, 2015C, p.2).¹⁷ This

¹⁷ This definition is provided in the resource materials that accompany the newly revised 2015 curriculum. While the definition of constructivist pedagogy cannot be thought of as a singular concept, it is understood to be a "learning or meaning-making theory, [in which] individuals create their own new understandings, based upon the interaction of what they already know and believe, and the phenomena or ideas with

particular learning process is conceived of in terms of changes in student behaviour over time. Since Social Studies unites “topics from disciplines within the humanities and social sciences” (BC, 2015B), learning experiences to construct knowledge about “human activities, behaviours, and interactions with both other humans and the environment” (2015B) employ inquiry strategies and problem-solving methods that are grounded within the scientific method: learners are offered opportunities to investigate open-ended questions that interest them, debate and discuss historical and contemporary issues, and develop and support their own hypotheses, solutions, and conclusions (2015B). However, the construction of knowledge must also support the overall aim of the Social Studies curriculum, which is to develop the educated citizen. Therefore, learners must not only develop a deeper understanding about topics in Social Studies, they must also acquire “an understanding [about] the rights and responsibilities of citizenship, and the democratic system of government” (2015B), which includes “how decisions are made at the individual, group, local, provincial, and national levels, and how to get involved in the political process and express their opinions effectively” (2015B).¹⁸ For this reason, learners are offered opportunities to integrate their knowledge and communication skills through debate (BC, 2006B, p.11). Since “formal debate is one of the fundamental activities of democracy” (2006B, p.11), this platform offers learners a hands-on opportunity to “develop an appreciation of democracy and what it means to be Canadian” (2006B, p.3).

In both Social Studies curricula versions, knowledge is viewed as process, as opposed to content, because it is “related to various modes of inquiry and to the scientific method” (Miller & Seller, 1990, p.111). In the former curriculum, prescribed learning outcomes relate to Bloom’s cognitive, affective, or psychomotor domains of learning (BC, 2005, p.19; BC, 2006A, p.27; BC, 2006B, p.15). The learning process, in this case, involves “the recall or recognition of knowledge

which they come into contact” (Richardson, 1997, p.3). Constructivism is a theory of how individuals learn or develop, and not one that prescribes what should be taught (1997, p.3).

¹⁸ Here again, it appears that the intent of the Social Studies curriculum is not to contribute to historical or geographical mindedness, but to the political function of citizenship.

and the development of intellectual abilities” (2006B), the development of values and value systems, beliefs, and attitudes, and “aspects of learning associated with movement and skill demonstration” (2006B). The cognitive domain of learning is further broken down into three levels, which include a *knowledge* stage, an understanding and application stage, and a higher mental processes stage (2006B). The cognitive, affective, and psychomotor domains of learning not only delineate the process of knowledge acquisition, they also inform the design and development of student assessment. In this former curricular version, the conception of the learning process is rooted within a transaction orientation, because knowledge is acquired through an inquiry process that is informed by, and governed in accordance with Bloom’s “broad developmental sequence for intellectual growth” (Miller & Seller, 1990, p.182).

The newly revised BC Social Studies curriculum, on the other hand, intends to enhance learner engagement in a learning process that supports deeper learning, which is defined as “learning that encourages [learners] to look at things from different perspectives, to see the relationships between their learning in different subjects, and to make connections to their previous learning, their own experiences, and to the world at large” (BC, 2015C, p.2). Ultimately, BC’s entire new curriculum is focused on promoting “lifelong, self-directed learning” (BC, 2015F, p.2). To achieve these goals, the curriculum offers opportunities for learners to take greater control over their learning in all subject areas. Together with their educator, learners are encouraged to reflect on their work, and then develop learning plans that are constructed according to their interests, learning needs, and goals (2015F). While the prescribed learning outcomes in the former curriculum placed greater emphasis on content acquisition, the 2015 curriculum expands the boundaries of learning beyond mastery of essential topics and knowledge to include the development of competencies, such as “skills, strategies, and processes” (2015F, p.4), which are organized around “key concepts, principles, and generalizations” (2015F). In this way, the curriculum identifies three elements that learners must be actively involved in for them to construct meaning and knowledge: “the Content (Know),

Curricular Competencies (Do), and Big Ideas (Understand)” (BC, 2015F, p.3), otherwise referred to as the “Know-Do-Understand” model.

An integral part of the learning process, as reflected through the newly designed curriculum’s “Know-Do-Understand” model includes “three broad cross-curricular competencies: thinking competency, personal and social competency, and communication competency” (BC, 2013, p.3). While these cross-curricular competencies are subject-specific, they are underpinned by core competencies, which represent “sets of intellectual, personal, and social and emotional proficiencies that all students need to develop in order [for them] to engage in deep learning and life-long learning” (BC, 2015D). Since cross-curricular competencies represent the “combined skills, processes, behaviours and habits of mind that learners use to make sense of the world” (BC, 2015C, p.2), they delineate the *do* component of the curriculum model. Even though the combination of all three competencies produces an integrated, holistic view of learning, each separate competency represents a component of the child’s development, and their interrelatedness means that progress in the growth in one competency impacts the growth of other competencies (BC, 2013, p.5).

Within the context of Social Studies, learners’ competency levels expand when they engage in *doing* activities, such as when they use thinking, communication, and collaboration to problem-solve (BC, 2015D). This is particularly relevant when they are required to develop the competencies needed to participate in a democratic society (BC, 2015B), which constitutes one of the Social Studies curricular aims. In this case, learners must be able to apply critical, creative, and reflective thinking skills to “take subject-specific concepts and content and transform them into a new understanding” (BC, 2015D). In addition, the fulfilment of this goal also depends on whether learners are able to communicate information, ideas, and experiences effectively, whether they possess a positive personal and cultural identity that is supported by a strong sense of self-worth and self-awareness, and whether they are socially aware individuals who readily take responsibility for their actions (BC, 2013, pp.7-8).

Concept-based learning is the third element of the “Know-Do-Understand” learning model. In this case, key concepts, principles, and generalizations are used to define the learning standards associated with a specific area of learning. Concept-based learning complements the competency-driven curriculum, because both share a “common focus on active engagement of students” (BC, 2015F, p.4), in which students engage in “authentic tasks that connect learning to the real world” (2015F, p.4). Concept-based learning is connected to the *understand* element in the “Know-Do-Understand” model. It appears in the curriculum in the form of *Big Ideas*, which are “built around higher-order standards and key ideas, [that allow] a more in-depth exploration of topics to gain deeper understanding” (2015F, p.4). *Big Ideas* do not comprise of a “list of topics to cover in isolation from one another” (2015F); rather, they offer the learner an opportunity to study facts, understand concepts, and develop disciplinary cross-curricular skills and competencies (2015F).

Both of BC’s Social Studies curricula versions “define learning in terms of change in the student’s external behaviour” (Miller & Seller, 1990, p.5), and various inquiry and problem solving learning strategies are employed to ensure the learner is offered hands-on, experiential learning. For this reason, the conception of learning is rooted within a transaction position, because learners are expected to construct the necessary knowledge, capacities, and understandings they require for them to develop into informed, active, and responsible citizens by the time they graduate.¹⁹ While many of the learning experiences occur within the Social Studies interdisciplinary framework, their ultimate purpose is to help realize the aim of Social Studies. Therefore, learning processes must expand into a social context, because this venue serves as a platform through which learners can actively engage in the democratic process, and develop the values, attitudes, and habits of mind of an educated citizen.

¹⁹ A transmission approach, on the other hand, does not promote “the interaction between prior and new knowledge, nor the conversations that are necessary for internalization and deep understanding” (Richardson, 1997, p.3).

The Learning Environment

Learning environments are defined as “the combined social, physical, psychological, and pedagogical contexts within which learning takes place” (BC, 2015C, p.5). Various learning environments serve the aims of different subject areas. For instance, in Physical Education, a learning environment will place greater emphasis on the physical context within which the learner engages. A Social Studies learning environment, on the other hand, needs to be more attentive to the social and psychological needs of learners to ensure they acquire the skills, knowledge, and competencies that are necessary for them to develop into “active, informed citizens, who can think critically, understand and explain the perspectives of others, make judgments, and communicate ideas effectively” (BC, 2015A, p.1).

Both versions of BC’s Social Studies curriculum include an *Establishing a Positive Classroom Climate* section that outlines the considerations that must be taken into account when creating a learning environment in which students “feel comfortable learning about and discussing topics in Social Studies” (BC, 2005, p.13; BC, 2006A, p.20; BC, 2006B, p.8; BC, 2015A, p.3). Respect is a central component to ensuring this: students must be encouraged to interact respectfully with each other, they must respect the privacy of others, and they must be respectful when others are expressing different points of view (2015A, p.3). A respecting classroom environment provides its “members sufficient time and opportunities to become comfortable with each other before engaging in group discussions” (2015A, p.3). Furthermore, educators should be “prepared to facilitate any potentially controversial discussions” (2015A, p.3) in a respectful, positive, and supportive way, and learners must be made aware of ways they can seek help and support if an activity or discussion evokes in them a strong emotional response. Educators must also ensure that the selection of “specific topics, activities, and resources to support the implementation of Social Studies” (2015A, p.3) in their classroom respects the varied interests, abilities and background of diverse young people attending BC’s schools. This includes the accurate and respectful portrayal of Aboriginal cultures and their

contributions to society, including seeking the support and advice of local Aboriginal communities to ensure correct protocols are used when local knowledge and expertise is shared within BC's Social Studies classrooms (2015A, p.3).

Social Studies learning environments integrate published copyright materials, which may include printed works, “literary, dramatic, artistic, and musical works; sound recordings; performances; and communications signals” (BC, 2005, p.16; BC, 2006A, p.23; BC, 2006B, p.10). These materials serve to ensure the goals of BC's Social Studies curriculum are realized, because they help learners “develop the competencies needed for participation in a democratic society” (BC, 2015B). These various resources also provide learners with the opportunity to better understand the “people, places, issues, and events that have shaped the world in which they live” (BC, 2015A, p.1), so that they can develop a “deeper understanding of the differences between peoples, [and] also an appreciation for aspects of the human experience [that is] shared across time and space” (2015A, p.1). However, learners must learn to respect the copyright laws, and in order for them to do so, they must understand the purpose of these special protections (BC, 2005, p.16; BC, 2006A, p.23; BC, 2006B, p.10). A comprehensive list of legal responsibilities is available within BC's former curriculum, where it specifies that “it is important for education professionals, parents, and students to respect the value of original thinking and the importance of not plagiarizing the work of others” (2005, 2006A, 2006B).

The newly designed curriculum includes an additional conception of a learning environment that is designed to “meet the interests, learning needs and aspirations” (BC, 2015J, p.2) of learners. According to “BC participants in consultations, researchers and world-leading authorities, a pedagogical learning environment that is *flexible* fosters creativity, inspires the interests of learners, and supports their needs (2015J, p.2). Several features of the newly designed Social Studies curriculum support the creation of flexible and personalized learning environments. First, with fewer learning standards, the structure of the 2015 curriculum “provides the space for flexibility so that teachers can more readily address the passions, range

of interests, and abilities of the learners at hand” (2015J, p.2). Secondly, the learning standards “can be combined and integrated in various ways, to create courses or learning experiences that go beyond the borders of traditional learning areas” (2015J, p.3). Finally, the curriculum’s new “Know-Do-Understand” learning model “supports and encourages student-driven, inquiry-based approaches to teaching and learning [by] placing an increased focus on concepts and content that address ‘real-world’ issues and problems” (2015J, p.3).

Social Studies learning environments that support and enable learners to develop into educated citizens must be respectful, flexible, and personalized. The curriculum acknowledges that learning environments come in many forms, and teachers often “create learning environments that explore the use of time and space in creative ways” (BC, 2015F, p.6) to adapt the environment to the needs, aspirations, and interests of learners. However, since the aims of Social Studies are directed towards the development of responsible, engaged, and active citizenship, much of the learning environment occurs within a social context. In it, students must be allowed to actively explore, critically examine, make judgments, and communicate their ideas effectively as they inquire into problems, topics, events, or issues that shape the world in which they live. Therefore, since the conception of the learning environment in the Social Studies classroom involves “providing an environment that supports problem solving” (Miller & Seller, 1990, p.112), it follows that the “emphasis is on the interaction, or transaction, between the student and the environment” (1990, p.112).

The Teacher’s Role²⁰

The learning standards in BC’s curricula are its legally required component. In the former curriculum they are referred to as *prescribed learning outcomes*; in the new curriculum, learning

²⁰ The concept of “role” can be very large, especially with regards to teachers. Please note that, in this section, and throughout this thesis, I am discussing “role” primarily in the generic terms of what the curriculum believes the duties and responsibilities of teachers should be.

standards include the concepts and content for each learning area, and curricular competencies. These learning standards “describe what students are expected to know, understand and be able to do” (BC, 2015J, p.1). However, even though BC’s “Ministry of Education defines the ‘what’ to teach” (2015J, p.1), teachers are free to determine which instructional methods and approaches they will use in their classrooms, what learning resources they will use to support student learning, and which assessment strategies and techniques they will apply (2015J, p.1).

The primary role of the Social Studies teacher, according to both curricula versions, is to ensure their students develop the knowledge, skills, and competencies needed for them to be responsible, thoughtful, engaged, active, and informed citizens (BC, 1997, p.1; BC, 2005, p.11; BC, 2006A, p.11; BC, 2006B, p.3; BC, 2015B). To achieve this, BC’s Social Studies teachers must create a personalized, flexible, and engaging learning environment that offers learners the opportunity to actively construct knowledge and understanding about their world through “experiential, inquiry-based, project-based and other forms of active learning” (BC, 2015C, p.2). The teacher working within this type of transactional learning environment “must be familiar with the appropriate resources and be able to stimulate inquiry with questions and probes” (Miller & Seller, 1990, p.111). To help learners deepen their learning, teachers must encourage their students to “think critically, solve problems, and communicate their ideas” (BC, 2015C, p.3). In doing so, they help their “students build up an increasingly sophisticated conceptual understanding of how knowledge has been constructed within a particular topic or discipline, [and guide them to] build generalizations and mental models of the world that allow them to make sense of new information and connect it to prior knowledge” (2015C, p.3). During this process, teachers are expected consider the various backgrounds, interests, and abilities of their students, and “adapt, modify, combine, and organize instructional strategies to meet [their] needs” (BC, 1997, p.3). Teachers must also ensure that the resource materials they use in their

classrooms “provide guidance for learning that is student-initiated, self-directed, inquiry-based, and interdisciplinary” (BC, 2012, p.3).

In an inquiry-based learning environment designed to satisfy “society’s aspirations for BC’s educated citizen” (BC, 2015F, p.3), the selection of problems that are either subject specific, or interdisciplinary, “should be related to the intrinsic interests of students, for the obvious reason that if a student is not motivated by a problem it is no longer a problem” (Miller & Seller, 1990, p.66). Teachers, therefore, must provide students with “challenging and well-defined problems to solve, ...[guide] them to confront their own beliefs and ideas, [ask] ...them to question, debate, draw distinctions, and perform other thinking tasks” (BC, 2013, p.6). An important part of this process is for teachers to ensure that their learners are presented with developmentally appropriate learning tasks that are complex or challenging enough to engage them. This involves not only being “interested in how children think and how they approach problems” (2013, p.111), but also how they develop cognitively, psychologically, physically, and spiritually. Even though the curriculum does not expand on this topic, elaboration is provided in its *Guidelines for Structuring Curriculum* (BC, 2012) section. In it, BC’s Ministry of Education’s advisory group divides school age children into three developmental stages: Formative Years (K-5), Middle Years (6-9/10), and Graduation (Transition) Years (10/11-12) (p.4). During the formative years, learners furnish their “knowledge, understanding, and skills for further learning” (2012, p.4); numeracy, cross-curricular competencies and literacy are strongly emphasized during this developmental phase. The middle years build upon the previous stage’s well-developed foundational skills; however, learners explore areas that they are passionate about through “inquiries and project-based learning experiences that link their learning to the wider community” (2012, p.4). In the final developmental phase, learning becomes more focused on areas of particular interest to the child, and what is required by her to transition into post-secondary adult life (2012, p.4). The role of the teacher is to understand and support the

developmental needs of learners as they transition through their formative, middle and graduation years.

The development of informed, responsible, and active citizens cannot occur in a vacuum, particularly if students are to “develop an understanding of the rights and responsibilities of citizenship and the democratic system of government” (BC, 2015B). For this reason, BC’s teachers are encouraged to invite various members of the larger community into the learning environments they have created whenever possible to share their expertise, experiences, and perspectives with their learners (BC, 2015F, p.7). Since the newly designed BC curriculum “is dedicated to ensuring that the cultures and contributions of Aboriginal peoples in [BC] are reflected in all provincial curricula, ...teachers are strongly encouraged to seek the advice and support of local Aboriginal communities (BC, 2015A, p.4). This collaboration within the general community affirms the curriculum’s transaction position whereby “knowledge is viewed in relation to the knower and, particularly, in relation to the *procedures* the knower uses to explore and verify knowledge” (Miller & Seller, 1990, p.111).

The role of BC’s teachers is to create safe, respectful, and enabling learning environments for each and every student to engage in. In the Social Studies classroom, teachers must consider the emotional safety of their students, which includes being “mindful of activities that may cause emotional or psychological stress for individual students..., such as blindfolding, working in closed environments, solo performance, body contact, heterogeneous groupings” (BC, 2015A, p.12). This means that they have to be sensitive to individual learner needs, and teachers must be ready to react to unique situations that may arise. They must ensure students are “aware of established rules and procedures for safety” (BC, 2015F, p.11), and ensure they comply with the “*Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*” (BC, 1996), especially the sections that relate to protection of privacy. Teachers must not only ensure that all social interactions are conducted with respect, but they are obliged to model respecting behaviours too.

Evaluation

Student evaluation involves collecting information about student learning and interpreting this data to plan instruction, set student goals, and make curricular decisions (BC, 1997, p.4). Teachers assess student performance in relation to specific learning standards, core competencies, literacy and numeracy. (BC, 1997, p.3; BC, 2005, p.25; BC, 2006A, p.49; BC, 2015H). This evidence of learning may be collected using various methods, such as student observations; student self and peer assessments; written, oral, or practical tests and quizzes; presentations and projects; work samples; written and oral reports; performance reviews; or portfolios, journals, and learning logs (BC, 2005, p.25; BC, 2006A, p.49). The newly designed curriculum further states that evaluation tasks must be rich, and teachers must engage students to set criteria, establish exemplars, and leverage the “power of questioning to allow for ongoing, timely, descriptive feedback to the student” (BC, 2015H).

Both curricula versions suggest three types of assessment that may be used in conjunction with one another, which include assessment *for*, *as*, and *of* learning (BC, 2005, p.25; BC, 2006A, pp.49-50; BC, 2015H). In assessment *for* learning, students are engaged and encouraged to “become involved in their own day-to-day assessment - to acquire the skills of thoughtful self-assessment and to promote their own achievement” (2005; 2006A; 2015H). The purpose of this type of regular, ongoing criterion-referenced assessment is to compare a learner’s achievement to established criteria; it is used to determine what students *need* to learn to be successful, because it is used as an opportunity to promote learning. In assessment *for* learning, students’ strengths are identified, and areas of learning that require further development are highlighted (2005; 2006A). Assessment *as* learning, on the other hand, is student driven; learners are provided with the opportunity to actively construct meaning from learning experiences through continuous reflection and self-assessment. In assessment *as*

learning, “teachers can help students develop, practice, and become comfortable with critical analysis of their own learning” (2005, p.26; 2006A, p.49). The last type of assessment includes formal, large-scale or teacher summative assessments to make judgments about student achievement in relation to other students, provincial, or national standards. These assessments *of learning* may be applied throughout the year at particular points in the instructional process, or at the end of a course of study or grade level. During the senior years, assessments *of learning* are in the form of provincial exams. Data gathered from assessment *of learning* is generally used in reports about student achievement (2005, p.26; 2006A, p.49).

BC’s Ministry of Education provides new guidelines for “assessment, evaluation, and communication of student learning... [to align them] with the redesigned curricula” (BC, 2015H). Whereas the achievement indicators in the former curriculum relate directly to its respective prescribed learning outcomes, the introduction of the “Know-Do-Understand” model of learning means that new guidelines must now be issued to ensure they are consistent with this new framework. Throughout each process, the principles of fairness and transparency must not only be accorded to each learner, but assessment, evaluation, and reporting should also be “ongoing, timely, specific, and embedded in day to day instruction” (2015H). Teachers should provide “varied and multiple opportunities for learners to demonstrate their learning” (2015H); these should be collected over time to provide a more comprehensive profile of the learner and his learning. Since evaluation in a transaction-oriented learning environment is focused on ensuring the student acquires complex intellectual frameworks and skills, such as analysis and synthesis, and social skills that are important in a democratic context (Miller & Seller, 1990, p.111), “students are encouraged to reflect and self-assess to build important meta-cognitive skills” (BC, 2015H) that are representative of “all three components of the curriculum model - knowing, doing, understanding” (2015H). Furthermore, the personalized emphasis of the new curriculum “lends itself to assessment as learning, where students participate in the setting of

criteria and the design of inquiries” (2015H). This allows them to “take responsibility for their own learning, [and construct] meaning for themselves” (BC, 2006A, p.49).

The main purpose of BC’s Kindergarten to Grade 12 Social Studies curriculum is to develop informed, responsible, and engaged citizens. In this inquiry to determine the underlying worldview that directs six of its curricular elements, data gathered from both versions of BC’s Social Studies curricula indicate that they are mostly rooted within a transaction orientation. Some curricula aspects do, however, relate to a transmission position, such as the organization of BC’s entire curriculum content into separate subjects, and the prescriptive tone used to communicate the learning outcomes in the former curriculum. However, the curriculum’s aims, and its conceptions of the learner, learning process, learning environment, teacher’s role, and evaluation are designed to support and encourage students to construct knowledge about Social Studies topics and concepts so that they can develop the cognitive and social capacities to engage actively in a democratic society. For this reason, a transaction worldview underpins both of BC’s Social Studies curricula versions. From this position, curricular conceptual elements serve to ensure the curriculum’s overall citizenship aims are realized; they view learners as people who must develop the necessary competencies to become educated citizens. They are central in this predominantly experiential learning landscape, that is based on inquiry and offers problem solving opportunities to ensure the needs, aspirations, and interests of all learners are enabled and respected. However, it is unclear whether both these versions of BC’s Kindergarten to Grade 12 Social Studies curriculum are capable of contributing to Canada’s efforts to fulfil its dissemination duty to education *about, through, and for* human rights. The next chapter is devoted to an inquiry to ascertain whether this is the case.

Chapter 5 - Compliance Assessment

BC's Kindergarten to Grade 12 Social Studies curriculum represents one of the public policies within Canada through which it can systematically integrate human rights education into Canadian schools. In order for me to determine how adequately the curriculum under investigation fulfils this duty, I have provided a description of what constitutes human rights education. I have also developed a human rights accountability tool that consists of structural, procedural, and outcome indicators to assess compliance. The latter indicator bridges between Canada's treaty duty to disseminate information *about, through, and for* human rights, and the provincial curriculum's adequacy to do so through its declared aims, and its conceptions of the learner, learning process, learning environment, teacher's role, and evaluation. In addition, the three categories of human rights indicators also provide the framework through which I conduct the following assessment to determine if, and how, BC's Kindergarten to Grade 12 Social Studies curriculum adheres to Canada's international human rights education obligations that are articulated in the Convention (1989) and the DHRET (2011).

I begin this chapter with a review of Canada's federal structure and the provincial legislative system that enables it to incorporate the treaties Canada has ratified into its domestic laws. I then examine BC's Kindergarten to Grade 12 Social Studies curricular aims, and its conceptions of the learner, learning process, learning environment, teacher's role, and evaluation to determine their compliance with the standards pertaining to human rights education. Since this curriculum represents one of the public policies within Canada through which it can educate *about, through, and for* human rights, I use this information to ascertain how closely it adheres with Canada's treaty duties. I also detail some of the active means BC's Ministry of Education has already taken to systematically integrate international human rights education into its schools via the province's Kindergarten to Grade 12 Social Studies curriculum.

A strong philosophical bias towards viewing the “world in terms of the interrelatedness and interdependence of all phenomena” (Miller & Seller, 1990, p.117) influences the way I conduct this inquiry. Since I believe that the world is not “composed of elementary building blocks” (1990, p.117) that are independent one from another, *and* I do not adhere to the idea that knowledge is generated solely through the application of the scientific method, my worldview aligns most closely with a transformational approach. Therefore, rather than view curriculum as something that is separated from the web of relations that surrounds it (1990, p.6), I view it as a complex and dynamic social process that is deeply embedded within a diverse array of personal meaning and opinions about what schools should do (1990, p.3). This does not mean that certain elements within a curriculum do not align with either a transmission or transaction paradigm. Rather, I believe that the complex matrix that comprises curriculum consists of various implicit and explicit elements, conceptions, and substance that define its purpose. From this particular worldview, I assess BC’s Kindergarten to Grade 12 Social Studies curriculum to determine its compliance with Canada’s human rights treaty obligations.

5.1. Structural Framework

In Chapter Three I identified four structural indicators that, when applied, illustrate Canada’s commitment to incorporate relevant human rights provisions into its legal and governmental framework. Specific attention is given to its declared public policies through which Canada can actively implement its dissemination treaty duties. The first two indicators identify all relevant international human rights treaties that Canada has ratified that obligate it to disseminate information *about*, *through*, and *for* human rights, and charge it with the duty to respect, protect, and fulfil each child’s inherent dignity and inalienable rights. Two subsequent structural indicators focus on dates of entry into force and coverage, whereby the first of these indicators relates to the right to education, including human rights education, and the second of

them points to the domestic laws for implementing a human rights education on the basis of equal opportunity.

5.1.1. Treaties Ratified

Canada has a comprehensive constitutional, political, and legislative structure at its federal, provincial, and territorial tiers of government through which it can adequately incorporate and advance its international human rights treaty obligations. Confirmation of this is obtained from the various documents that comprised the last Universal Periodic Review of Canada, which was conducted by the UN's Human Rights Council in 2012. This report assessed the progress Canada made to respect, protect, and fulfil its treaty duties for all of its citizens. In this most recent review, Elissa Goldberg (UN, 2013B), Canada's Ambassador and Permanent Representative to the UN in Geneva, mentions that "all levels of government cooperate to ensure protections are in place across the country, [and] where Canadians consider themselves to be subject to a rights violation, avenues for redress are well established and openly accessible" (2013B, p.3). Goldberg also pointed out that "Canadian federalism includes collaborative and complementary laws, policies and programs of federal, provincial and territorial governments that protect the rights and freedoms of people in Canada" (UN, 2013A, p.2). During the same review, Canadian representatives to the UN Human Rights Council echoed these findings; they claimed that "Canada has a strong framework for the protection and promotion of human rights, from [its] Constitution to the many laws, programs, policies and institutions in place across the country" (2013A, p.2). Accordingly, this multi-partner and multi-layer national and regional structure has the capacity to fully ensure Canada complies with its international human rights treaty duties.

Since the inception of the UN in 1945, Canada has annexed numerous human rights treaties into its domestic legal system²¹ through ratification, which is the “act whereby a state indicates its consent to be bound to a treaty” (UN, N.D). Furthermore, the UN ratification institution “grants [UN Member States] the necessary time-frame to seek the required approval for the treaty at the domestic level and to enact the necessary legislation to give domestic effect to that treaty” (N.D). Several of these treaties make reference to education as a right, but the Convention ties this right with the duty to disseminate information *about, through, and for* human rights principles and norms in its Article 42. It charges Canada to “undertake to make the principles and provisions of the Convention widely known, by appropriate and active means, to adults and children alike” (UN, 1989, Article 42). The Convention also provides direction about what the aims of human rights education should be in Article 29, which elaborates on the child’s rights *through* education.

Canada began the process to formally incorporate the Convention into its domestic legal system shortly after it was adopted by the UN General Assembly in 1989. Canada signed it in May of 1990, and then formally ratified the Convention in December 1991. The DHRET, a subsequent human rights instrument that pertains specifically to a UN Member State’s dissemination duty, was adopted, without a vote, by the UN General Assembly on the twenty-third of March, 2011. Since Canada is a member of the UN, the DHRET represents an additional legally binding human rights instrument that Canada must comply with regarding the duty to disseminate information *about, through, and for* human rights. According to these findings, Canada has, indeed, ratified the international human rights instruments pertaining to

²¹ Canada ratified the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights in 1976, and in doing so, it reaffirmed its commitment to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. These three treaties constitute the International Bill of Rights. Canada ratified other international human rights treaties, including the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (1970); the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (1981); the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (1987); the Convention on the Rights of the Child (1991); and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2010).

human rights education, and from the time of ratification, Canada became obligated to disseminate information *about, through, and for* international human rights.

The UDHR signifies the touchstone for international human rights law. Its provisions reflect a “common standard of achievement for all peoples and all nations” (UN, 1948, Preamble). Its human rights and fundamental freedoms permeate all subsequent international human rights treaties. The UDHR represents the core international human rights treaty through which nations “reaffirmed their faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person and in the equal rights of men and women” (1948, Preamble). When Canada ratified the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights in 1976, it reconfirmed “its commitment to the [UDHR, which then] played a seminal role in the development of human rights law” (Schabas, 1998, p.405) in Canada. The International Bill of Rights²², therefore, serve as the original treaties that Canada ratified that obligate it to respect, protect, and fulfil the inherent dignity and inalienable rights of every Canadian, which also includes all Canadian children. Ensuing international human rights treaties expanded upon the principles and norms contained in the International Bill of Rights to include special provisions and protections for minority groups and peoples. For instance, the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (1979) affords particular provisions and protections for women to guarantee them economic, social, cultural, civil, and political equality. The Convention stands out as a special treaty designed to “extend particular care to the child” (UN, 1989, Preamble) who “by reason of his [sic] physical and mental immaturity, needs special safeguards and care” (1989, Preamble). Accordingly, Canada has ratified all treaties relevant to the duty to respect, protect, and fulfil each child’s inherent dignity and inalienable rights, which includes all three treaties contained in the International Bill of Rights and the Convention.

²² The International Bill of Rights includes the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.

5.1.2. Entry into Force and Coverage

The next two structural indicators depict Canada's internal political and legal framework through which it implements its treaty obligations domestically. The first one focuses on the right to education, and the second indicator in this category expands the notion of education to include *human rights* education, and deals with implementing this particular education right on the basis of equal opportunity. Section 93 of the *Canadian Constitution Act (1867)* allocates exclusive legislative powers in relation to education to each of its provinces. As such, the date of entry into force of the right to education, which includes the right to *human rights* education, may be assumed to concur with the date when the Act became superior law in Canada in 1867. Accordingly, education was reaffirmed as a provincial mandate. In order for me to determine the extent of coverage regarding the right to education in general, and the right to a human rights education on the basis of equal opportunity more specifically, I need to survey all relevant forms of *provincial* superior law, specifically those relating to the coverage of the right of education in BC. I include human rights education within the scope of general education, because the purpose of the former is to expand the parameters of the right to education to include rights *through* education, which is defined as the obligation to develop each child's "respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, and for the principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations" (UN, 1989, Article 29.1.b).

BC's Ministry of Education is responsible to oversee the laws and regulations that are used to govern the administration, operation, and partnerships of each of its provincial education systems. They are communicated formally through a *Manual of School Law (1997)*,²³ and other policies, such as the *Library Act (1996)*, *School Calendars (1996)*, and *School Trustee Election Procedures (2014)*. Education policy, which is defined as consisting of "a plan

²³ BC's *Manual of School Law* includes the *School Act*, the *Teachers Act*, the *Independent School Act*, and the *First Nations Education Act*.

of action used by the Ministry of Education to set out clear rules and expectations for the delivery of programs and services to the public” (BC, N.D.E), are derived from this “legislation, or from decisions made by elected officials, such as Ministers and School Trustees, or public servants and school administrators” (N.D.E). One of these duties is to “set the education standards for students in grades K to 12 through the provincial curriculum” (BC, N.D.A). Through an ongoing process that involves teachers, government officials, academics, and public stakeholders, curriculum development teams draw from current trends in education and research in the field to design its provincial curriculum. Once it has completed an initial phase-in period, the curriculum becomes a legal policy that all educators in BC are required to adhere to as part of their licensing duties. Therefore, BC’s entire Kindergarten to Grade 12 curriculum represents a legal active mechanism through which it can proceed to systematically integrate information *about, through, and for* human rights, and thereby satisfy Canada’s dissemination treaty duties.

The roles and responsibilities of BC’s Ministry of Education are particularly relevant to the coverage of the right to education, and for implementing a human rights education on the basis of equal opportunity, because it is legally responsible to administer all Kindergarten to Grade 12 education legislation and set its education policy (N.D.E). One of these duties includes setting the province’s Kindergarten to Grade 12 education standards, which is communicated through BC’s education curriculum. Fund allocation, student performance, and reporting are other obligations BC’s Ministry of Education has that reflect the legal and political structures that are in place to ensure BC’s provincial government realizes its education duties, which also include those relating the dissemination of information *about, through, and for* human rights. These standards are outlined in BC’s Ministry of Education’s *Manual of School Law*, which consists of the *School Act, Independent School Act, Teachers Act, First Nations Education Act*, and various regulations, ministerial orders and other orders in council,

The *BC School Act* (1996) is part of BC's *Manual of School Law K-12*. It is pertinent to the scope of who is entitled to receive an education in BC's schools, and it represents the superior law in all matters concerning education in BC. Accordingly, "a person who is a resident in British Columbia must enroll in an education program ...on the first school day of a school year if, on or before December 31 of that school year, the person will have reached the age of 5 years, ...until he or she reaches the age of 16 years" (BC, 1996A, 3.1.a-b). The enactment of this coverage to make education compulsory for all children ages of 5 to 16 in BC is with the advice and consent of Her Majesty the Queen, and the Legislative Assembly of the Province of BC (1996A, Preamble).

The coverage of domestic laws that assure equality rights to every Canadian is mandated and enforced under Section 15(1) of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms (1982). In addition to these federal laws, BC's Human Rights Code (1996) also stipulates that two of its purposes is to "promote a climate of understanding and mutual respect where all are equal in dignity and rights" (BC, 1996, Article 3.b), and to "identify and eliminate persistent patterns of inequality associated with discrimination" (1996, Article 3.d). Since equality rights afford every Canadian individual "equal protection and equal benefit of the law without discrimination and, in particular, without discrimination based on race, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, sex, age or mental or physical disability" (1982, Item 15.1), and the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms represents the superior law in Canada, every Canadian is equal in the eyes of the law. As I have demonstrated previously, the right to education includes the right to human rights education, because the latter pertains to rights that are realized *through* education. Therefore, in addition to the right to education, the right to equality means that human rights education must be available to every Canadian citizen, without discrimination of any kind, and provincial governments must assure equal access to this right at the provincial level of government through its compulsory education system.

Four human rights education structural indicators demonstrate that Canada has a comprehensive political and legal structure through which it can incorporate the treaties it has ratified at the country level. By ratifying the International Bill of Rights and the Convention, Canada committed to respect and fulfil its duty to disseminate information *about, through, and for* human rights. The ratification of these treaties also provided the legal structure through which to protect the inherent dignity and inalienable rights of every Canadian citizen. Accordingly, every Canadian citizen is regarded as a bearer of rights, including children, who are entitled to added protections that are enforced through the Convention. Following the annexation of these rights into Canadian federal law, the distribution of legislative powers with regards to education embedded most duties pertaining to education within Canada's provincial government structure. It determined that all BC children ages five to sixteen are equally entitled to access the province's education system without discrimination of any kind. Furthermore, there are no exclusions to this right: The Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms ensures equal access to education, including human rights education, for all Canadian children.

5.2. Procedural Framework

The analysis of Canada's mandated activities within the country's relevant institutions indicates that it has the adequate legal and political structure through which it can actively fulfil its human rights treaty duties to disseminate information *about, through, and for* human rights via BC's school curriculum. The next step is to assess the active means taken by Canada to systematically integrate human rights education into its provincial school curricula, and correlate them with the dissemination standards outlined in the treaties that Canada has annexed into its federal and provincial legal system through the ratification process. This is achieved by comparing BC's Kindergarten to Grade 12 Social Studies curricular aims and the curriculum's conceptions of the learner, learning process, learning environment, teacher's role, and

evaluation with those corresponding to international human rights education. Since the realization of this duty occurs progressively over time, this analysis captures Canada's actual commitment to its international human rights dissemination duties at the time of writing this thesis. For this reason, process indicators are applied to determine compliance.

5.2.1. Aims

The purpose of the first process indicator is to monitor the aim of the curriculum under investigation to determine whether it adheres with the aim directing international human rights education. Since curricular aims represent the intent of an education program, they serve to govern what the program plans to offer, and its substance.

The aim of BC's Kindergarten to Grade 12 Social Studies curriculum is to "develop graduates who have the knowledge, skills, and competencies to be active, informed citizens" (BC, 2015B). The curriculum further describes an informed citizen as someone who "understands key historical, geographical, political, economic, and societal concepts, and how these different factors relate to and interact with each other" (2015B). The aim of human rights education, on the other hand, is to develop each child's capacity to become a peace-builder so that he or she can unite in strength with the family of nations to help realize the UN Charter peace goals of 1945. The UN Charter further defines the act of peace-building to include actions towards the maintenance of international peace and security, the development of friendly relations among peoples, and the promotion and encouragement of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms (UN, 1945, Article 1.1-3).

A direct comparison between the aim of BC's Kindergarten to Grade 12 Social Studies curriculum and the aim of human rights education indicates a lack of congruence: the former is centred around the concept of citizenship, while the latter is focused on peace. However, these aims are general with long-term projections towards enabling a general capacity such as active, engaged, and democratic participation or peace-building. To achieve them, the aim must be

broken down into more specific and shorter term goals. Since aims govern curricula goals, the investigation into compliance must expand beyond a simplistic comparison of aims only, to include an analysis of curricula goals; these link between curricular content and “make clear its contribution to the development of educated citizens” (BC, 2015F, p.5). In this type of holistic approach to curriculum interpretation, the analysis of the relationship between curricular aims, goals, and content provides greater insight into what the Social Studies curriculum *intends* to accomplish through its overall citizenship focus.

Both of BC’s Social Studies curricula versions reflect goals that relate directly to the aim of citizenship, because they are designed to enable and prepare students to “exercise their roles, rights, and responsibilities within their family, the community, Canada, and the world” (BC, 2006A, p.11), and develop the necessary competencies to participate effectively in a democratic society (BC, 2015B). Accordingly, the educated citizen must be able to consider multiple perspectives, gather and critically analyze information from multiple sources, make connections between numerous social variables, respect different points of view and values, and make informed decisions that are communicated effectively to others (BC, 2006A, p.11; BC, 2005, p.11; BC, 2015B). They must also acquire “respect for human equality and cultural diversity, and develop the skills and attitudes necessary [for them] to become thoughtful, active participants in their communities and as global citizens” (BC, 2006A, p.11).

These stated goals are intended to serve the aims of active, informed, and responsible citizenship, but they are different to the peace-building goals of human rights education. From a transmission orientation, which views the world as a composite of unrelated isolated components, the goals of BC’s Kindergarten to Grade 12 curriculum do *not* comply with Canada’s dissemination duties to educate *about* human rights to maintain international peace and security, *through* human rights to develop friendly relations amongst peoples, and for the promotion and encouragement of respect *for* human rights and fundamental freedoms. There is no parallel between the language used to communicate these goals, their scope, or what it is

they intend to accomplish. A more holistic, transformative worldview, on the other hand, takes into account the complex interrelated and interconnected dynamic between the curriculum's aims, goals, and content. When the curriculum is analyzed through this orientation, information confirms that they do, indeed, have the capacity to promote peace-building behaviours similar with those underlying human rights education. The following two examples from each curriculum version serves to substantiate this claim.

In the former Kindergarten Social Studies curriculum, in the area of *Governance*, children are expected to be able to “describe their roles and responsibilities as members of the classroom and school community” (BC, 2006A, p.56) so that they can “gain an appreciation for the purpose of governance in a variety of societies” (2006A, p.12), including their own. As they acquire this knowledge, the child is expected to “participate co-operatively in groups” (2006A, p.30), and “identify the purpose of classroom and school expectations” (2006A, p.30). The purpose of studying these topics in the area of *Governance* is to provide opportunities for children to develop the “skills, attitudes, and processes necessary to be responsible, active citizens” (2006A, p.11).

A similar example is extracted from the newly designed BC Kindergarten Social Studies curriculum. This curriculum consists of a “Know-Do-Understand” model of learning that is designed “to develop graduates who have the knowledge, skills, and competencies to be active, informed citizens” (BC, 2015B). This integrated model of learning includes *Big Ideas*²⁴, which are key concepts that students must understand at the completion of the curriculum. For example, one of the *Big Ideas* in this particular curriculum is that children must learn to understand that “rights, roles and responsibilities shape our identity and help us build healthy relationships with others” (2015M, Kindergarten). To build the schema for understanding this

²⁴ *Big Ideas* are central to the newly designed 2015 curriculum. They consist of cross-disciplinary and interdisciplinary concepts, principles, and theories that connect multiple understandings into broad conceptual frameworks or schema (BC, 2015C, p.1). They are derived directly from curricular goals, and they are available online for all grade levels.

conceptual framework, children must learn about the “rights, roles, and responsibilities of individuals and groups” (2015M) so that they can apply ethical judgment to discern “fair and unfair aspects of events, decisions, and actions in their lives” (2015M).

In these two particular examples, young children are exposed to the concept of social organization, and they are also offered opportunities to engage in active citizenship. They learn about the rights, roles and responsibilities required for good governance, and they are exposed to the values of fairness that underpin them. As they participate cooperatively with others, they are provided with opportunities to acquire behaviours of respect for human rights, which, in turn, promote and support the goal of developing healthy relationships with others. These concepts not only reinforce responsible and thoughtful citizenship, they also serve to develop the child’s capacity to build peace, because, through engagement in Social Studies, the child is provided with the necessary skills, knowledge, and competencies to build friendly relations amongst peoples, and promote and encourage respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms.

The example from the former curriculum precludes attention to more specific concepts and competencies that are acquired through engagement in Social Studies, because its more prescriptive nature excludes them. Even so, when both examples are considered together, they exhibit elements that *are* congruent with the first component of human rights education, which is to educate *about* human rights norms and principles, the values that underpin them, and the mechanisms to protect them (UN, 2011, Article 2.2.a). Furthermore, in a more general survey of the 2015 curriculum’s content areas for all grade levels, I identified elements that tie into the peace-building aims of human rights education in multiple ways, and in increasingly more sophisticated degrees of complexity. As such, their inclusion as curricular substance does not only support the citizenship aims of both versions of BC’s Kindergarten to Grade 12 Social Studies curriculum, but the key concepts, principles, and theories they convey to the child is supportive of her capacity to become a peace-builder.

The application of the human rights compliance process indicator found that the curricular aim of both versions of BC's Kindergarten to Grade 12 Social Studies curriculum can support the child's capacity to become a peace-builder. A direct comparison of its citizenship aim and goals revealed a lack of compliance with the peace aim and goals of human rights education. However, a more holistic analysis of the curricular substance that stems from these aim and goals indicates that they not only support responsible, engaged, and active citizenship, but they also represent the requisite skills, concepts, principles, attitudes, and social behaviours that are necessary to help realize the UN 1945 Charter objectives of maintaining international peace and security, developing friendly relations amongst peoples, and promoting and encouraging respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. For this reason, I maintain that BC's Kindergarten to Grade 12 Social Studies curricular citizenship aim is not only *partially* compliant with the human rights education aim, and it also has the *potential* to develop each a child's capacity to become a peace-builder. For this to occur, the aim of BC's Kindergarten to Grade 12 Social Studies curriculum must be expanded beyond the concept of citizenship only to include a vision of positive world peace, whereby its goals would be to educate *about, through,* and *for* human rights.

5.2.2. Process Through Curricular Conceptions

In the previous section I assessed compliance of curricular aims and goals through the application of the first human rights education process indicator. However, other elements comprise curriculum, and they must be assessed to determine Canada's compliance to its dissemination duties to educate *about, through,* and *for* human rights through both versions of BC's Kindergarten to Grade 12 Social Studies curricula. In this section, I apply the second process indicator to examine curricular conceptions of the learner, learning process, learning

environment, teacher's role, and evaluation, to understand if, and how, they contribute to the systematic integration of human rights education into BC's schools.

A. Information About International Human Rights Norms and Principles

One of the requirements for a curriculum to comply with a UN Member State's treaty obligations to disseminate information *about* human rights for global citizenship is that it must contain educational content that is referenced to international human rights norms, the principles that underpin them, and the mechanisms used to protect them (UN, 2011, Article 2.2.a). To determine whether this is the case, content in BC's Kindergarten to Grade 12 Social Studies curriculum must contain evidence pertaining to the various international human rights treaties Canada has ratified; it does not suffice to reference domestic human rights instruments only to comply with this duty. In this particular investigation, I look for any evidence pertaining to (1) civic, political, economic, social, or cultural international human rights norms and standards, (2) human rights principles of non-discrimination, participation, access to remedy and information, accountability, the rule of law, and good governance, and/or (3) information about domestic and international avenues through which to protect these human rights.

The prescribed learning outcomes in the former Kindergarten to Grade 11 Social Studies curriculum from 1997 (Grade 8-10), 2005 (Grade 11), and 2006 (Kindergarten to Grade 7) detail the content that must be taught to every child in BC by the end of each grade level. A search for any content relating to international human rights indicates that there is a surprising lack of information about their norms and no mention of the international human rights treaties in this curriculum. One small exception to this is in the section on *Autonomy and International Involvement* in the Grade 11 curriculum, which states that "it is expected that students will assess Canada's participation in world affairs with reference to human rights [and the] United Nations" (BC, 2005, p.20). Categorizing the UN alongside human rights in an item that relates to

world affairs can be loosely tied to the mechanisms of human rights protections, but the prescribed learning outcome does not elaborate on how this is the case.

The 2015 Social Studies curriculum, on the other hand, contains one specific reference to the Convention, and several hints pertaining mostly to human rights principles, such as equality, non-discrimination, participation, and good governance. However, there is no other direct mention about any of the other international human rights treaties that Canada has ratified, including the International Bill of Rights, in later grades. For example, one of the sample topics to be covered in its Kindergarten curriculum is intended to satisfy the *Big Idea* pertaining to the “rights, roles, and responsibilities [that] shape our identity and help us build healthy relationships with others” (BC, 2015, Kindergarten). In this instance, children are expected to know about the entitlements contained within the Convention, and tie them into the “needs and wants of individuals and families” (2015, Kindergarten). There are other references to the topic of human rights that do not elaborate on whether they are those contained in international human rights treaties in the *content* area of the Grades 1, 2, 3, 5 and 6.

The design of the new curriculum around the “Know-Do-Understand” model, however, is intended to build deeper understanding of Social Studies topics and key concepts that are expanded upon as the child progresses through to graduation. Therefore, the early introduction of the more general concept of human rights, and the specific reference to the Convention in the Kindergarten curriculum establishes a baseline from which subsequent knowledge on the topic of human rights is built. For instance, once children learn that human rights, responsibilities, and human needs are interrelated and interdependent concepts, they can begin to form an appreciation that “individuals have rights and responsibilities as global citizens” (BC, 2015, Grade 2). These are developed through the “connections between [one’s] community and communities throughout Canada and around the world” (2015, Grade 2). Children in Grade 6 are required to learn that “complex global problems require international cooperation to make difficult choices for the future, [and] systems of government vary in their respect for human

rights and freedoms” (2015, Grade 6). To support these *Big Ideas*, students are expected to know about topics relating to “global poverty and inequality, urbanization and migration of people, the roles of individuals, government organizations, and NGOs, different systems of government, globalization and economic interdependence, [and] international cooperation and responses to global issues” (2015, Grade 6). To enable the learning of this content, students are exposed to a large number of related topics, such as the UN, the International Criminal Court, government decision-making structures, human and drug trafficking, child labour, resource use and misuse, and genocide (2015, Grade 6). This last example demonstrates that students, who obtained knowledge about international human rights norms in earlier grades, are now educated *about* multiple human rights principles that underlie these norms, and they are further exposed to domestic and international processes and avenues through which human rights may be protected globally.

In this current comparison I am able to identify a greater presence of content relating to international human rights in BC’s newly designed Kindergarten to Grade 12 Social Studies curriculum. Unlike the former curriculum, the 2015 version includes a direct reference to the Convention in particular, and many other indirect references to the values that underpin these rights, along with various local and global efforts taken to uphold and protect them. However, the systematic integration of information *about* human rights norms, their cross-cutting principles, and the international mechanisms for their protection into curriculum is a gradual process. For it to reposition children as members of an international community, the inclusion of content that relates to international human rights must be understood to be a process that is achieved progressively over time. Since this study examines curricula from two different time frames, I can clearly discern a greater adherence to the duty to include information about international human rights in the newer curriculum when compared with its previous version.

B. School Discipline Through International Human Rights

One component of the right to education in the Convention is a stipulation that the UN Member State “take all appropriate measures to ensure that school discipline is administered in a manner consistent with the child’s human dignity and in conformity with the present Convention” (UN, 1989, Article 28.2). This duty is connected to the actions we take to ensure we coexist peacefully with each other; it involves educating children *through* human rights to enable them to overcome interpersonal and inter-group conflicts respectfully, thus securing a safe and friendly learning environment for everyone to engage in. School discipline is directly tied to the actions of both educators and learners take to ensure this, and the outcome defines the school’s learning climate. A study conducted by Howe and Covell (2005, 2013) confirmed that, when children attended schools in which educators taught *through* human rights, children became more cooperative²⁵, inclusive, sensitive, and respectful of others, and they used “rights discourse” to solve incidents of teasing, bullying, and conflict (Covell, 2013). Moreover, BC’s Ministry of Education claims that “a strong relationship exists between feelings of safety and belonging and a student’s ability to learn” (BC, 2008B, p.3). For this reason, actions must be taken to ensure all children feel comfortable and safe in their school community by providing them with an education *through* human rights. A school curriculum must include adequate guidelines to assure this.

A survey of both of BC’s Kindergarten to Grade 12 Social Studies curricula versions revealed the inclusion of a *Considerations for Program Delivery* section that outlines the steps teachers must take to ensure school discipline is administered in a manner that respects each child’s inherent dignity. This is to guarantee that all students “feel comfortable learning about, and discussing topics in Social Studies” (BC, 2005, p.13; BC, 2006A, p.20; BC, 2006B, p.8; BC, 2015A, p.3). The first part of this section provides a guideline for establishing a positive

²⁵ Cooperation between individuals within a rights-respecting framework is dialogically based; it is not the result of coercion or obedience.

classroom environment, of which *respect*²⁶ is a central ensuing component. While the term *respect* is a vague and contentious term, in this specific reference it is linked directly to how adequately school discipline is administered in a rights-respecting manner that is consistent with the international human rights treaties Canada has ratified. To assure this, the teacher is responsible to become familiar with relevant legislation, initiatives, and provincial and district policies that pertain to human rights, school discipline, and diversity in BC's schools so that he or she can facilitate a respecting classroom culture. Subsequent sections include information about confidentiality, various ways teachers can create more inclusive, equitable, and accessible learning environments, copyright responsibilities, appropriate debate conduct, and safe ways to integrate media into the classroom.

The development of rights-respecting behaviours are also promoted through curricular learning content. For instance, in the former curriculum, prescribed learning outcomes aimed at developing the necessary "skills and attitudes of active citizenship" (BC, 2005, p.20), such as "ethical behaviour, open-mindedness, respect for diversity, and collaboration" (2005, p.20), also serve the objective of creating a respectful learning environment, because they share similar equality and non-discriminatory values. Furthermore, the newly designed curriculum includes specific *social responsibility* core competencies students are expected to acquire in order for them to be able to "consider the interdependence of people with each other, to contribute positively to one's family, community, [and] society, to resolve problems peacefully, to empathize with others and appreciate their perspectives, and to create and maintain healthy relationships" (BC, 2015N). Classroom discipline is also positively impacted by a student's *personal awareness and responsibility* competency, which includes developing the capacity for one to "regulate emotions, [and] respect their own rights and the rights of others" (BC, 2015O).

²⁶ I acknowledge here that the word *respect* is a contested concept or virtue, especially when placed within the context of citizenship. However, within this thesis, I link the notion of *respect* directly to a UN Member State's duty to adhere with the international human rights treaties it has ratified.

Here again, behaviours that are intended to support and promote the citizenship aim of the curriculum also function to serve the human rights education aim of peacebuilding.²⁷

A more holistic view of BC's entire Kindergarten to Grade 12 Social Studies curriculum provides a deeper insight into the manner in which school disciplinary guidance permeates all of its elements. For example, the interdisciplinary field of Social Studies immerses students in multiple opportunities to engage with content and topics that not only support the development of knowledge, skills, and capacities for active and engaged citizenship, but they also have the potential to inspire individuals *through* human rights for peaceful coexistence. For instance, the draft 2015 curriculum states that students in Grade 11 and 12 will be required to learn that "the causes of social injustice are complex and have lasting impacts on society" (BC, 2015, Gr. 11/12). For them to expand their understanding about this matter, they must learn about the "various theoretical frameworks, interpretations, and concepts of social justice, the connections between social justice issues, and processes, methods, and approaches individuals, groups, and institutions use to promote social justice" (2015, Gr. 11/12). During the process of engaging with this material, children are expected to "make reasoned ethical judgments about controversial actions in the past and present after considering the historical context and standards of right and wrong" (2015, Gr. 11/12). This learning process not only expands upon the notion of social justice, but, by being engaged in this particular topic, children are provided with opportunities to develop greater insight into the social behaviours that promote social justice. While Social Studies content may not appear to be directly connected to school discipline and positive learning environments, many of the topics in both versions of the Social Studies curriculum address the complex ways humans interact with each. For this reason, *through* their involvement in Social Studies, "students can gain an understanding of the people, places, issues, and events that have shaped the world in which they live, and develop not only a

²⁷ In this case, the notion of *respect* for human rights and fundamental freedoms is core. As I stated in footnote 25, this term is distinguished here from the more contentious discussion or argument about the notion or virtue of respect.

deeper understanding of the differences between peoples, but also an appreciation for the aspects of the human experience shared across time and space” (BC, 2015A, p.1).

This assessment found that both versions of BC’s Kindergarten to Grade 12 Social Studies curriculum outline multiple steps teachers must take to ensure they create a safe, caring, and respecting learning environment for everyone to engage in. It also provides numerous opportunities for children to delve into content that supports the development of positive attitudes and behaviours upon which rights-respecting communities can be built and further nurtured. For these reasons, the curriculum provides adequate guidance and support *through* which educators can ensure school discipline is administered in a manner that is rights-respecting and consistent with the child’s inherent dignity, which means that they comply with this duty.

C. Participation *For* International Human Rights

Canada has an obligation to not only provide an education *about* and *through* human rights, but to also inspire individuals to maintain international peace and security, develop friendly relations amongst peoples, and promote and encourage respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. The aim of this final component of human rights education is to motivate *for* transformative action. To assure this, everyone’s civil and political participatory rights must be realized, so that each person can be empowered to enjoy and exercise these rights as they effectively uphold and protect the rights of others. The Convention charges a UN Member State with the obligation to assure all children the right to voice an opinion in matters that concern them (UN, 1989, Article 12.1). Children also have the right to freely express themselves, which means that they are not only entitled to seek and receive information, but they also have the right to “impart information and ideas of all kinds” (1989, Article 13.1). They are also entitled to freely associate and assemble peacefully with each other (1989, Article 15.1). Restrictions are

imposed on the exercise of all of these participation rights if any actions they take impinge on the rights, freedoms, and safety of others, and threaten national security, or public order and health (1989, Article 13.2.a-b, 14.3, 15.2).

The process to systematically integrate an education *for* transformative action into a school curriculum is two fold. First, children must be provided with authentic opportunities to exercise their rights within their classroom learning environment, school community, and beyond. For them to do so, they must be taught about all their international human rights, which includes their civil and political ones, and the international human rights cross-cutting principles that underpin them. However, children must also learn that there are certain restrictions to the exercise of these particular rights.²⁸ For this reason, the curriculum must provide children guidance in the exercise of these rights in a manner that is consistent with international human rights norms and principles. To assess Canada's compliance to these participatory rights, I examine both versions of BC's Kindergarten to Grade 12 Social Studies curricula to determine whether they offer opportunities for children to exercise their participation rights for transformative action. I also assess the curriculum to determine whether any guidance it provides to restrict the exercise of these rights is consistent with international human rights norms and principles.

Both curricula versions are designed to engage students in an inquiry-based experiential learning process that is intended to foster "the skills and attitudes necessary [for children] to become thoughtful, active participants in their communities and as global citizens" (BC, 2006A, p.11). For this reason, children are provided with opportunities to learn about local and global topics within the humanities and social sciences, which "focus on human activities, behaviours, and interactions with both humans and the environment" (BC, 2015B). The curriculum also claims to offer the student learning experiences that "develop the competencies needed for

²⁸ Here, the notion of *respect* manifests through behaviours *for* human rights; i.e., children must understand that they are responsible to respect the human rights and fundamental freedoms of everyone, especially during the exercise of their participation rights.

participation in a democratic society” (BC, 2015B), such as “considering multiple perspectives, respecting different values and points of view, gathering and critically analyzing information, making informed decisions, and communicating their views effectively” (2015B). Most of these learning experiences are provided through each curriculum’s learning standards. I have extracted some examples from both curricula versions to demonstrate this.

One of the prescribed learning outcomes in the area of *Governance* in the former Grade 6 curriculum, for instance, is that students must “compare individual and collective rights and responsibilities in Canada with those in other countries” (BC, 2006A, p.36). A suggested achievement indicator for this learning outcome is that the student must be able to “give examples of how the exercise of power and authority can affect an individual’s rights (e.g., rules, laws, student councils, peer groups, teams)” (2006A, p.102). If, hypothetically, a student identifies a situation in his classroom community whereby the power exerted by one group of students is impinging the rights of individuals in another group, he may wish to take a leadership role to remedy this situation. Since one of the *Skills and Processes of Social Studies* prescribed learning outcomes for this grade level expects that students will “implement a plan of action to address a selected local or global problem or issue” (2006A, p.36), the student may first “compare and assess two or more perspectives on [this] local issue, select ways to clarify [this] specific issue [through] discussion” (2006A, p.100), and then take action to ensure the rights of everyone in his class are respected, regardless of which group they choose to associate with.

The newly designed Grade 9 curriculum offers another example, whereby students are encouraged to use Social Studies inquiry processes and skills to “communicate ideas, opinions, and arguments effectively in oral or written forms” (BC, 2015, Gr.9). These participatory behaviours may be used in conjunction with one another to respond to specific curricular content regarding the discriminatory policies Canada has had towards its First Peoples, as in the case of the residential school system (2015, Gr.9). Since the learning experiences in the 2015 curriculum are designed to encourage students to employ inquiry strategies and problem

solving methods to investigate open-ended questions and concepts that interest them, it would support a student who may decide to write an advocacy letter to one of her elected officials in response to this issue. In it, she may identify the “continuing effects of imperialism and colonialism on indigenous peoples in Canada” (2015, Gr.9), particularly with regards to the issue of residential schools and their continued impact on second and third generation victims. She may argue that Canada has not taken adequate reconciliatory steps to effectively remedy this particular social injustice, and demand further action be taken to ensure the inherent dignity and inalienable rights of First Peoples residential school victims be respected, protected, and fulfilled, if she has retained previous knowledge about international human rights norms and their underlying principles.

The draft 2015 optional *Social Justice* curriculum for Grade 11/12 provides another example of ways children can exercise their participation rights through the study of Social Studies. In this instance, students learn that “the causes of social injustice are complex and have lasting impacts on society” (BC, 2015 Draft, p.7). For this reason, they must first know about “past and present social injustices in Canada and the world, their possible causes, and their lasting impact on individuals, groups, and society” (2015 Draft, p.7), and then be taught to identify the many different “processes, methods, and approaches individuals, groups, and institutions use to promote social justice” (2015 Draft, p.7). The curriculum then offers students the opportunity to “create and implement an action plan to address a particular social justice issue” (2015 Draft, p.7). Since this particular curriculum is still in its draft stage, it does not provide any sample topics or foci questions at this time. Moreover, since it is still issued as an optional curriculum, and it is up teachers to choose whether to implement it in their classrooms.

By applying a more integrated approach to the assessment of curricular information in this inquiry, I am able to determine that both versions of BC’s Kindergarten to Grade 12 Social Studies curriculum offer multiple opportunities for children to exercise their participation rights for transformative action in varying degrees of complexity and sophistication. The above

examples demonstrate that children are offered various learning experiences in which they are entitled to express their views freely, and they are free to seek and receive information to support their learning. They are also entitled to share their opinions, views, thoughts, and ideas about their Social Studies inquiries freely with others. Both curricula versions incorporate learning experiences in which children are often encouraged to work collaboratively with each other, which means that they are free to associate and assemble peacefully with each while working towards achieving their Social Studies learning goals. Since the above rights and freedoms adhere to the Convention's participation rights, I find that BC's Kindergarten to Grade 12 Social Studies curriculum complies with the children's rights education's duty to provide opportunities for children to exercise their participation rights *for* transformative action. However, I am not able to determine whether the transformative initiatives the curriculum empowers children to take to remedy social issues they have become aware of actually results in any authentic change to the prevailing social conditions.

Participation rights may be subject to certain restrictions to ensure the entitlements, freedoms, and reputations of others are respected and protected. For this reason, a school curriculum must also provide guidance in the exercise of these rights in a manner that is consistent with international human rights norms and principles. This provision is positively linked to establishing a rights-respecting learning environment, in which the teacher models regard for the inherent dignity and inalienable rights of everyone so that all "students feel comfortable learning about and discussing topics in Social Studies" (BC, 2005, p.13; BC, 2006A, p.20; BC, 2006B, p.8).

Very little direct curricular evidence supports adherence to the duty to limit a child's freedom of expression. The only example is found in the *Establishing a Positive Classroom Climate* area of the former curriculum's *Considerations for Program Delivery* section (2005, p.13; 2006A, p.20; 2006B, p.8). One of its agenda items charges the Social Studies teacher with the responsibility to "establish clear ground rules for class discussions that demonstrate respect

for privacy, for diversity, and for the expression of differing points of view” (2005, p.13; 2006A, p.20; 2006B, p.8). However, since they do not elaborate upon concepts of *privacy* and *diversity*, and the curriculum has demonstrated a failure to include comprehensive information about international human rights treaties, these skimpy guidelines are not comprehensive enough on their own accord. Only if adequate guidance is provided to ensure school discipline is administered *through* international human rights may they prove to suffice. For this to happen, school discipline in practice must be contextualized within international human rights principles and norms. An overall failing of entire Kindergarten to Grade 12 curriculum is the lack of consistent and direct reference in the area of international human rights norms, the principles that underpin them, and the mechanisms used to protect them. This deficiency means that the manner in which children’s participatory rights are restricted are not governed by those outlined in international human rights norms and principles. For this reason, both curricula versions do not comply with this particular duty.

As children transition from Kindergarten through to Grade 12, and expectations about what they should know, do, and understand increases, their ever expanding knowledge about local and global social issues, and their underlying causes means that the transformative actions they take should evolve to become more responsible, engaged, and active; their enactment should ultimately lead to positive social transformation. This assessment found that both versions of BC’s Kindergarten to Grade 12 Social Studies curriculum provide opportunities for children to inquire into the root causes of social injustice, and take transformative action *for* human rights. Children are also guided in the exercise of these rights *if* school discipline is rights-respecting and compliant with international human rights norms and principles.²⁹

However, since my former survey also indicated that both curricula versions provide very little information about the international human rights protection mechanisms children can access to

²⁹ This condition is mostly impacted by the various understandings of what international human rights are by the individuals working within the school, which may, or may not be congruent with what the curriculum believes they should be.

adequately protect human rights and fundamental freedoms, this deficiency may hinder the authentic impact these transformative actions have within their local and global community.

D. Rights-Consistent Educational Methods

Human rights education learning processes progress through three increasingly more complex levels. In the first concrete stage of learning, children acquire knowledge *about* human rights norms, the values that underlie their principles, and the mechanisms used to protect them (UN, 2011, Article 2.2.a). Even in this initial phase of learning, children must first obtain knowledge about a topic, and only then are they expected to understand its deeper meaning and employ higher mental processes to analyze, synthesize, or evaluate this information. The next human rights education stage of learning is a values based one, whereby learning and teaching is conducted *through* human rights to ensure children obtain the values and attitudes necessary for them to respect inherent human dignity, and each person's inalienable rights and fundamental freedoms (2011, Article 2.2.b). Only once children have acquired knowledge about human rights norms and principles, and appreciate their underlying value, can they be empowered to enjoy and exercise their own rights, and take action to uphold the rights of others (2011, Article 2.2.c). In this final stage of the learning process, teaching methods provide children with action-based learning opportunities to take transformative action for social justice and peace. Consideration for the evolving capacities of the child are embedded within this learning process, whereby learning opportunities and parameters of knowledge become increasingly more complex and broad as the child gets older.

Rights-based educational teaching methods aim to develop a child's capabilities to become a peace-builder. For this reason, it does not only incorporate learning processes that develop a child's intellectual abilities, but it is also concerned with instilling respecting values that then motivate the child to take positive action for change. To comply with this duty, a UN

Member State must ensure its school curricula incorporates educational methods that aim to develop a child's cognitive, affective, and/or psychomotor capabilities to their fullest potential, and ensure that they are administered in a manner that is consistent with the evolving capacities of the child (1989, Article 5). Since Social Studies is mostly concerned with intellect, attitudes, and behaviours, my investigation to determine whether the curriculum incorporates rights-based educational methods is limited to those within the realm of the cognitive and affective domain only.

Both versions of BC's Kindergarten to Grade 12 Social Studies curriculum contain information regarding the educational methods that govern their respective curricula. While the former curriculum provides a more condensed version in its *Domains of Learning* section (BC, 2005, p.19; BC, 2006A, p.27; BC, 2006B, p.15), the newly designed curriculum's focus on enhanced learner engagement in a learning process that supports deeper learning. In addition, the 2015 curriculum expands on this notion extensively throughout its accompanying documents, and through the learning experiences it provides. However, since both curricula versions are rooted within constructivism, their applied educational teaching method share a design that is intended to offer students inquiry-based and experiential learning opportunities that foster active, responsible, and engaged citizenship. For this reason, I treat the "Know-Do-Understand" educational learning model in the newer curriculum as an expanded and more comprehensive extension of the prescribed learning outcomes used to organize the learning standards in the former curriculum.

For instance, the former curriculum defines *cognition* as the "recall or recognition of knowledge and the development of intellectual abilities [that occur via] three cognitive levels: knowledge, understanding and application" (BC, 2006A, p.27). The 2015 curriculum, however, elaborates upon this definition to include the notion of a "thinking competency, which encompasses critical, creative, and reflective thinking, [and] represents the cognitive abilities

that students develop through their studies” (BC, 2013, p.3). Accordingly, a child’s thinking competency enables her to transform curricular content into new understandings (2013, p.5).

The former curriculum does not provide a lot of information about the “attitudes, beliefs, and the spectrum of values and value systems” (BC, 2006A, p.27), which are the concern of the affective domain. However, the notion of personal and social competency is expanded upon in the newly designed curriculum’s cross-curricular competencies to encompass the “abilities students need to thrive as individuals, to understand and care about themselves and others, and to find and achieve their purposes in the world” (BC, 2013, p.7). Embedded within this competency are affective elements tied to a child’s sense of self-worth, self-awareness and personal identity. It also includes community-minded behaviours that relate to taking responsibility for one’s actions, and those required to work collaboratively and cooperatively with others, such as respect, empathy, and care (2013, p.7-8). The affective domain also depends on a child’s “communication competency, which encompasses the set of abilities that students use to impart and exchange information, experiences, and ideas” (2013, p.8), because these competencies bridge between the knowledge students have acquired and their personal and social relationships.

The method to incorporate cognitive and affective learning processes in the former curriculum is through its learning objectives, which expect that children will be able to *describe, analyze, assess, evaluate, demonstrate, or present* what they have learned. The integration of cognitive and affective learning processes in the new curriculum, on the other hand, is through the “Know-Do-Understand” model’s curricular competencies. Students are expected to be able to engage in similar learning process to those outlined in the former curriculum’s prescribed learning outcomes. In both cases, children are first required to engage in lower level learning processes during their initial encounter with Social Studies topics. Only after they have acquired a deeper understanding of this material are they expected to incorporate more sophisticated forms of learning processes that lead to the novel applications of the topic.

Teaching methods that incorporate this learning process occur on a micro scale during the course of study at each grade level, and also span the entire Kindergarten to Grade 12 curriculum. In the case of the latter, children are not only challenged to engage in more complex learning processes the older they get, but they are also expected to expand the parameters of their knowledge, in both proxy and time. In the early grades, Social Studies topics are limited the child's immediate world: children learn about their families and communities, and the more immediate historical events and social conditions that impact them. However, as the child transitions through to Grade 12, they are expected to expand their horizons metaphorically and physically as their capacities evolve on route to adulthood. For example, in an overview of Social Studies Kindergarten to Grade 7 topics, children first learn about "self, family, [and] school" (BC, 2006A, p.14) until Grade 2, followed by "communities - past and present, Aboriginal cultures, exploration, and contact, Canada - from colony to country, Canada and the world, and ancient civilization" (2006A, p.14) from Grade 3 to 7. Even though the curriculum organizers stay the same, they are expanded upon on multiple dimensions as the child develops to maturity.

The constructivist educational teaching methods that have been incorporated into both versions of BC's Kindergarten to Grade 12 Social Studies curriculum serve their shared citizenship aim. Since I have also previously demonstrated that this curricular aim supports the child's capacity to become a peace-builder,³⁰ this investigation into the educational teaching methods that are incorporated into both versions of the curriculum comply with those governing human rights education, because they develop the child's capabilities to become a peace-builder. This is achieved through the integration of rights-consistent learning processes that are in keeping with the evolving capacities of the child. These are offered through various curricular learning experiences to children at each grade level *and* over the course of the entire Kindergarten to Grade 12 Social Studies curriculum.

³⁰ See section 5.2.1. in this Chapter.

E. Rights-Respecting Evaluation Methods

A final step to assess the process taken by a UN Member State to implement a human rights education is to determine whether its school curricula make provisions for children to demonstrate their learning through rights-consistent evaluation methods. These offer children opportunities to demonstrate what they know through a variety of different venues, which must then be judged fairly by their teacher. According to the Convention, children are entitled to receive a “fair hearing” (UN, 1989, Article 40.2.b.iii). While this duty pertains primarily to the UN Member State’s legal duties towards children, the principle underlying it pertains to the obligation of those in positions of authority to judge those they are responsible for fairly. Therefore, since teachers have legal authority over their students, they must be judicial in their judgments. To ensure fairness, the design and structure of evaluation instruments must reflect consideration for the child’s evolving capacities (1989, Article 5), and be administered with his or her best interests in mind (1989, Article 3). A fundamental aspect of evaluation is that it must provide children with the opportunity to voice an opinion in all matters that concern them (1989, Article 12), and what they have learned, and how they are asked to demonstrate this knowledge concerns them directly.

BC’s Kindergarten to Grade 12 Social Studies curriculum defines evaluation as a process that “involves interpreting assessment information in order to make further decisions, [such as] set student goals, make curricular decisions, [or] plan instruction” (BC, 1997, p.4). Both curricula versions suggest formative and summative assessment methods that should be used in conjunction with one another. I assess information about student learning obtained by both formative and summative assessment methods to determine whether BC’s Kindergarten to Grade 12 Social Studies curriculum contains rights-consistent evaluation methods.

Both curricula versions recommend teachers incorporate formative and summative types of assessment methods; however, the 2015 curriculum will only reveal its directions for doing so as “teachers work with the new curriculum and competencies this year” (2015P). The former curriculum defines formative assessment as either criterion-referenced or student-driven, and multiple formative assessment strategies are suggested within its *Student Achievement* section, and *Classroom Assessment Model*. Rooted within the concept of self-assessment, its main purpose is to provide learners with ongoing opportunities for them to determine what they need to learn to be successful. In assessment *for* learning, students’ strengths are identified, and areas of learning that require further development are highlighted (BC, 2005, p.25; BC, 2006A, pp.49-50; BC, 2015H). Assessment as learning constitutes the other type of ongoing formative assessment both versions of BC’s Kindergarten to Grade 12 Social Studies curriculum require teachers to use in their classrooms. Through a process of continuous self-assessment, during which students are supported and guided by their teachers, learners take responsibility for their own learning. Larger scale summative assessment *of* learning compares students’ achievement to that of others, or against predetermined criteria; it is usually teacher directed. The curriculum makes suggestions for the use of this type of assessment of student achievement throughout the Kindergarten to Grade 12, but it becomes a much more prevalent form of assessment in the latter grades. Provincial exams are included in this category of assessment.

In the former curriculum, formative and summative achievement indicators correspond with the curriculum’s prescribed learning outcomes, and many strategies are provided in the curriculum’s *Classroom Assessment Model* (BC, 2005, pp.39-81; 2006A, pp.117-208). For example, children in Grade 1 are expected to “participate co-operatively and productively in groups [to] describe their roles, rights, and responsibilities at home and at school” (2006A, p.131). In planning for assessment, the teacher may then “show students a copy of the school’s code of conduct or other listings of rights and responsibilities, hold a class discussion on these and their purposes, [and then] have students role play the rights and responsibilities to see how

they work for the benefit and safety of everyone” (2006A, p.131). The primary objective of this learning activity is to “observe students demonstrating responsible behaviour towards others in the class and on the playground” (2006A, p.131). Assessment *for* learning may ask the student to identify several different positive actions he took that allowed him to cooperate successfully with his group members, and identify behaviours that hindered this. Assessment *as* learning, on the other hand, may involve a class brainstorming session to generate a list of rights and responsibilities that each student is then responsible to respect. In this case, students may periodically reflect upon their behaviours during group activities to assess whether they complied with the student generated list of rights and responsibilities. The curriculum offers a *Student Responsibility* assessment instrument as an example of a summative assessment template teachers can use to determine whether the student was able to “demonstrate active listening, [or] recognize that diverse points of view exist” (2006A, p.134).

Students are an integral part of the formative assessment process; it empowers them to be accountable for their learning. Formative assessment engages children “to reflect on [their] own thinking and learning processes, to ask what worked and did not work in a given situation, and to identify what [they] can do differently next time” (BC, 2013, p.6). Since this type of assessment incorporates the child’s opinions and thoughts about their learning progress, it complies with the child’s freedom of expression rights, which entitles a “child who is capable of forming his or her own views the right to express those views freely in all matters affecting the child” (UN, 1989, Article 12.1). Furthermore, throughout the ongoing formative assessment process, which provides an increasingly more comprehensive profile of student strengths and weaknesses, the teacher fulfils an important role to ensure the “views of the child are being given due weight in accordance with the age and maturity of the child” (1989, Article 12.1), and “in a manner consistent with the evolving capacities of the child” (1989, Article 5).

Summative assessment involves judgments about students’ learning, either against preordained curricular criteria that is tied to specific learning standards, or the achievement of

other students. In this case, students have very little say whether it represents a fair assessment of their learning, since they have very little control over the criteria and evaluation methods used to determine what they know. However, while both formative and summative assessments combine to provide students with multiple avenues to demonstrate their learning, formative assessment, in particular, is the only evaluation method that is rights-consistent. Even so, since both formative and summative assessment methods evaluate student learning, they may not necessarily be rights-consistent. While they may be oriented towards the same objective, the main question is whether this objective was learned and assessed in a rights-respecting manner during the learning process, and in the final summative evaluation stage.

Through the application of two extensive indicators, I was able to determine that the *process* to incorporate an education *about, through, and for* human rights into both versions of BC's Kindergarten to Grade 12 Social Studies curriculum is continuously progressing towards greater compliance. Through its curricular citizenship aim, and its conceptions of the learner, learning process, learning environment, teacher's role, and evaluation, children in BC's schools have the potential to become increasingly more capable of becoming peacebuilders for the following reasons. First, as they become more knowledgeable about international human rights norms and principles, the values that underpin them, and the mechanisms used to protect them, their capacity to become global citizens who strive to maintain international peace and security increases. However, my assessment also identified a deficiency in the availability of comprehensive information about international human rights treaties, instruments, and treaty bodies beyond the 2015 Kindergarten curriculum. I also identified that the curriculum offers multiple steps teachers can take to ensure school discipline becomes increasingly more rights-respecting, which means that children have a greater chance of becoming adept at developing friendly relations amongst peoples for peaceful coexistence. Furthermore, I was able to ascertain that the curriculum offers opportunities for children to exercise their participation rights

for transformative action, and restrictions to the exercise of this right is compliant with Canada's international human rights treaty duties when school discipline is rights-respecting. However, my assessment is not able to determine whether the transformative actions children take truly promote and encourage respect for international human rights and fundamental freedoms. The compliance assessment also indicated that both curricula versions incorporate rights-based educational teaching methods, and suggest formative student evaluation strategies, both of which also consider the evolving capacities of the child. This process assessment indicates that efforts are being made to integrate human rights education into BC's Kindergarten to Grade 12 Social Studies curriculum via the curriculum's aims, and its conceptions of the learner, learning process, learning environment, teacher's role, and evaluation.

5.3. Outcomes

Canada has a comprehensive legal and political structure through which it can incorporate human rights education into its provincial school curricula. In this particular review of BC's Kindergarten to Grade 12 Social Studies curriculum to determine its compliance with Canada's dissemination treaty duties, I have also ascertained that BC's Ministry of Education is progressing in its efforts to fulfil its duty to educate *about*, *through*, and *for* international human rights. In this final stage of my assessment, I examine both versions of the curriculum to identify the active steps it has made, over and above the structural and procedural ones already in place or in process, to assure BC's children attending Kindergarten to Grade 12 fully enjoy their human rights education entitlements. Two outcome indicators are applied during this assessment, which are drawn directly from the UNCRC's 2012 Concluding Observations.

5.3.1. Access to Information

Access to information affords children the “freedom to seek, receive and impart information and ideas of all kinds, regardless of frontiers, either orally, in writing or in print, in the form of art, or through any other media of the child’s choice” (UN, 1989, Article 13.1). This entitlement is rooted within the UDHR’s freedom of opinion and expression right (UN, 1948, Article 19). This freedom includes assuring everyone the right to access information about human rights norms, their underlying principles, and the mechanisms used to protect them for global citizenship, because this is the precursor to international peace and security. For children to build friendly relations amongst peoples in a spirit of trust and transparency, they must be able to exchange their thoughts, experiences, and ideas freely with one another (1989, Article 14.1). Finally, transformative action for authentic change depends on children being able to access information about human rights and fundamental freedoms, so that they can promote and encourage respect for them.

In its last review of Canada’s efforts to “promote awareness and understanding of the Convention” (UNCRC, 2012, Item 24), the UNCRC urged Canada to “take more active measures to systematically disseminate and promote the Convention among professionals working with or for children, and among children” (2012, Item 25). Even though each of the published former curricula include a *Learning Resources* section at the end of each integrated resource package, they do not provide any information about international human rights, instruments, or protection mechanisms. The same applies to the 2015 curriculum, where all supporting resource materials pertain to other aspects of its new design. A Ministry of Education webpage, titled *Cross-curricular Resources* (BC, N.D.F), does offer a few resources that relate to human rights. One example is the resource on *Human Rights in the Asia-Pacific 1931-1945: Social Responsibility and Global Citizenship*,³¹ which provides extensive information about international human rights norms and principles, the foundation of the UN, various human rights

³¹ See <http://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/irp/resdocs/asiapacific/handouts.pdf> for the complete document.

treaties such as the Geneva Convention, and information about war crimes and international law. However, this resource guide is intended to support aspects of the Grade 11 Social Studies curriculum only, which means that it is only really accessed by children in Grade 11 and their teachers. Two other Ministry of Education publications do, however, support teachers to educate *through* human rights: *Making Space - Teaching for Diversity and Social Justice Throughout the K-12 Curriculum*,³² and *Safe, Caring and Orderly Schools - A Guide*.³³ Since these are supplemental materials for teachers to access, I will not elaborate on their content. They do, however, provide some evidence that efforts have been made for *teachers* to be able to access information about international human rights norms and principles via BC's Ministry of Education website. However, since these resources are not intended for students, and there is no other information about this topic in the curriculum, the curriculum still mostly fails to comply with its duty to make provisions for children, primarily, to have access to information about human rights norms and principles via the Internet or other educational resources.

5.3.2. Education Initiatives

A second and last outcome indicator compares BC's former Kindergarten to Grade 12 Social Studies integrated resource packages, that were published between 1997 and 2006, with the province's newly revised 2015 version. This is done in order for me to determine whether Canada, through its BC curricula, has taken action to further comply with the UNCRC's 2012 urge that it make further efforts to systematically integrate knowledge *about, through, and for* human rights into school curricula (UNCRC, 2012, Item 25). This is not a repeat inquiry into the structure or process of integration; rather, it examines the overall framework changes that have occurred following the last revision. By conducting this contrast, I wish to ascertain whether

³² See http://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/irp/pdfs/making_space/makingSpace_full.pdf for the complete document.

³³ See <http://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/sco/guide/scoguide.pdf> for the complete document.

there is any indication that the curriculum revision team that designed BC's latest Kindergarten to Grade 12 Social Studies curriculum made any effort to act upon the above UNCRC recommendations. In this particular examination, I look at the transformation process of curriculum revisions, and the macro curricular changes that have occurred between the former and newly revised curriculum that may, or may not support the further integration of human rights education into BC's Kindergarten to Grade 12 Social Studies curriculum. Since the revision has already occurred, the 2015 version signifies its outcome, which is why it is assessed for compliance.

Provincial school curricula must undergo periodic reviews and redesigns to ensure they continue to fulfil their mandated objectives. The motivation driving the recent Kindergarten to Grade 12 curricular revision in BC was to design one that "better engages students in their own learning, and fosters the skills and competencies students will need to succeed" (BC, 2015F, p.1). To prepare them for this, the redesigned "curriculum must be learner-centred and flexible" (2015F, p.1), and it must also support "deeper learning through concept-based and competency-driven approaches" (2015F, p.1). For this reason, the organization of learning standards in the 2015 curriculum have been revamped from a previous list of prescribed learning outcomes into a "Know-Do-Understand" model of learning.

The significant difference between the two formats is the impact their underlying worldview has on the systematic integration of human rights education into curricula. The prescriptive tone used to convey content in the previous curriculum is more consistent with a transmission orientation, because it dictates an extensive list of behavioural outcomes a student is expected to master by the end of a specific course or grade. This format creates a distinction between learners and the curriculum since it is based on a more authoritative worldview. However, the 2015 model of learning is centred around a more integrated approach. In this case, learning is not only viewed as mastery of content only. Rather, it also occurs through the development of competencies a child must be able to do, and the acquisition of an

understanding about key inter-, and cross-disciplinary concepts. In lieu of their “consultation with educators, academic experts, and subject-area experts” (BC, 2015Q), BC’s curriculum review team designed a more integrated curriculum to not only promote the development of more complex intellectual mental processes, but to also promote and support the necessary competencies, attitudes, and skills required for active, responsible citizenship. Therefore, the “Know-Do-Understand” learning model was created to incorporate a holistic approach to child development, which understands that deeper and more transferable learning is fostered through the child’s engagement in rich cognitive and affective learning experiences, where knowledge is generated *through* various inquiry procedures and processes.

The gradual shift towards creating a learning model that has the potential to support more of the child’s “personality, talents and mental and physical abilities to their fullest potential” (UN, 1989, Article 29.1.a) supports the rights *through* education duty a UN Member State has. Accordingly, efforts must be made to meet the full needs of all children, so that they can then develop “respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, and the principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations” (1989, Article 29.1.b). Since the major 2015 revisions of BC’s Kindergarten to Grade 12 entire curriculum, which includes Social Studies, involved a complete overhaul of the organization and scope of its required learning standards, this indicates that BC’s Ministry of Education made a considerable effort to ensure its curriculum meets all of the educational needs of children attending BC’s schools. Therefore, Canada, through its BC provincial school curriculum, has not only complied with the UNCRC’s recommendations that it not only take “education initiatives [to] integrate knowledge and exercise of children’s rights into curricula” (UNCRC, 2012, Item 25). Instead, it has further expanded upon this duty by revamping its entire Kindergarten to Grade 12 curricula, and, in doing so, it has made it possible to more adequately educate *about*, *through*, and *for* human rights through the implementation of its Social Studies curriculum.

In this final assessment of Canada's compliance to its international human rights education duties, I applied two outcome indicators. They were designed to assess compliance to the UNCRC's most recent recommendations that Canada take more active measures to actively promote the Convention through its school curricula. Unlike the previous findings regarding the processes used to systematically integrate an education *about, through, and for* human rights into BC's Kindergarten to Grade 12 Social Studies curriculum via its curricular elements, these two indicators determined whether Canada had actually implemented the UNCRC's 2012 recommendations. The first indicated that very little has been done to increase the provision of resource material about human rights norms and principles via BC's Ministry of Education website, including in its online curricula. However, recent curricula revisions do indicate that efforts have been taken by BC's curriculum review team to further integrate knowledge *about, through, and for* human rights into its Kindergarten to Grade 12 Social Studies curriculum.

In this chapter I applied a human rights accountability mechanism to assess both versions of BC's Kindergarten to Grade 12 Social Studies curriculum to determine Canada's compliance to its international human rights dissemination obligations. Three general indicators assessed (1) the mandated *structure* through which human rights are disseminated at the state level, (2) the *process* through which human rights education is integrated into provincial school curricula via their elements, and (3) the *outcome* of the actual actions taken to satisfy recent UNCRC recommendations to further promote awareness and understanding of the Convention among educators and learners. I found that Canada has a comprehensive political and legal structure through which it can incorporate the treaties it has ratified at the federal level. This includes a mandated provincial school curriculum through which each province can actively implement its duty to disseminate information *about, through, and for* human rights. At the provincial level, BC's Kindergarten to Grade 12 Social Studies six curricular elements, which

include its aim and its conceptions of the learner, learning process, learning environment, teacher's role and evaluation, are progressing along a continuum towards compliance. However, even though BC's Ministry of Education has recently made an effort to design a curriculum that further meets the developmental needs of all school age children in BC, it still fails to provide information and resources about international human rights, the values underpinning their principles, and the mechanisms used to protect them remains. I believe that this deficiency continues to be a major impediment to the full integration of human rights education into BC's Kindergarten to Grade 12 Social Studies curriculum.

Chapter 6 - Conclusion

6.1. Discussion

6.1.1. Study Overview

Canada continuously undergoes reviews to ensure it respects, protects, and fulfil its international treaty obligations. These accountability means are conducted by various UN treaty bodies, NGO's, and independent agencies to monitor compliance. In its last comprehensive review of Canada's compliance to the Convention in 2012, the UNCRC found that Canada has made little effort to systematically integrate child's rights education into its provincial school curricula. These findings were echoed in a study by Morris and Davidson (2012), who stated that there is a "surprising dearth" (p.60) of international human rights education and training in all BC sectors, including in its schools. However, neither study conducted an in-depth inquiry into any of the state's provincial curricula to ascertain if, and where, they fail to actively promote knowledge and awareness *about, through, and for* international human rights to school age children.

The purpose of this thesis is to further the inquiry into curriculum specifically, to ascertain whether there was an overt effort to systematically integrate human rights education into BC's schools via its Kindergarten to Grade 12 school curricula. I focused primarily on the province's Social Studies curricular framework, which include its educational aims, and its conception of the learner, learning process, learning environment, teacher's role, and evaluation. Two time frames were examined: the 1997 to 2006 combined Kindergarten to Grade 12 curricula and the 2015 newly revised curricula, of which the Kindergarten to Grade 9 is already undergoing a phase-in process.

In order for me to conduct my study, I first identified the relevant treaty standards that relate to the duty to provide a human rights education, which also included a model of its core

components. Accordingly, the purpose of human rights education is threefold: (1) to educate children *about* international human rights norms, the values that underpin their standards, and the mechanisms used to protect them for global citizenship; (2) to educate *through* human rights for peaceful coexistence; and (3) to educate *for* human rights by empowering children to take transformative action to respect and uphold the rights of self and others. While this describes the international human rights education normative framework, it does not portray the actual practice a UN Member State takes to implement these statutes domestically. For this reason, I also conducted a comprehensive review of BC's Kindergarten to Grade 12 Social Studies curriculum, because it represents one of the avenues through which a UN Member State can systematically integrate human rights education at the federal level; it is also the subject of this investigation. In this synopsis, I detailed the content and organization of the curriculum's learning standards. I also analyzed its curricular elements, including its aim, and conceptions of the learner, learning process, learning environment, teacher's role, and evaluation.

To bridge between the international human rights education normative framework, and compliance to it through the practice of curriculum at the provincial level, I developed a human rights indicator that serves to assess the gap, or lack thereof, between theory and practice. In the case of this study, it was designed to assess Canada's commitment to incorporate the relevant human rights education provisions into its legal and governmental structure, especially those pertaining to international treaty rights to *and* through education. It also examined the process taken by BC's Ministry of Education to systematically integrate an education *about*, *through*, and *for* human rights into its schools via both versions of the province's Kindergarten to Grade 12 Social Studies curriculum. I also looked for evidence regarding any efforts taken by BC's Ministry of Education to incorporate the dissemination and awareness-raising recommendations made by the UNCRC to Canada in its recent 2012 review.

My inquiry into curriculum was influenced by a strong transformational philosophical orientation, which views the world in terms of the interrelatedness, interconnectedness, and

interdependence of all phenomena. Through this orientation, I maintained that curriculum must be assessed not as something dislodged from the social matrix within which it evolves, but as a deeply embedded complex dynamic that represents the vast array of personal meaning and opinions about what schools should do. I sought to impose a rights-based judgment on BC's Kindergarten to Grade 12 Social Studies curriculum during this investigation; it was predominantly formative, and almost completely devoid of summative forms of evaluation. By adopting this lens through which to inquire into the curriculum, I was able to conduct a thorough assessment of the curriculum under investigation to ascertain its human rights education compliance. Following is a summary of findings from my investigation.

6.1.2. Summary of Findings

The first part of my study was an investigation into Canada's federal and provincial structures to ascertain whether the UN Member State has adequate frameworks through which it can incorporate human rights education into school curricula. By applying four human rights education structural indicators, I demonstrated that Canada does, indeed, have a comprehensive political and legal structure through which it can incorporate the treaties it has ratified at the federal level. When Canada ratified the International Bill of Rights and the Convention, it made a commitment to respect and fulfil its duty to disseminate information *about, through, and for* human rights. The ratification of these treaties also defined the legal structure through which to protect the inherent dignity and inalienable rights of every Canadian citizen. This means that everyone must be assured their inalienable rights and fundamental freedoms, including children, who are entitled to added protections that are enforced through the Convention. Since the distribution of legislative powers with regards to education embedded most duties pertaining to education within Canada's provincial governmental and legal structure, it determined that all BC children ages five to sixteen are equally entitled to access the

province's education system without discrimination of any kind. Furthermore, there are no exclusions to this right: The Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms ensures equal access to education, including human rights education, for all Canadian children.

These findings regarding Canada's mandated activities within the country's relevant institutions clearly indicate that BC's Kindergarten to Grade 12 Social Studies curriculum represents a valid legal and structural vehicle through which Canada can fulfil its dissemination and awareness-raising duties. However, the process to actively and systematically integrate all *three* components of this duty into the curriculum proves to be much more involved and complex. Accordingly, human rights education does not only include providing children with comprehensive information *about* human rights norms, the values that underpin their principles, and the mechanisms used to protect them, it must also educate *through*, and *for* human rights. While both the concerns raised by the UNCRC and Morris and Davidson in their respective 2012 studies regarding compliance to this duty appeared to only focus on the lack of availability of information *about* human rights in BC's schools, I maintain that a focus on this first component of human rights education does not necessarily translate to a lack thereof. Rather, I delved more deeply into BC's Kindergarten to Grade 12 Social Studies curricular elements to find evidence of compliance to all three of the components that comprise human rights education. More specifically, I looked to see whether its curricular aims have the *potential* to develop each child's capacity to become a peace-builder, and whether there are adequate directives to educate *about*, *through*, and *for* international human rights for global citizenship, peaceful coexistence, and transformative action. A key aspect in assessing the integration of a fully compliant human rights education into curricula is to accept that there will never be perfect adherence to this duty. Rather, curricular compliance must be understood as a continuous process, which is directly linked to the prevailing attitudes, perceptions, and beliefs of society at each point along the continuum of its development and revision.

The first process indicator I applied assessed BC's Kindergarten to Grade 12 Social Studies aim to discover if it supports the child's capacity to become a peace-builder. In a direct comparison of the language used to articulate it, I found that the citizenship aim of the curriculum does not comply with the peacebuilding aim underpinning human rights education. However, after applying a more holistic analysis of the curricular substance that stems from this aim via its goals, I discovered that the curricular aim that is intended to support responsible, engaged, and active citizenship also embeds within it the requisite skills, concepts, principles, attitudes, and social behaviours that are necessary to help realize the 1945 UN Charter peacebuilding objectives. For this reason, I maintain that BC's Kindergarten to Grade 12 Social Studies citizenship aim is *potentially* compliant with the human rights education aim, because its curricular substance to enable the realization of this aim also has the capacity to develop the child's ability to maintain international peace and security, develop friendly relations amongst peoples, and promote and encourage respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms.

BC's Kindergarten to Grade 12 Social Studies curriculum must also provide children with information *about* international human rights principles and norms, the values that underpin them, and the mechanisms used to protect them. This is so that they can become global citizens, who can competently participate in the discourse on critical issues of concern, such as the environment, the economy, and social justice. Global citizenship also means that children must be able to eventually understand various international human rights protection mechanisms so that they can hold states accountable for their domestic and international policies to ensure they respect treaty rights and fundamental freedoms for all persons, regardless of who they are. Through a more holistic analysis of curricular conceptions of the learner, learning process, learning environment, teacher's role, and evaluation, I was able to identify a greater presence of content relating to international human rights in BC's newly designed Kindergarten to Grade 12 Social Studies curriculum when compared with the former version. Unlike the former curriculum, I found that the 2015 newly revised curriculum includes

one direct reference to the Convention in particular, and many other hints about the values that underpin human rights principles, such as those pertaining to equality, non-discrimination, participation, access to information, the rule of law, and good governance. The new curriculum also contains much more content about various local and global efforts that have been taken to uphold and protect human rights domestically and globally throughout the Kindergarten to Grade 12 grades. However, both curricula versions fail to systematically integrate information about *international* human rights treaties into their learning standards. Instead, they tend to reference domestic charters of rights, which limit the full appreciation of international human rights norms and principles, because they are mediated versions of the source: i.e., the inclusion or preclusion of human rights and fundamental freedoms in these particular instruments depended upon the prevailing political and moral ideologies at the time of their annexation into state law. Furthermore, comprehensive information about accountability and access to remedy cross-cutting principles is very rarely emphasized in either version of the curriculum. However, knowledge about, and appreciation for these cross-cutting principles is paramount to the effective actions people take *for* human rights. Even though I understand that the inclusion of adequate information about international human rights treaties and protection mechanisms is a gradual process, for BC's Kindergarten to Grade 12 Social Studies curriculum to succeed in repositioning children as members of an international community, it must contain content that relates specifically to all aspects of *international* human rights.

An education *through* human rights is linked to the actions educators take to create a positive school environment where each person's inherent dignity and inalienable rights are respected. In my assessment of both versions of BC's Kindergarten to Grade 12 Social Studies curriculum, I found that it provides substantial guidance about the disciplinary actions teachers must take to ensure they create a safe, caring, and respectful learning environment. BC's Ministry of Education provides additional supplementary resources teachers can access through its website to help them establish a caring, safe, and orderly learning environment. The

curriculum also provides numerous opportunities for children to delve into values laden content that addresses social justice issues, diversity, equality, and concepts relating to positive peace, all of which support the development of positive attitudes and behaviours upon which rights-respecting communities can be built and further nurtured. Even though these curricular provisions satisfy the requirement that school discipline be administered in a rights-respecting manner that is consistent with the child's inherent dignity, the progressive fulfilment of the duty to educate *through* human rights also depends on the degree to which children are immersed within a culture that models respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms.

Human rights education must ultimately motivate children to take transformative action *for* human rights. A prerequisite for the fulfilment of this final duty is that children must not only acquire knowledge and appreciation *about* international human rights norms, principles and protection mechanisms *through* a rights-respecting learning environment, but it is imperative that the curriculum provide them with authentic opportunities to participate as agents of change in the pursuit of freedom, justice, and peace. This would entail permitting children to freely engage in conversation about matters of primary concern to them, and then providing them with rights-respecting avenues to remedy them. This assessment found that both versions of BC's Kindergarten to Grade 12 Social Studies curriculum provide opportunities for children to take leadership positions within their community for change, and some learning experiences also allowed children unite with others to critically examine and scrutinize the root causes of social injustice. I did find, however, that restrictions to the exercise of these participation rights in a manner that is consistent with those outlined in international human rights treaties Canada has ratified is limited in both versions of the curriculum. Mostly, children are guided in the exercise of these rights by default *if* school discipline is rights-respecting and consistent with international human rights norms and principles. Furthermore, since I have already indicated that the curriculum provides very little information about international human rights protection mechanisms, which detail the numerous ways to remedy human rights violations domestically

and internationally, this deficiency may hinder the authentic impact the transformative actions children take actually have within their local and global community. This would especially be the case if the child's larger social context is not committed to the principle of accountability, which subsumes a culture of personal responsibility and ownership of one's actions.

The process to integrate an education *about, through, and for* human rights into school curricula depends first on the provision of information about human rights. More importantly, though, is whether the curriculum is aligned with a rights-consistent teaching method that not only educates *about* and *through* human rights, but also supports the final transformative action objectives of human rights education. In this stage, children should become progressively more capable of taking action to maintain international peace and security, to develop friendly relations amongst peoples, and to promote and encourage respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. As the curriculum analysis demonstrated, a constructivist educational teaching method underlies both versions of BC's Kindergarten to Grade 12 Social Studies curriculum; it serves their citizenship aim. The compliance assessment also demonstrated that the citizenship aim of BC's Kindergarten to Grade 12 Social Studies curriculum has the *potential* to support the child's capacity to become a peace-builder, because the knowledge, values, and behaviours that are required for responsible, engaged, and active citizenship are also those that develop each child's capacity to become a peace-builder. To achieve this, the curriculum has incorporated learning processes through which children progress from a lower level knowledge acquisition stage during their initial encounter with a Social Studies topic, and through to a final stage of learning in which they apply their new learning in novel applications. Furthermore, children are required to engage in increasingly more complex learning processes at each grade level, *and* over the course of the entire Kindergarten to Grade 12 Social Studies curriculum. I found this constructivist teaching method to not only be consistent with the evolving capacities of the child, but to also correspond with a rights-based learning process, which entails acquiring knowledge *about*, values *through*, and behaviours *for* human rights. Even so, the provision of

rights-consistent educational methods that provide children with opportunities to practice active citizenship in their Social Studies classroom does not necessarily assure that the transformative actions children should be able to take to narrow the gap between the existing human rights violations they have encountered and international human rights treaty guarantees will actually occur. Here again, the lack of information about international human rights treaties, and the mechanisms used to protect them may limit the full impact of actions *for* human rights.

In conjunction with educating through rights-consistent teaching methods, a curriculum must also ensure learning is evaluated in a rights-respecting manner. This all-encompassing curricular element impacts the child's sense of self-worth and agency, because it is tied to values of fairness and human dignity. Furthermore, when evaluation is modelled through human rights, children learn how to respectfully hold self and others accountable for their actions. This cross-cutting human rights principle is a necessary ingredient for transformative action. In my assessment of BC's Kindergarten to Grade 12 Social Studies curriculum I found that, even though the students are subjects of both formative and summative evaluation, in the former method children are more actively required to account for their learning through a process of self-reflection, self-examination, and self-critique. Since the curriculum suggests teachers consider implementing formative assessment methods that incorporate the child's opinions and thoughts about their learning progress, this type of evaluation complies with the child's freedom of expression rights, and it takes into account his evolving capacities. It also models a culture of accountability for one's actions, which is one of the underlying principles of human rights. However, since both curricular versions also incorporate summative assessment methods, which are not rights-respecting, children's motivations for taking action may not necessarily be intrinsic, but rather a fulfilment of what they think is expected of them.

A final component of this compliance assessment was to identify two immediate outcomes that Canada has taken in response to the UNCRC's 2012 recommendations that it take more active means to actively promote the Convention through its school curricula. I found

that very little has been done to increase the provision of resource material about human rights norms and principles in BC's Ministry of Education's website, including in its online curricula. However, curricula revisions leading up to the release of the 2015 curriculum do indicate that efforts have been taken by BC's curriculum review team to further integrate knowledge *about*, *through*, and *for* human rights into its Kindergarten to Grade 12 Social Studies curriculum. These outcomes lead right back into the process to systematically integrate human rights education into BC's Kindergarten to Grade 12 Social Studies curriculum. I repeatedly identified almost no reference to any of the international human rights treaties that Canada has ratified, except for the Convention in the 2015 Kindergarten curriculum. Even though the outcome of recent revisions indicate that progress has been made to include more information about human rights norms and principles, these still do not suffice if the curriculum is to further comply with Canada's dissemination treaty duties to educate *about*, *through*, and *for* human rights so that children can actively engage in peacebuilding actions to uphold the 1945 UN Charter goals.

6.2. Recommendations

Human rights education must be understood as a composite of three interrelated elements: education *about*, *through*, and *for* human rights. In this compliance assessment, I found that BC's Kindergarten to Grade 12 Social Studies curriculum displays strength in the area of educating *through* human rights. However, the overall lack of adequate information *about* the international human rights treaties that Canada has ratified may be a major impediment to the actions children take *for* human rights. Furthermore, the capacity to educate *through* human rights is contingent upon success in educating *about* human rights. Even if the individuals responsible for drafting the curriculum have an intuitive sense of what human rights are, they may not necessarily be educated about international human rights norms and principles themselves, which will impact the full realization of the dissemination duty. While the curriculum includes varied references and content that relates to most of human rights cross-

cutting principles, it fails to provide sufficient information about access to remedy and accountability principles, and the international human rights protection mechanism that is in place to assure the full realization of these human rights and fundamental freedoms for all peoples. These deficiencies become increasingly problematic as children transition into the final stage of human rights education. Even though they are offered opportunities to exercise their participation rights to uphold the rights of self and others, I question the authenticity of this action: can it be truly transformative if children have received a censored³⁴ human rights education? Furthermore, one of the stated purposes of the redesigned curriculum is to support the development of each child's capacity to actively engage within an increasingly more interconnected global community, but can they conceivably take transformative action towards the full realization of the UN Charter goals to secure and maintain international peace and security, develop friendly relations amongst peoples, and promote and encourage respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, if they have not been educated *about, through, and for* human rights?

If our Canadian society is sincere about its intent to develop global citizens who can also engage actively in world affairs, then we must become more accountable and take action to remedy existing curricula so that they become progressively more aligned with all three aspects of human rights education. For this reason, I recommend that BC's Kindergarten to Grade 12 Social Studies curriculum include more direct references to all the international human rights treaties that Canada has ratified, along with more comprehensive information about the availability of domestic and international mechanisms used to protect human rights. It must also be re-examined to determine whether children are provided with authentic opportunities to remedy any human rights violations they encounter during their Social Studies learning. When

³⁴ I use the word "censored," instead of "mediated," because, in my opinion, certain parts of the International Bill of Rights were deliberately omitted, which has caused the *Canadian Charter of Rights*, and other subsequent domestic charters, to be a modified or watered down version of the original international treaties.

the curriculum is reassessed, I urge BC's Ministry of Education and its review team ensure that it provide educators with more comprehensive guidance in the exercise of rights that is referenced directly to those outlined in international treaties. Finally, I recommend that the citizenship aim of BC's Kindergarten to Grade 12 Social Studies curriculum be expanded to include a vision of positive peace, so that the curriculum's goals are purposefully intended to enable each child to become a peace-builder. The fulfilment of these recommendations will further Canada's progress in systematically integrating human rights education into its schools.

6.3. Recommendations for Further Study

In the discussion of my findings I question whether children can take authentic transformative action for human rights if they have received a *censored* human rights education. I pose this question, because my investigation revealed no mention of the international human rights treaties Canada has ratified except for the Convention, which is only referenced once in the Kindergarten curriculum. The curriculum does allude to Canada's domestic charters of rights on multiple occasions, but I found that certain parts of the international human rights treaties are omitted in these domestic versions. For instance, during my investigations I became aware of the fact that there was some contention regarding the ratification of the UDHR following its adoption by the UN General Assembly in 1948.³⁵ My research also uncovered an issue in Canada's endorsement of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples following its adoption by the UN in 2007.³⁶ I believe that these issues will continue to impede Canada's fulfilment of its duty to disseminate information *about, through, and for* human rights, especially

³⁵ Schabas provides a general overview of the issues surrounding the adoption of the UDHR by Canada in *Canada and the Adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights* (1998); in it he uncovers Canada's hesitation to incorporate this treaty into its domestic legal system.

³⁶ Recently, Canada was again reticent to endorse the 2007 UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples; it only made public its intent to support this particular treaty in 2010 (Government of Canada, 2010). I do not elaborate on the issues surrounding the annexation of international human rights treaties into Canada's legal system, because they are beyond the realm of this thesis. Even so, I do acknowledge that the politics surrounding their ratification may have impacted the construction of Canada's domestic human rights charters.

given the very large emphasis on Canada's indigenous peoples and the effects of colonialism in the 2015 curriculum. However, since I assess curricula compliance to the duty to disseminate information *about, through, and for* human rights, the investigation into the implications these issues may have on Canada's capacity to fulfil its human rights education obligation is beyond the scope of this work, but my assessment does lead there.

6.4. Concluding Remarks

Canada has a moral and legal obligation to comply with the international human rights treaties it has ratified. Part of the ongoing process to monitor the progressive realization of these duties includes assessments such as those conducted in this thesis. Information from this study is now available for use by subsequent human rights monitoring agencies, NGO's, and UN treaty bodies. Since it provides a comprehensive review of Canada's duty to systematically integrate information *about, through, and for* human rights in Canadian schools via curricula, it can legitimately be part of the *State Party's Report*, which Canada is expected to submit to the UNCRC by July 11, 2018. However, I hope BC's Ministry of Education will consider implementing the above recommendations in its next curriculum revision, not only because it is duty-bound to do so, but mostly because it is the right ethical and moral thing to do for the sake of our children.

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