Children's rights in school: The perception of children in Nicaragua

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For María de los Ángeles

who made everything possible.

Abstract

For the many thousands of children in poor countries who drop out of school and so lose out on the life-chances that education might offer them, the notion of a 'right *to* education' has little meaning. Poverty and child labour are contributing factors, but for many children lack of respect for their rights *in* education is also a major problem. While current 'whole-school approaches' to children's rights seem promising, failure to address underlying problems reduces their effectiveness. This thesis explores how children and adolescents in Nicaragua's coffee sector perceive their human rights in school, providing insights that can contribute to the development of effective human-rights-based approaches to schooling, particularly in poor countries where the right to go to school must itself be claimed and defended.

To come as close as possible to understanding how children themselves perceive their rights in school and the issues that concern them, the adult researcher worked in partnership with a team of child researchers in Nicaragua. The use of a distinctive methodology known as 'Transformative Research by Children and Adolescents' generated additional knowledge regarding the development of productive and ethical partnerships between child and adult researchers. The child researchers were facilitated in developing and carrying out a research project using qualitative interviews to address the above issues, including producing and publishing their own report; while the adult researcher gathered background information from parents, teachers and other adult informants. With the young researchers' approval, their original data was subjected to a more thorough thematic analysis, which was compared with their own analysis.

Four main themes emerged: (1) Developing positive human relations is fundamental for a rights-respecting school; (2) Students see some forms of behaviour management as rights violations, for example depriving them of playtime as punishment; (3) Lack of attention to the complex relationship(s) between rights and responsibilities has led to confusion and misunderstandings; (4) The child's right to be heard was not an important issue for the children in this research, which raises questions for adult researchers interested in this topic.

The main implications of the study are: highlighting the need for a rights-based approach to human relations in schools, particularly for dealing with behaviour issues; identifying the need for a more coherent and consensual pedagogy around children's rights and responsibilities; and helping adult and child researchers develop more effective and productive partnerships.

Acknowledgements

Contents

List of tables

List of figures

List of text boxes

List of appendices

1. Map showing location of area of study

2. Photographs of the research area

3. Young Researchers report (original Powerpoint with English translation)

4. Young researchers report (published version in Spanish)

5. Table comparing seven whole-school approaches to children's rights

6. The origins and principles of 'Transformative Research by Children and Adolescents'

7. The young researchers' research process, step by step

8. Information sheets/consent forms for young researchers and their parents(original Spanish)

9. Information sheets/consent forms for young researchers and their parents (English translation)

10. Information sheet/consent form for adult interviewees (original Spanish)

11. Information sheet/consent form for adult interviewees (English translation)

12. Example of a session plan for one of the young researchers' workshops (English translation)

13. Young researchers' interview questionnaire (original Spanish)

14. Young researchers' interview questionnaire (English translation)

15. Young researchers' action plan (English translation)

16. Young researchers' final evaluation questionnaire (English translation)

17. Schedule of questions for follow-up focus group discussion with young researchers (English translation)

18. Schedule of questions for interviews with adult key informants (English translation)

19. Individual questionnaire completed by teachers attending focus group (English translation)

20. Transcription of children's interview data (sample)

21. Thematic analysis: Example of coding table

22. Matrix tool for evaluating the scope of children's participation in development projects

List of abbreviations and acronyms

Acronyms which only occur as the names of institutional authors of cited works are not included, and all such institutional authors' full names are given in the reference list.

CENIDH	*Centro Nicaragüense de Derechos Humanos* (Nicaraguan Human Rights Centre)
CESCR	Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (United Nations)
CESESMA	*Centro de Servicios Educativos en Salud y Medio Ambiente* (Centre for Education in Health and Environment)
CFS	Child-Friendly School(s)
CRAG	Children's Research Advisory Group
CRC	Convention on the Rights of the Child (United Nations)
CRE	Children's Rights Education
CRPD	Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
EDC	Education for Democratic Citizenship
EFA	Education For All
FEP	*Federación de Estudiantes de Primaria* (Federation of Primary Students)
FES	*Federación de Estudiantes de Secundaria* (Federation of Secondary Students)
FSLN	*Frente Sandinista de Liberación Nacional* (Sandinista National Liberation Front)
HRC	Human Rights Council (United Nations)
HRE	Human Rights Education

HRL	Human Rights Learning
ICESCR	International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (UN)
ICT	Information and Communications Technology
IMF	International Monetary Fund
MDG	Millennium Development Goal
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NNA	*Niñas, Niños y Adolescentes* (Children and Adolescents)
OAS	Organisation of American States
OHCHR	Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (United Nations)
PISA	Programme for International Student Assessment
PRA	Participatory Rural Appraisal
RRR	Rights, Respect and Responsibilities
RRSA	Rights-Respecting School Award (UNICEF UK)
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
TRCA	Transformative Research by Children and Adolescents
UDHR	Universal Declaration of Human Rights
UNCRC	United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child ('CRC' is the preferred abbreviation in this thesis; UNCRC is only used in quotation of other sources)
UNDHRET	United Nations Declaration on Human Rights Education and Training
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund (the acronym comes from its original name: 'United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund', though this name is no longer used)

Chapter 1: Introduction

1. The purpose of this study and the research questions derived from it

In rural Nicaragua, despite the prevalence of child labour on the coffee plantations, over 90% of children start primary school, which is guaranteed free of charge under Nicaragua's moderate socialist Sandinista government. But only 28% of these children complete the full six years of primary school, and less that 10% graduate from secondary school (Flórez, 2012). For the many thousands of children who drop out of school and so lose out on the life-chances that education might offer them, the notion of a 'right to education' has little meaning; and this is typical of rural life in many countries of Africa and Asia as well as South and Central America. Unlike Ireland and Britain, children in countries like Nicaragua are not obliged to go to school. In every poor family, to attend or not to attend school is a decision constantly made and remade after weighing up the pros and cons – with lost income from children's work often counted as one of the cons. But how important are other factors, such as respect for children's rights *in* school? Can children be expected to voluntarily choose, year after year, to attend schools where their rights are ignored and violated? Perhaps a way forward, then, is to create a new kind of 'school for children with rights' (Hammarberg, 1998).

The purpose of this study, therefore, is to explore how children and adolescents living and working in Nicaragua's coffee sector perceive the exercise of, respect for and violation of their rights in school, and by so doing provide insights that can contribute to the development of effective human-rights-based approaches to schooling, particularly in poor countries where the basic right to go to school must also be claimed and defended. Based on this, the key question to be directly addressed by the research was formulated as:

How do children and adolescents living and working in Nicaragua's coffee sector perceive the exercise of, respect for and violation of their rights in school?

A wider question to be addressed through analysis of the findings was formulated as:

What insights can these children's perceptions of rights in school offer to those concerned to develop effective human-rights-based approaches to schooling?

The use of a distinctive methodological approach called 'Transformative Research by Children and Adolescents' (TRCA), and reflection on this experience, gave rise to a subsidiary, methodologically-focused, research question:

What can be learned from this experience that can help in developing productive and ethical partnerships between child and adult researchers?

Having established the questions to be addressed, this introductory chapter first deals with an issue of terminology that recurs throughout the thesis, namely the use of the expression 'children and adolescents', before going on to offer a rationale for the research; that is, to explain why it was important to do this piece of research, and why four rural primary schools in Nicaragua were chosen as a case study. This is followed by a substantial section – the only part of the thesis written in the first person – which discusses a number of important aspects of the relationship between the researcher and the research. Then, after a short section explaining the scope of the study, the chapter ends with an account of how the rest of the thesis has been structured and organised.

2. Why 'Children and Adolescents'?

Throughout this thesis, where terms or concepts require definition or explanation, this is done as they appear in the text. There is no glossary. 'Children and adolescents', however, appears throughout, and, since it is not the most commonly used term in the literature in English on this topic, this is the appropriate place to define it and explain why it is preferred over more familiar terms.

The definitions used are taken from Article 2 of the Nicaraguan Children and Adolescents' Legal Code (Asamblea Nacional de Nicaragua, 1998), which says that

'child' is any person who has not reached 13 years of age (i.e. 0-12), and 'adolescent' is a person of 13 years and over, not having reached 18 (i.e. 13-17). These legal definitions are consistent across most Latin American countries, and also with people's everyday use and understanding of these words.[1]

'Children and adolescents' has been used in this study for two reasons. First, as a practical matter, using the same terms with the same meanings shared between languages makes for easy correspondence between the literature in Spanish, the research data, also in Spanish, and the writing up of the findings in English. The more important reason, however, is as an alternative to the two expressions commonly used in the literature in English to describe this subject group; namely 'children', and 'children and young people' (the latter sometimes abbreviated to 'CYP'), both of which are unsatisfactory for different reasons.

Many writers use 'children' as a convenient way of referring to both children and adolescents even though this is not how the word is commonly used in everyday English. This usage is often justified by reference to Article 1 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC); although Nigel Cantwell, who was involved in drafting the Convention, has written that this is a misunderstanding of the drafters' intention, which was only to establish an understanding of the term's use within the text of the treaty, and not to redefine the meaning of the word 'child' (Cantwell, 2011, p. 43). Even where this justification is offered, the use of 'child' to describe adolescents not only offends many adolescents (Tisdall and Liebel, 2008, p. 3), but creates a disjunction between the meaning of the word as stated and the socially-constructed representations of childhood in people's heads, which leads to all kinds of problems including infantilisation of adolescents, invisibility of infants, and a failure to come to grips with 'evolving capacities', all exacerbated by a

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[1] In Latin America the word 'joven' (young), when used as a noun (literally 'young person'), refers to a young adult of 18 to 25 (or sometimes 30), so cannot be used as a synonym for 'adolescente'. This is a frequent source of errors in translation between English and Spanish.

tendency in the sociology of childhood literature to avoid the idea that children develop.

Recognising the unsatisfactory and confusing nature of this approach, other writers (including the present author up to this point) have used the expression 'children and young people'. Whilst this has the advantages of acknowledging important differences and respecting the way many adolescents prefer to describe themselves, it causes more problems than it solves. The term 'young person' has no commonly agreed definition, and in many discourses and policy documents is used to refer to people up to 25 or 30 years of age (and in some cultural contexts 'young people' can be up to 40). Nor is there any lower limit: sometimes 'young people' is used to include children, while at other times they may be treated as intersecting groups, or as completely separate. 'Children and young people' is particularly troublesome in children's rights discourse, because 'young people', unless specifically defined otherwise (which goes against common usage), includes one group of people who do have rights under the CRC (under 18s), and another group who do not (18 and overs).

Given these objections, the Latin American solution, 'children and adolescents', which offers clarity, consistency, and coherence between legal definitions, academic discourse and everyday usage, seems an attractive alternative. Though it is not the most frequently-used term in English-language child rights discourse, nor in everyday speech, this may be an advantage in that the word 'adolescent' is more likely to be understood *as defined*, and is less tainted by socially-constructed stereotypes.

However, this expression too is not without its problems, and can be critiqued on at least three grounds: (1) Its etymology is from the Latin *adolescere*, to grow up, causing some to condemn it as focusing on what adolescents are supposedly growing into, rather than as capable citizens in their own right ('human becomings'

rather than 'human beings') (Laurs, 2004, p. 2-3).[2] In answer to this, however, it can be said that words are best defined by their current use, not their etymology. (2) In contrast to Latin America, it is not how adolescents in English-speaking countries commonly identity themselves, and thus its use implies labelling people, as opposed to respecting their right to identify themselves. (3) There is a practical problem in that the binomial 'children and adolescents' has no readily recognisable abbreviation in English, like 'CYP' for 'children and young people' (unlike Spanish, where 'NNA' is instantly recognisable as 'niñas, niños y adolescentes'). This means the writer faces a constant temptation to revert to the more convenient 'children', thus defeating the object of promoting an alternative, more appropriate terminology. The last two of these objections, however, can be thought of as inevitable consequences of innovation, worth persevering with in order to find out if the innovation is an improvement on what went before.

3. Rationale: Why it was important to do this research

Why is it important to gather and analyse children and adolescents' perceptions about their rights in school? Many reasons can be given, but for this study, four are of particular importance: (1) because of the unique role of education rights in human development; (2) because of the growing importance of rights *in* school alongside rights *to* school, especially in poorer countries; (3) because not enough is known about how to ensure children's rights in school and the kinds of initiatives that can help achieve this; and (4) because children and adolescents are the leading actors and principal rights-holders in relation to schools and schooling. Each of these four points will be explained briefly.

First, though it is said that there is no hierarchy of human rights, education has special significance as it is both a fundamental or intrinsic right (the right to learning as a good in itself), and an instrumental right, meaning that it enables the enjoyment of many other human rights, all equally important in themselves

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[2] In Spanish, the matter is confounded by the existence of a similar-sounding, but unrelated, verb 'adolecer' which means to be defective or lacking.

(CESCR, 1999: Para 1; Mustaniemi-Laakso, 2007). Moreover, education does this both directly and indirectly. Directly, people with education have more knowledge and skills (and often confidence) to claim and defend their other rights, to demand social justice, and to challenge duty-bearers who fail in their obligations. Indirectly, education helps people, communities and nations escape from poverty, and thus free themselves from all the additional human rights violations that disproportionately affect the world's poor. No other human right can do all this (Drèze and Sen, 2002, pp. 38-40).

The second point concerns the relationship between the right *to* education and rights *in* education. Until recently, the United Nations, its various agencies concerned with education (primarily UNESCO and UNICEF), and most of the NGOs (Non-Governmental Organisations) with a worldwide education brief have prioritised the right *to* education. A driving force here was the influence of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), particularly Goal No. 2, "Achieve universal primary education by 2015". And indeed progress has been achieved, with global net primary enrolment increasing from 83% in 2000 to 90% in 2012, and the estimated number of primary-school-age children out of school falling from 100 million to 58 million (UNDP, 2014b). Whilst concerted efforts in relation to MDG 2 by both governments and international agencies have thus helped make the right *to* education a reality for an ever-greater proportion of the world's children; by omitting salient aspects of quality, context, and equity, "the indicators simply ensured that the number of children enrolled increased, but what and how they learned was not assessed" (Unterhalter, 2014, p. 182). This narrow focus on the MDGs thus diverted attention from efforts to realise rights *in* education.

The year 2015 may come to mark a turning point for education rights as the Millennium Goals expire and the world's governments unite to adopt a new set of global development goals, provisionally known as the 'Sustainable Development Goals' (SDGs), as targets to be achieved by 2030. The draft SDGs include, as Goal 4, "Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all" (UN Open Working Group, 2014). Though a natural successor to MDG 2, SDG 4 represents a significant change of emphasis. While the right to education continues to be seen as universal ('for all'), that education is now

also to be *inclusive*, *equitable* and of *quality*. Thus, if the global community's goals are to be achieved, just being in school will no longer be enough, and the other rights that children have in relation to their education must come to stand alongside the right of access. In order to benefit from the outcomes of education, children and adolescents have to stay in school and, while there, have to be supported in learning that is of value to themselves and their families, their community and their country. This requires a change in the way we think about human rights in education.

Children's rights in relation to their education are set out in the CRC. Though the rights in the CRC are corroborated, and in a few cases enhanced, by rights relating to education in the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) and other treaties, all of which will be discussed later on, this study will generally call on the CRC as a first point of reference. While the CRC has two lengthy articles setting out children's rights in relation to their education (Articles 28 and 29, the latter dealing specifically with the aims of education), it is important to remember that when children go to school they bring all their other rights with them: the right not to suffer any form of discrimination; the right to have decisions made according to their best interests; the right not to suffer violence, abuse or exploitation; the right to receive an education of acceptable quality and relevance; the right to freedom of opinion and freedom of expression; the right to be heard; the right to play and recreation, and many more. All these rights accompany children to school.

Throughout this thesis, the term 'education rights' will be used in recognition of this reality. 'Education rights' is a broader concept than the oft-heard expression 'the right to education'. It embraces not only the rights specifically related to education and schooling in Articles 28 and 29 of the CRC, but all the other rights children have, the exercise or infringement of which may affect their experience of education, including, but not limited to, those mentioned in the previous paragraph. It also includes equivalent rights in the ICESCR, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) and other international instruments, in regional human rights instruments and in national bills of rights for those countries that have them (which is an important consideration for the present study, as Nicaragua has a national children and adolescents' legal code whose importance equals or exceeds

that of the CRC in the national context). Education rights, then, include the basic right of access *to* education for all children, but also a wide range of human rights to be enjoyed *in* education by all children.

One thing this study will highlight is the importance of the linkage between these two: respect for children's *rights in school* is a necessary condition for full enjoyment of the *right to education* (Tomaševski, 2001b).

The third reason why this study is important follows logically from the first two. All the world's governments, with the unique and isolated exception of the United States of America, are now States Parties to the CRC, making them by definition the principal duty-bearers in relation to the rights assured to children by this treaty. Since 2000, many governments, encouraged by the MDGs (and in many cases by their growing awareness that educating their people is a dependable route to growth and prosperity), have striven to get more children into school, and donor countries have supported their efforts. As mentioned above, considerable progress has been made. From 2015 onwards, however, governments will have to realise that meeting their obligations as duty-bearers in relation to the CRC will require more than getting children into schools; it will require that schools themselves change, learning to respect and protect all the other rights that their students bring to school with them, and to be true to those very aims of education that they, as Parties to the CRC, have already agreed on.

How are they to take up this challenge? Children's rights experts, advocates and activists are not short of suggestions, and a promising area in recent years has been the development and implementation of 'whole-school approaches' to children's rights. This concept will be discussed in detail in the next chapter, but essentially it means the transformation of the whole school, applying a rights-based approach to everything from curriculum and pedagogy to school ethos, governance and environment, and above all the nature of human relationships among and between the actors involved. Though a number of these programmes have had independent evaluation showing positive results (Covell and Howe, 2008; Sebba and Robinson, 2010, discussed in the following chapter), emerging critiques suggest that there are still unresolved problems, both at a conceptual and practical level, and that if these programmes are to realise their full potential and be scaled up around the world,

there needs to be a more profound understanding of some of the issues at the heart of them (Howe and Covell, 2010; Mejias and Starkey, 2012; Trivers and Starkey, 2012). The prevalence of confused thinking about the relationship between children's rights and responsibilities is one example that will be highlighted in the present study.

As the literature review in the following chapter will show; to date, whole-school approaches to children's rights have been largely a feature of education in wealthier countries, where (almost) universal access to school has already been achieved, thus enabling the gradual shift in emphasis from the right *to* education towards rights *in* education mentioned above. In poorer countries, where the struggle for the right to go to school is still an everyday reality for millions of children, there are few reports of such programmes. However, as the present study will show, rights *to* education and rights *in* education must be understood as linked, and so for education duty-bearers there is no sense in waiting till all children are in school before concerning themselves with rights in school.

The fourth argument for the importance of this study is based on the need for adult policy-makers not just to listen to children's views when making decisions that affect their lives, but to make greater efforts to understand and take on board children's perspectives. Though it has never been possible to completely silence children, the CRC's codification of the child's right to speak and be taken account of in 1989, and the subsequent development of information technology, have led to the emergence of many new spaces and possibilities for children's voices to be heard (Andersson and Olson, 2014; Livingston, 2010; Loader et al., 2014).

On further reflection, however, some things have not changed that much. Children's lives continue to be dominated by decisions made by powerful adults who take little or no account of their opinions (the school curriculum being one obvious example) (Thornberg and Elvstrand, 2012); most adults in positions of power make little or no attempt to seriously engage with children, understand their perspective, or empathise with their situation (Tisdall et al., 2006); and these powerful adults tend to be more comfortable thinking about children's *needs* (Woodhead, 1997), children's *well-being* (Lundy, 2014), and children's *protection*: all things they can bestow on children from their positions of power. They thus

avoid real commitment to children's rights, which would open them up to children claiming from them what is theirs by right; in other words, they would have to recognise their obligations (Gasper, 2007).

If a move towards rights-respecting classrooms in rights-respecting schools, governed by a rights-based approach to education policy, is to succeed, adult decision-makers will have to reconsider – and ultimately transform – how they listen to, and respond to, children's perspectives on education. If Hammarberg's (1998) vision of "a school for children with rights" is to become a reality, token consultations will not be enough. Adults' listening can no longer stop at 'hearing', but must strive for engagement and understanding, even dialogue. The present study contributes to this drive towards transformation by inviting adult readers to engage with children's perceptions of their rights in education at a level that goes beyond hearing their opinions, and tries to comprehend their way of thinking about their own and their fellow students' experiences.

4. Why do it in Nicaragua?

Data to inform the exploration of these issues could be collected virtually anywhere in the world, or it could be collected in various places and the results compared. It is therefore important to explain why a single case study was chosen for this research, namely four rural communities in the district of La Dalia in the coffee-producing zone of Northern Nicaragua; and how this particular case came to be selected.

Regarding the first of these questions, the option of carrying out comparative research in a number of different settings was considered but rejected because, this being a primarily qualitative study, differences could have been described, but not accounted for. It was felt that the effort to collect data from several settings would lead to less depth in the data, and a focus on comparison without valid explanation would get in the way of the deeper understanding that might be achieved by analysing a single case more thoroughly.

The selection of rural Nicaragua as the case to be studied was based on four main factors: (1) There is more to be learnt about education rights in a country like Nicaragua where the right *to* education in its most basic sense (that is, the right to

go to school) is still a right to be claimed and defended, as opposed to a country like Northern Ireland where it is largely taken for granted; in particular, such a study can shed light on the relationship between the right *to* school and rights *in* school in such contexts (further discussed in Chapter 2); (2) There was an opportunity to collect data from children attending schools where there had been a specific sustained programme to promote the realisation of their rights (CESESMA and Save the Children's *'Safe, Quality Schools'* project, discussed in Chapter 3), so that the children's perceptions were influenced by this experience, and, in the case of the young researchers team, their analysis could build on what they had learnt from it; (3) Having lived and worked in the area for the 11 previous years, the (adult) researcher had a good understanding of the socio-cultural, economic and educational context of the setting that both facilitated and added value to the research (discussed in the following section); and (4) The researcher's previous connection with CESESMA had created a relationship of mutual trust and a shared disposition to collaborate to bring the project to fruition, without which the research would not have been feasible either ethically or logistically (also discussed below).

5. Locating the (adult) researcher in the research

In contrast to the rest of this thesis, I have written this section in a direct first-person style where I identify myself as the author. Before entering into discussion of my personal relationship to the research, its context and its participants, I will explain why I decided to do this.

There is an ongoing debate in the social research literature, particularly in relation to qualitative research, about how the identity and presence of the researcher are best accounted for in writing a research report. At the most basic level, this involves a choice between writing in a formal, impersonal style, or in the first person, identifying oneself in the text as 'I'. For me, this presented a dilemma. On the one hand, I wanted to use my thesis to demonstrate mastery of the established conventions of the academy and my disciplinary community within it (and so gain acceptance as a full member thereof), which requires writing in a traditional impersonal style (Hyland, 2001; Breuer et al., 2002). On the other hand, in giving an account of my work I felt it was important to attend to the practice of researcher reflexivity (Breuer et al., 2002; Starfield, 2012; Berger, 2015), best facilitated by

the use of the first person to identify the researcher (Webb, 1992; Hyland, 2002; Davies, 2012). To resolve this dilemma, I decided to write the thesis in conventional impersonal style, but to include within it one section where issues relating to my identity, personality, biography, beliefs, attitudes and socio-political power position, and their impact on my research, are addressed, using simple, direct 'I' language. Once this is done, the narrative will return to the conventional impersonal style.

How then, has me being me, and not someone else, affected this research? I will briefly consider six areas where I believe me being me was relevant: (1) professional networks in Nicaragua; (2) personal interest in, experience of and commitment to the 'children as researchers' approach; (3) attitude to working with children formed through long experience and *in*-formed by human rights; (4) long-term immersion in Nicaraguan society and culture; (5) understanding and awareness of how my identity affects the dynamics of power in my relations with others; and (6) being bilingual in English and Spanish.

(1) The professional relationships I have developed in Nicaragua during 11 years with CESESMA played a big part in making this research possible. The importance of CESESMA's support is discussed in Chapter 4, and the CESESMA team was willing to give this support because they had known me as a colleague (or more specifically, in Spanish, a *'compañero'*) for 11 years, and had learned from experience that I could be trusted in two ways: that what I proposed was likely to work, and that I was likely to see through whatever I made a commitment to. If someone unknown to CESESMA had approached them with a similar proposal it is unlikely that they would have received the same level of support.

(2) One of the reasons for adopting a 'children-as-researchers' approach for this study, perhaps the main reason, was my own interest in, experience of and commitment to this methodology (see Chapter 4). Though elsewhere I have written about the historical development of the 'Transformative Research by Children and Adolescents' approach in an impersonal way (Shier, 2015), it is no secret that I myself was involved in both developing and championing this approach from its beginnings in the UK, and subsequently in Nicaragua. Because of this experience, when it came to writing a research proposal, I was confident that this methodology

would not let me down. Though it is quite possible that other researchers would have had similar ideas about working with child researchers, it is unlikely that anyone else would have come up with this proposal.

(3) I started my professional life as an adventure playground worker in 1976, so by the time I began my doctoral research in 2012, I had accumulated 36 years' professional experience, both working with children directly and training and supporting adults working with children in non-school settings. From 1993 onwards my work has been solidly rights-based, with an increasing focus on children's participation (Wheeler, 2010). During these 36 years I acquired a set of ideas about, and attitudes towards, children that were helpful in planning and carrying out this research. Foremost among these is that I have learned to recognise the imposition of adult agendas on children and, though I cannot always avoid this, I try to find ways to pay attention to children's own concerns and interests. I have long been interested in the identification and avoidance of manipulation (Hart, 1992). Another helpful attitude is my unwavering confidence (built on experience) that child researchers will rise to whatever challenge they decide to take on. Finally I have learned not to make assumptions about children, or to make generalisations about what they are like, what they can or cannot do, or how they will or will not behave.

(4) During 11 years in Nicaragua, as well as professional links, I have come to know, and have a strong attachment to, the country and its people, particularly the people of the rural north. Although I do not consider myself Nicaraguan, and maintain my Irish passport, I hold permanent residence in Nicaragua and own my own home there. When I married a Nicaraguan in 2004, my wife's family became my surrogate family, and we have a daughter who has dual Nicaraguan and Irish nationality. Spanish is the main language used in our home. Though I live in a town, I spend a lot of time in the countryside with rural children and their families on the coffee farms. Thus, though I am not fully an 'insider', I am far from being an 'outsider'. Having made my permanent home in Nicaragua does not make me Nicaraguan, but it does give me a perspective that is different from that of most European or North American researchers who travel to Nicaragua to research the lives of Nicaraguan people.

(5) Over time I have learned to be aware of how different aspects of who I am affect the dynamics of power in my relations with others. For example I am aware of how my gender, age, skin colour, nationality, ethnic-cultural identity, class (in both Marxian and socio-cultural senses), sexual orientation, religion (none in my case), age, appearance, style of dress, way of speaking and many other factors affect how I see myself and how others, both as individuals and as members of groups, respond to and interact with me (though often these effects may be hidden, and even if they are not, I may not be sensitive enough to notice them). In the case of this research project, the differences between myself and the child research participants are starkly visible and could scarcely be greater: To them I am a white-skinned, middle-aged, English-speaking foreign man. Since British and Irish people are rarely encountered in rural Nicaragua, white-skinned English-speaking foreign-ers are usually classified as 'gringos', a common Latin-American term for people from the United States, which has its own meanings embedded in historic power relations. To add to this, I arrive in their community in a chauffeur-driven four-wheel-drive pick-up truck, have access to technological resources, and take the lead in the facilitation process, assisted by local Nicaraguan colleagues. If the aim is to support the 'empowerment' of local children, this could be considered an un-promising start. In such circumstances, the importance of researcher reflexivity cannot be overstated. I cannot make the power imbalance go away, and to ignore or deny it would undermine the credibility of the research. Therefore, I must try to facilitate process in a way that acknowledges the power and influence I hold and yet, drawing on constant reflection and reflexivity, creates conditions and provides structure where the child researchers' own process of empowerment can unfold.

I do this in different ways before, during and after each workshop session (dis-cussed further in Chapter 4), and use a field journal to record my reflections after each session (Ortlipp, 2008). Though specific examples of reflexivity in practice will be found in later chapters, this is a continuous process which picks up on many small issues that may or may not get written up in the final account of the research.

(6) I am bilingual in English and Spanish, with English being my first language and Spanish my principal home language for the past ten years. Because of my 11 years working with children in Nicaragua, and my partial assimilation into a Nicaraguan

family, I am not only fluent in Spanish, but am familiar with children's idioms, local expressions, and local meanings that only make sense in context. This role of 'bilingual researcher', and particularly the capacity to carry out cross-language research without recourse to translation, is important enough to warrant more detailed consideration, which will be found in Chapter 4.

My window for writing about myself in the first person closes here. I hope that by writing in this way I have helped the reader to understand the relationship between myself as a person and the research I am giving an account of, and to appreciate the implications of this relationship for the research findings and outcomes. I also hope that, having done so, I have justified my decision to write in this way.

I will now return to third-person impersonal writing for the rest of this thesis.

6. Scope of the study

Though limitations of this study and challenges encountered are discussed in Chapters 7 and 8, defining the scope of this project at the outset can provide orientation for a considered and critical reading of the thesis.

First, this was a small-scale piece of research restricted to four primary schools in neighbouring villages in a remote rural area in the centre of the Nicaraguan coffee-growing zone (see map in Appendix 1). A total of 150 children were interviewed. Because of the methodology used, the findings of this study do not permit generalisation; in other words they cannot be used to make inferences about the likely views of other children in other places, even if their lives appear at first sight to be similar. The wider significance of this study – beyond the valuable knowledge it gives us of the perceptions of a specific group of school students in Nicaragua – is not to be found in generalising these specific and bounded findings to other settings, but in applying the analysis of these very findings to aid our understanding of larger underlying issues.

Second, although the four schools involved in the research had participated for a number of years in a rights-based development programme called 'Safe Quality Schools', and this experience must have influenced the children's perceptions, the way the research was designed does not permit any conclusions to be drawn about

the effectiveness or otherwise of this intervention. Analysis of these findings may, however, help to inform discussion about the shaping of future interventions in general.

Third, although teachers participated in a focus group, and some completed a short questionnaire, on the whole their data was relegated to secondary status, and greater priority was given to the children's perceptions. At the same time, the young researchers decided not to interview teachers or other adult actors, and were not encouraged to do so. On previous projects using this methodology, young researchers have interviewed adults, and there is no reason they should not do so if they wish. However, on this occasion the young researchers only collected and analysed data from other children. Their focus remained firmly on the children's perspectives, and dialogue or exchange between children and adults did not form part of the research.

7. Organisation of the thesis

The thesis is structured in a conventional format. Following this introductory chapter, Chapter 2 is a literature review, which covers four main areas: understanding education rights; what children tell us about rights in school; human rights education in schools, with an emphasis on whole-school approaches; and finally education rights (including human rights education) in Latin America. This leads into Chapter 3, where the Latin American scope narrows further to focus on Nicaragua as the context for this particular study, looking at the political-historical context; the economic context (considering poverty, coffee and child labour as issues relevant to the present study); the educational policy context; the human rights framework; and the pedagogical framework for children's rights in school. In the latter part of Chapter 3, the focus narrows still further to the coffee-growing communities of La Dalia in the north of the country, the four rural communities where the research was carried out, and the schools attended by the participating children. It also introduces the organisations Save the Children and CESESMA and the 'Safe Quality Schools' project they have run in this area since 2011.

The first part of Chapter 4 deals with research methodology, first to locate the 'Transformative Research by Children and Adolescents' approach in relation to the established paradigms of qualitative social research, and then to connect it to a

number of related research approaches in this area. A sub-section discusses issues of cross-language research and the unique role of the bilingual researcher. In the latter part, Chapter 4 turns to a description of the methods used, first for fieldwork in all its stages and then for data analysis. Further sections discuss the trustworthiness of the findings and ethical considerations.

Chapter 5 is a presentation of the main findings, and Chapter 6 is a discussion of these, highlighting a number of key themes: rights and peer-relations, rights and punishment, rights and responsibilities, and participation rights in school. Chapter 7 is a substantial reflection on and critique of the methods and methodology used, which includes suggestions for their further development. In conclusion, Chapter 8 provides a final overview of the thesis and its implications, and puts forward a number of practical proposals for development, together with suggestions for future research.

The thesis contains a number of quotations translated from Spanish, from both existing literature and the research data. Unless stated otherwise, all such translations are by the present author, and this is taken as understood throughout for ease of reading. In some cases, where elements of meaning may be lost in translation, the original Spanish words used are given in parenthesis beside the English terms in question. And in a few cases where there is no satisfactory English translation (for example *'promotor/a'*), the original Spanish words are kept, but their meaning explained when they first occur.

All internet addresses (URLs) mentioned, either in footnotes or in the final reference list, were successfully accessed on 8 September 2015. Retrieval dates are not specified for each item.

Chapter 2: Literature review

1. Introduction

This chapter does not touch on the vast literature that addresses the question, 'what is a human right?'. Though it makes no quarrel with the concept of 'natural rights' proposed by Kant, Hobbes and many other philosophers (Finnis, 2011), it opts for a positivist view of human rights, understanding them to be those liberties or entitlements that are identified as such in recognised legal documents, be they statutes, treaties, case-law or accounts of customary law.[3]

Recently advocacy for 'reconceptualisations' of children's rights, such as 'rights from below' (Liebel et al., 2012), and 'living rights' (Hanson and Nieuwenhuys, 2013) has attracted attention in the literature.

> The concept of living rights highlights that children (amongst other people), while making use of notions of rights, shape what these rights are – and become – in the social world. The concept challenges the idea that children's rights are exclusively those defined by international institutions or states. (Hanson and Nieuwenhuys, 2013, p. 6)

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[3] See Gardner (2001) and (Shapiro 2007) for support for this view.

However, in a telling critique of the 'rights from below' approach, Lenzer (2015) argues that this is a dangerous position to adopt, as identifying children themselves as the main protagonists who will define, promote and defend their own rights places the weakest and most vulnerable children, who are unable to do so, at risk of neglect, abuse and exploitation. Also, as Larkins and colleagues (2015) point out, the limitations of these approaches are highlighted when children's rights are brought into play in advocacy for social change, where robust rights claims based on universally agreed legal rights may turn out to be more convincing than those made up by the children themselves. Having noted these proposed reconceptualisations, then, the frameworks and analytical tools discussed in this chapter mainly derive from ideas of legal rights, particularly rights as defined in international law.

Following this introduction, this chapter has ten main sections and a brief conclusion. Section 2 looks at education rights as they are posited in the main international legal instruments, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) and the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC),[4] while Section 3 explores some of the most influential conceptual models in the literature on these rights. An important theme for this study is the child's right to an education of *quality*, so Section 4 explores the concept of 'quality' in education, particularly in relation to education rights. Another important concept is the complex and contested nature of the relationship between children's rights and children's responsibilities, so Section 5 looks specifically at the literature relating to this issue. This is followed in Section 6 by a review of the literature wherein

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[4] Though the CRC and the ICESCR are considered the most important formulations of education rights in international law, there are others that should also be mentioned, principally the 1960 UNESCO Convention against Discrimination in Education, the 1979 UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, and the 2006 Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. There are also a variety of regional instruments such as the European Convention on Human Rights, the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child, and the American Convention on Human rights, which are important in their respective regions. However these are not considered in detail in this review.

children and adolescents themselves share their views on their rights at school. Section 7 reviews the literature on Human Rights Education (HRE) in schools, and Section 8 looks more specifically at whole school approaches to rights in schools, followed by Sections 9 and 10 looking first at education rights and then HRE in Latin America. Section 11 introduces the concept of "resesearch by children" as an overarching concern of this thesis, setting the scene for the fuller exploration of this topic that will follow in chapter 4, and is followed by a brief concluding section.

2. Education rights in international law

The right to education is set down in Article 26 of the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR). However, broadly the same content was subsequently incorporated into article 13 of the 1966 International Covenant on Economic Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR). In 1989, after a gap of 23 years, the UN General Assembly adopted the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) which also deals with education rights. Although the treatment of education rights in these two treaties is similar, there are some significant differences. However, there is little to be found in the literature on the implications of these. There are differences, for example, in the listings of the aims of education in the two treaties. Where the ICESCR specifies the development of the child's personality, the CRC adds the development of his or her talents and mental and physical abilities to their fullest potential. The CRC also adds to the list the development of respect for the child's parents, cultural identity, language and values, as well as those of others, and for the natural environment. Both treaties want education to promote understanding, tolerance and friendship, but the CRC adds peace and gender equality.

Surprisingly, given that the CRC is often cited as the first international treaty to recognise children's participation rights (Reynaert et al., 2009), an aim of education in the ICESCR that is *not* found in the CRC is to "enable all persons to *participate effectively* in a free society" (ICESCR article 13.1, emphasis added). The nearest equivalent in the CRC is, "preparation of the child for responsible life in a free society" – leaving it open to interpretation whether or not such a 'responsible life' should include active participation in decision-making. A plausible explanation of this is that the drafters of the ICESCR in the 1960s were thinking of children

growing up to participate as adults in a free society, and were not interested in children's participation as such.

The CRC also deals with a number of educational issues that are not mentioned in the ICESCR. It requires states to make educational and vocational information and guidance available and accessible to all children, and to take measures to encourage regular school attendance and reduce drop-out rates. It also requires states to ensure that "school discipline is administered in a manner consistent with the child's human dignity and in conformity with the present Convention" (CRC Article 28.2). This has been widely interpreted as implying that all corporal punishment in schools is a violation of convention rights (Coomans, 2007, p. 192).

The real difference between the two treaties, however, is how their different contexts and purposes affect our understanding and interpretation of education rights. Scholars who take the ICESCR as their main point of reference have analysed the 'right to education' through textual exegesis of Articles 13 and 14 in isolation (Beiter, 2006; Coomans, 2007). To understand education rights as conceived in the CRC, however, requires a different approach; namely a careful reading of the Convention as a whole, not just the two specifically education-focused articles. The UN Committee on the Rights of the Child made this clear in its first General Comment, where it explains that, "[Article 29] draws upon, reinforces, integrates and complements a variety of other provisions and cannot be properly understood in isolation from them" (Committee on the Rights of the Child, 2001, para. 6).

In particular, the principle that in all actions concerning children 'the best interests of the child shall be a primary consideration' (CRC Article 3) has a profound impact on what is acceptable in educational planning and policy-making, and provides a counterweight to the traditional view that parents can do as they please in relation to their children's education (Alston and Gilmour-Walsh, 1996; Freeman, 2007).

The principle of children's right to be heard in all decisions that affect them (Article 12) also has far-reaching implications in education. This principle was further developed by the Committee on the Rights of the Child in its General Comment

No. 12 in 2009, where, in order to comply with their obligations under Article 12, it called on States Parties to promote active, participatory learning in schools; to take children's and parents' views into account in curriculum planning; to practise respect for human rights in schools, ensuring children's views are given due weight; to promote class councils, student councils and student representation on school boards where children can freely express their views on the development and implementation of school policies and codes of behaviour (these practices to be enshrined in law, not left to the goodwill of heads and school authorities); to consult children at local and national levels on all aspects of education policy (including strengthening the child-friendly character of the educational system); and finally to support the development of independent student organizations (summary of Committee on the Rights of the Child, 2009, paras. 107-112).

On participation rights, the comparison with the ICESRC is interesting. The ICESRC is a product of its time (formulated in the early 1960s) and in general does not perceive children as entitled to influence their own lives, or as having the right to be consulted on decisions that affect them. These ideas are also largely absent from the early literature on the ICESCR. Children's 'participation rights' as such were introduced to international law by the CRC in 1989, and even then were considered novel and radical (Lansdown, 1995; McCowan, 2012).

3. Concepts and frameworks for understanding education rights

"Essentially all models are wrong, but some are useful"
(George Box, 1979)

Introduction

This section looks at a number of influential conceptual frameworks that have been advocated to support the understanding, analysis and implementation of children and adolescents' rights in education. After noting a number of these that, because of their influence in the literature, warrant a mention, it focuses in on those most relevant to the present study: the three types of states' obligations; the four 'A's; rights *to*, *in* and *through* education; and UNESCO and UNICEF's 'Human rights-based approach to education for all'.

The first of the ideas that require just a brief mention here is the 'common core' approach, which suggests the division of human rights into a core that is genuinely universal and must apply to all children in all countries without delay, and a periphery that can be implemented gradually or to a limited extent depending on resources, local culture etc. (Alston, 1987). Coomans (2007) developed this idea in relation to education rights by listing what he considered to be their common core. Although this idea has influential supporters (CESCR, 1990, para 10; Beiter, 2006, p. 644), it appears to propose a 'hierarchy of rights', and thus seems at odds with the doctrine of indivisibility of rights (Meron, 1986). It also leaves unresolved questions about whether the minimum core is the same in all countries or different for rich and poor (Young, 2008), and who should get to determine the core content (Mutua, 2002).

Another influential idea is that human rights can be categorised into three 'generations': civil and political rights (also described as civil liberties); economic, social and cultural rights; and 'solidarity rights' which are associated with peoples rather than individuals, such as self-determination, peace and sustainable development (Vašák, 1977). As with the 'common core' approach, this idea has been further developed in the field of education, where Nowak (1995) claims that "the right to education is probably the only right that reveals aspects falling under all three generations" (p. 196). Though the notion of three generations of rights has been criticised on historical, philosophical and legal grounds (e.g. Eide and Rosas, 1995; Alston, 1982), it continues to have a strong presence in the literature.

Yet another influential model has been the division of the rights in the CRC into the three Ps: Protection, Provision and Participation (Cantwell, 1993), occasionally referred to as the 'three pillars of the Convention' (Habashi et al., 2010). According to Nigel Cantwell (1993), who was involved in the drafting of the CRC in the 1980s, this formula was invented to be, "an easily-remembered slogan to describe the content of the Convention" (p. 121), and to distance it from the 'three generations' model. However, the 'three Ps' formula has become influential and the Committee on the Rights of the Child has used it in several General Comments (e.g. CG 12, para. 18). As with the three generations, education rights involve all three pillars.

Having noted some ideas that, although influential, have been less important in building the conceptual framework for present study, those that have been more important will now be introduced.

The three (or maybe four) types of states' obligations

First proposed by Asbjørn Eide in 1987, the three categories of states' obligations in respect of human rights are to *respect* rights, to *protect* rights and to *fulfil* rights. Although it is Eide's labels that have become the 'standard model', he was in fact reengineering an earlier tripartite division of obligations proposed by Henry Shue in 1980: 'To avoid depriving', 'to protect from deprivation' and 'to aid the deprived' (Shue, 1980/1996). Eide later proposed a fourth category of 'facilitate rights' (Eide, 2000), which led the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (CESCR), in its General Comment No. 13 on the right to education, to propose a four-way split:

> The obligation to respect rights requires States parties to avoid measures that hinder or prevent the enjoyment of the right to education.
>
> The obligation to protect rights requires States parties to take measures to prevent third parties from interfering with the enjoyment of the right to education.
>
> The obligation to fulfil by facilitation requires States to take positive measures that enable and assist individuals and communities to enjoy the right to education (for example maintaining quality control in private schools).
>
> Finally the obligation to fulfil by provision means States parties have an obligation to provide the necessary services (public schools etc.) to fulfil the right to education. (CESCR, 1999, para. 47)

The children's-rights-based approach to research proposed by Lundy and McEvoy (2012a) (discussed in Chapter 4) says that all such research should aspire to "build the capacity of duty-bearers to fulfil their obligations" (p. 79); hence the importance for the present study of the above framework which helps to determine what these obligations are.

The four 'A's

The four 'A's are Availability, Accessibility, Acceptability and Adaptability. This model was developed by the former UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Education Katarina Tomaševski, and has found wide acceptance and provided the conceptual underpinning for a number of major international education rights programmes, notably the Right To Education Project.[5] Of the many documents Tomaševski produced in support of the 4 'A's model, the most complete and comprehensive is her 2004 '*Manual on Rights-Based Education: Global human rights requirements made simple'* (Tomaševski, 2004a).

There have been a number of refinements or elaborations of the basic 4 'A's. For example the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights makes use of them in General Comment No.13 (para. 6) where 'Accessibility' is further sub-divided into (i) non-discrimination, (ii) physical accessibility and (iii) economic accessibility. Likewise 'Acceptability' requires education to be (a) relevant, (b) culturally appropriate and (c) of good quality. Melchiorre (2010) has developed a matrix combining the four 'A's with Eide's three types of states' obligations, showing how states have obligations to respect, protect and fulfil rights in respect of each of the four As.

Rights To, In and Through Education

This model, associated with Eugeen Verhellen of the Children's Rights Centre at the University of Ghent, is based on the idea that implementing the CRC in the context of schools and schooling involves at least three essential components: the right *to* education (making education available and accessible to all children everywhere); rights *in* education (ensuring that children's rights in general are respected and complied with within education systems); and rights *through* education (Verhellen, 1993, 2006).

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[5] http://www.right-to-education.org/

The last of these has been given subtly different meanings by different comment-ators: Firstly it is understood as referring to human rights education (Verhellen, 1993, p. 205). This implies more than just informing children that they have rights. It also needs to develop children's self-concept as rights-holders and the skills and confidence they require to claim and defend rights and call failing duty-bearers to account. Secondly, as the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights points out in the opening paragraph of General Comment No. 13, it draws our attention to the fact that, "Education is both a human right in itself and an indispensable means of realizing other human rights" (CESCR, 1999, para 1).

Though not as widely applied as the 4 'A's model, the '*to*, *in* and *through*' model has frequently provided a useful tool for analysis of education rights in relation to specific groups or contexts; see for example Lundy's work on education rights in the context of a society emerging from conflict in Northern Ireland (Lundy, 2006), Wilson (2004b) on minority rights in education, Aikman and Rao (2012) on gender equality and girls' education, and Shier et al. (2013) on education rights for working children in Nicaragua.

A human-rights-based approach to education for all

'Education for All' (EFA) is the name of an ongoing global process led by UNESCO in partnership with other UN agencies. It was launched in Jomtien, Thailand in 1990 with a 'World Declaration on Education for All' (UNESCO, 1990), and subsequently an international 'Framework for Action' was agreed at Dakar, Senegal in 2000 (UNESCO, 2000).[6]

Some human rights scholars, including Tomaševski (2001a) and Beiter (2006, p. 328), suggested, however, that the EFA process was taking the global education campaign away from its human rights base and regressing to needs-based thinking. This is seen in the language of key EFA documents such as those mentioned above which discuss governments' and other actors' commitment to education, but not

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[6] For the full history of the 'Education for All' process see Beiter (2006), pp. 323-327.

their 'obligations'. However, human-rights-based approaches have continued to gain influence in international cooperation and development in the past decade (e.g. United Nations, 2003; UNDP, 2006) (though not without critique; for example Nyamu-Musembi and Cornwall, 2004). The UN agencies therefore decided it was appropriate to rethink Education for All in the light of new human-rights-based approaches in the education sector; a process which resulted in the 2007 joint framework document 'A Human Rights-Based Approach to Education for All' authored by Gerison Lansdown and colleagues (2007).

Though it recognises the influence of Tomaševski and the 4 'A's, the new framework offers a new and different structure. Going back to an analysis of the texts of the CRC, ICESCR and other instruments, it defines three key education rights: the right of access to education, the right to quality education, and the right to respect in the learning environment. Each of these is shown to consist of three elements, giving the nine-way framework set out in Box 1.

UNICEF/UNESCO: 'A Human Right-Based Approach to Education for All'

Conceptual framework

1. The right of access to education

    ▫ Education throughout all stages of childhood and beyond

    ▫ Availability and accessibility of education

    ▫ Equality of opportunity

2. The right to quality education

    ▫ A broad, relevant and inclusive curriculum

    ▫ Rights-based learning and assessment

    ▫ Child-friendly, safe and healthy environments

3. The right to respect in the learning environment

    ▫ Respect for identity

    ▫ Respect for participation rights

    ▫ Respect for integrity.

The foundations of these rights in the CRC and other relevant treaties are set out in detail in the framework document.

Box 1. Conceptual framework of 'A Human Right-Based Approach to Education for All' (taken from Lansdown el al., 2007, p. 28)

The three key education rights in this framework: access, quality and respect, can be compared with a similar framework for the study of education rights recently proposed by Quennersdedt (2015), who suggests that the relation between education and children's rights has three main aspects: access, content and relations. The two schemes do not quite map onto one another, as relations can be both respectful and of quality, as can content. One way to characterise this difference is that, while Quennersdedt focuses on aspects of education rights that are to be studied and analysed, Lansdown and colleagues name the actual rights to be claimed.

Whilst no single conceptual framework yet devised does justice to the inter-connectedness and dynamic tension between the different elements that make up the overall bundle of education rights, and all those described above provide useful elements, it is this last model that will mainly be drawn on in the present study. There are a number of reasons for this, not least of which is this model's explicit concern with the *quality of education* (a more detailed exploration of which will be found in the following section). Also helpful is the incorporation within this of the right to a child-friendly school environment (explored further in Section 8 below and Chapter 6). Finally the bringing together of a number of key rights *in* education under the banner of the *right to respect* helps cement the link between rights *in* education and the right *to* education, since few children will willingly spend a large part of their childhood in a place where they are not respected.

4. The right to quality education

Quality in education from a human rights perspective

The education-specific articles of the CRC (Articles 28 and 29) do not mention the idea of 'quality' in education, let alone establish a right to it. Indeed, the word 'quality' does not appear anywhere in the Convention. And yet it has become a central and much-discussed concept in the field of education rights, and as such is fundamental to the work of CESESMA and Save the Children in Nicaragua where fieldwork for the present study took place. It is therefore worth looking at how the notion of 'quality education' has been conceptualised, and considering how it can best be understood in the context of the present study.

Discussion about quality in education goes back long before the CRC, but the aim here is to consider how the concept has been developed from a children's rights perspective, and specifically to understand what it means to say that a child has a *right* to quality education. Some broader critiques of the idea of quality in education will also be considered, to see if these can shed any further light on the legitimacy and utility of the concept as used in the children's rights context.

Though not in the Convention, quality of education as a right appears in the Committee on the Rights of the Child's General Comment No. 1 on the aims of education (2001) which says:

> Article 29 (1) underlines the individual and subjective *right to a specific quality of education*. Consistent with the Convention's emphasis on the importance of acting in the best interests of the child, this article emphasizes the message of child-centred education: that the key goal of education is the development of the individual child's personality, talents and abilities, in recognition of the fact that every child has unique characteristics, interests, abilities, and learning needs. (Para. 9. Emphasis added)

And later:

> *Every child has the right to receive an education of good quality* which in turn requires a focus on the quality of the learning environment, of teaching and learning processes and materials, and of learning outputs. (Para. 22. Emphasis added)

There are no other references to quality of education in the General Comment. However, these two statements are sufficient to make it clear that, for the Committee, Article 29 (1) gives rise to a right to education of a certain quality. In these statements, the committee identifies at least six elements that it considers constitute quality education: (1) child-centred education; (2) the development of the child's personality, talents and abilities; (3) the recognition of every child's unique characteristics, interests, abilities and needs; (4) the quality of the learning environment; (5) the quality of teaching and learning *processes*; and (6) the quality of learning outputs.

The idea of a right to quality education was also taken up by UNICEF and UNESCO. The 1990 'Jomtien Declaration on Education for All' called for the expansion of education services of quality and, with particular urgency, improving the quality of education for girls and women (UNESCO 1990), but went no further in explaining what this meant. It was left to UNICEF in a 2000 working paper to propose the working definition of quality education from a children's rights perspective shown in Box 2:

UNICEF's concept of 'quality education'

Quality education includes:

1. Learners who are healthy, well-nourished and ready to participate and learn, and supported in learning by their families and communities;

2. Environments that are healthy, safe, protective and gender-sensitive, and provide adequate resources and facilities;

3. Content that is reflected in relevant curricula and materials for the acquisition of basic skills, especially in the areas of literacy, numeracy and skills for life, and knowledge in such areas as gender, health, nutrition, HIV/AIDS prevention and peace.

4. Processes through which trained teachers use child-centred teaching approaches in well-managed classrooms and schools and skilful assessment to facilitate learning and reduce disparities.

5. Outcomes that encompass knowledge, skills and attitudes, and are linked to national goals for education and positive participation in society.

Box 2: UNICEF's concept of 'quality education' (UNICEF, 2000, p. 4)

The same year, the Dakar Framework for Action set out six global goals, the last of which was to improve all aspects of the quality of education (UNESCO, 2000, p. 8). The framework document goes on to explain that to achieve this will require:

(1) healthy, well-nourished and motivated students; (2) well-trained teachers and active learning techniques; (3) adequate facilities and learning materials; (4) a relevant curriculum that can be taught and learned in a local language and builds upon the knowledge and experience of the teachers and learners; (5) an environment that not only encourages learning but is welcoming, gender-sensitive, healthy and safe; (6) a clear definition and accurate assessment of learning outcomes, including knowledge, skills, attitudes and values; (7)

participatory governance and management; and (8) respect for and engagement with local communities and cultures. (UNESCO, 2000, p. 17)

… a concept broadly similar to, and compatible with, the previously-mentioned UNICEF definition.

In the following decade the concept of quality in education was further elaborated. Pigozzi (2006), on behalf of UNESCO, developed a rights-based framework made up of ten elements, where learning was placed at the centre, surrounded by an inner circle of five elements at the 'learner level', and an outer circle with a further five elements at the 'education system level'. Pigozzi's ten elements are:

Learner level: Education seeks out learners; Values what the learner brings; Content; Process; Environment

Education system level: Managerial and administrative system; Implementation of 'good policies'; Supportive legislative framework; Adequate resources; Measurement of learning outcomes. (Pigozzi, 2006, p. 45)

UNESCO's 2005 Education for All Global Monitoring Report, 'Education for All: The Quality Imperative', enlarged on this. The report explored an impressively broad sweep of earlier ideas and used these to build up a new framework, more elaborate than those that had gone before (EFA Global Monitoring Report Team, 2004). The wide-ranging, though not particularly critical, analysis incorporated the Jomtien and Dakar agreements (p. 29), Pigozzi's UNESCO concept (p. 30), CRC article 29 and the UNICEF approach (p. 31). It went on to review how quality in education has been conceived in five different intellectual traditions; namely the humanist, behaviourist, critical theory, Freirean, and indigenous traditions (pp. 32-35). These elements are brought together to construct a new model, which is summarised in the diagram in Figure 1.

Figure 1.1: A framework for understanding education quality

Enabling inputs

Teaching and learning
- Learning time
- Teaching methods
- Assessment, feedback, incentives
- Class size

- Teaching and learning materials
- Physical infrastructure and facilities
- Human resources: teachers, principals, inspectors, supervisors, administrators
- School governance

Learner characteristics
- Aptitude
- Perseverance
- School readiness
- Prior knowledge
- Barriers to learning

Outcomes
- Literacy, numeracy and life skills
- Creative and emotional skills
- Values
- Social benefits

Context
- Economic and labour market conditions in the community
- Socio-cultural and religious factors
- (Aid strategies)

- Educational knowledge and support infrastructure
- Public resources available for education
- Competitiveness of the teaching profession on the labour market
- National governance and management strategies

- Philosophical standpoint of teacher and learner
- Peer effects
- Parental support
- Time available for schooling and homework

- National standards
- Public expectations
- Labour market demands
- Globalization

Figure 1: The framework for understanding education quality from the 2005 EFA Global Monitoring Report, 'Education for All: The Quality Imperative' (EFA Global Monitoring Report Team, 2004, p. 36).

Although rights-based perspectives formed a good part of the mix that gave rise to this framework, the end product has emerged completely rights-free. Children's rights do not form any part of education quality either in the diagram or in the explanatory text that accompanies it. For example, 'enabling inputs' in the quality formula do not include teachers acknowledging and respecting children's rights in school; nor are children as rights-holders or children's rights in general mentioned as part of the context. This bears out the criticisms of the global Education for All process made by Tomaševski (2001a) and Beiter (2006) mentioned above; that it was taking the global education campaign away from its human rights base and regressing to needs-based thinking (though in this case it seems to be the needs of the market rather than the needs of the children that predominate).

Holding firmly to the human-rights-based approach, however, Wilson (2004a) reviewed global jurisprudence in search of evidence of the justiciability of the right to quality education. He concluded that jurisprudence does not help much in resolving debates on what makes for high quality in education, but:

> What human rights standards and their implementation show us, though, is the lower limits of acceptability, where discussion on quality ends and on human rights violation begins. (Wilson, 2004a, p. 2)

In other words, while litigating education rights does not do much to guarantee the highest quality in education, it can draw attention to, and sometimes remedy, situations where the quality is unacceptably low (which resonates with Tomaševski's criterion of 'Acceptability' from the 4 'A's framework).

The different conceptualisations of quality education discussed so far were sub-sequently reconsidered and put back into a rights-based framework in UNESCO and UNICEF's joint 'Human Rights Based Approach to Education for All' (Lansdown et al., 2007). As discussed earlier, this proposes a rights-based conceptual framework for education made up of three components, one of which is 'The right to quality education'. The authors review the relevant international human rights instruments (UDHR, CRC, ICESCR and CRPD) and from these identify eight key states' obligations that together they conceive as 'Obligations to ensure the right to quality education'. These are shown in Box 3.

Obligations to ensure the right to quality education

- Develop children's personalities, talents, and mental and physical abilities to their fullest potential.

- Promote respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, and prepare children for a responsible life in a spirit of peace, tolerance, equality and friendship.

- Promote respect for the child's, his or her parents' and others' cultural identity, language and values.

- Promote respect for the natural environment.

- Ensure the child's access to information from a diversity of sources.

- Ensure that the best interests of children are a primary consideration.

- Promote respect for the evolving capacities of children in the exercise of their rights.

- Respect the right of children to rest, leisure, play, recreation, and participation in arts and culture.

Sources: Article 26, Universal Declaration of Human Rights; articles 3, 5, 6, 12, 17, 29, 31, Convention on the Rights of the Child; article 13, International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights; and article 24, International Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

Box 3: Obligations to ensure the right to quality education
(from Lansdown et al., 2007, p. 32)

The right to quality education is then described as made up of three elements: (1) a broad, relevant and inclusive curriculum; (2) rights-based learning and assessment; and (3) a child-friendly, safe and healthy environment. In further elaborating these elements, the children's rights basis is firmly maintained: the curriculum is to follow the aims of education set out in the CRC and the Committee on the Rights of the Child's guidance on this; the concepts of rights-based learning and assessment are introduced (though the authors take an oddly neo-liberal approach to assessment with their advocacy of testing and dissemination of test results); and the notion of a child-friendly school environment is to include, among other things, 'safe and stimulating opportunities for play and recreation' (Lansdown et al., 2007, pp. 33-34). Though not as detailed and comprehensive as the EFA framework in Figure 1, this model's commitment to its own rights-based approach, and its simplicity, are

advantages when working directly with children as researchers (or advocates/ activists), as is the case in the present study.

Quality in education, stepping outside the human rights perspective

Whilst the foregoing has considered the question of quality in education from a human rights perspective, this is just one approach among many, so a wider look at the idea of education quality and its critics may be helpful in order to ensure the legitimacy and utility of the concept as used here in the children's rights context.

The issue of quality in education has a huge literature, containing a plethora of different models (Cheng and Tam, 1997, describe 7 of these), most of which do not even contemplate the existence of quality education as a human right. For many, quality education is primarily an instrument to increase production of human capital, which itself is an instrument for increasing economic growth (e.g. Verspoor, 2005); an approach explained and effectively critiqued by Tikly (2011). Drawing on postcolonial theory and Sen's capability approach, Tikly and colleagues propose an alternative 'social justice' approach for understanding education quality, particularly in the African context. Although they are critical of the human-rights-based approach, believing it tends to separate people from their contexts, they do not dispense with it altogether and draw heavily on the Dakar framework, with the result that their social justice framework is ultimately not that different, though perhaps more context-specific (Tikly and Barrett, 2011; Tikly, 2011).

The sources considered so far, whether they prefer a human rights, human capital or social justice approach, all address the quality issue in the context of international development, where the main focus is the struggle to improve education in low-income countries and disadvantaged communities. The larger part of the education quality literature, however, deals not with these issues, but with the evaluation of education services as an aspect of (mainly domestic) educational management or policy (Doherty, 2008; Vanhoof and Van Petegem, 2007). Important debates in the evaluation literature that touch on conceptions of quality include: Standards compliance versus school improvement (Gewirtz, 2000); the acceptability in education of industrial models like Total Quality Management (Doherty, 2008); school self-evaluation versus external inspection (Croxford et al., 2009; McNamara

and O'Hara, 2005), and the 'fabrication' of quality through massive data-gathering as a new form of educational governance in Europe (Ozga et al., 2011). However the idea of quality education as a human right plays no part in any of these debates.

Finally there is a sustained critique of the use of the concept of quality as a way to evaluate education put forward by Moss, Dahlberg and colleagues. Although their work is in the field of early years education, their theorising is applicable to all education. Their view is that, in education, the very word 'quality' has become contaminated with the virus of neoliberal technological managerialism, so that the mere use of it is enough to stifle discussion of more humanistic alternatives, so denying the creativity and excitement that might result (Moss et al., 2000, p. 113). In other words:

> The concept of quality appears both neutral and benign, self-evidently a good thing. Yet, our argument is that it is value-ridden and dangerous, especially when deployed as part of a narrowly conceived yet powerfully implemented approach to early childhood which seeks to govern the child through normal-isation, technical practice and instrumental rationality. (Dahlberg, Moss and Pence, 2007, p. xvi)

Influenced by the Reggio Emilia approach to early years education, they propose an alternative to quality evaluation called 'meaning making', described as "evaluation as a participatory process of interpretation and judgement" (Moss and Dahlberg, 2008, p. 6).

There appear, then, to be two distinct discourses around quality in education with very little connection between them. One is centred in the international development sphere, where the notion of education as a human right is strong (though admitting of alternative approaches). In this discourse, while the best way to determine quality in education is debated, the validity of the concept is seldom questioned. The other discourse occurs in the world of educational evaluation and 'quality assurance', where human rights are almost entirely ignored by progressive and conservative thinkers alike. Moss, Dahlberg and colleagues' challenge to the *concept* of quality in education is located squarely in this second discourse. But what of the education rights discourse, with its emphasis on every child's right to a

quality education? Has the notion of 'quality education' that has emerged from decades of debate to claim a central position in this discourse become tainted in the same way? Is the infection contagious across discourses?

It may indeed be productive for education rights advocates to give some thought to this challenge, and consider alternatives to the language of quality as Moss and colleagues propose. However, given the wide international acceptance of the child's right to a quality education, and a growing understanding of how it complements and is interdependent with the right of *access to education*, particularly in poor countries and disadvantaged communities (Shier et al., 2013), attempting to dislodge 'the right to quality education' from its current prime position could risk a major setback for education rights.

5. On children's rights and responsibilities

Educating children about their rights is often seen as provocative or inflammatory and linked to concerns about children's behaviour in school (Osler and Starkey, 2005). Because of this, there is a "commonly held perception in UK human rights education discourse about the need to balance rights and responsibilities", giving rise to, "constant expression of this concern by school leaders and teachers" (Mejias and Starkey, 2012, p. 129). And this perception is not limited to the UK. The Council of Europe says that Education for Democratic Citizenship should empower people "to exercise and defend their democratic rights and responsibilities in society" (Council of Europe, 2010). The belief that children need to be educated about their responsibilities as well as their rights is also widespread in Latin America amongst both professionals and parents (López Hurtado, 2001).

Although the notion that there is 'correlativity' between human rights and responsibilities (or duties[7]) is well-established in political and social philosophy

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[7] What is the difference between 'duties' and 'responsibilities'? Goodin (1986) explains that duties are based on actions, and responsibilities on results. I have a duty when something has to be done and it is up to me to do it, and I have a responsibility when it is up to me to see to it that a certain result occurs. In this discussion we can regard them as

(Feinberg, 1973; Shue, 1980/1996), as the literature on children's rights continues to develop, the precise nature of this correlativity in the special case of children's rights has become subject to competing interests and, instead of becoming clearer, has become increasingly confused. As a result, the teaching of 'rights and responsibilities' in and out of schools has become confused and confusing (Howe and Covell, 2010; Niñas y Niños Investigadores, 2014).

A review of the literature revealed the following eight different ways in which a relationship between rights and responsibilities has been conceptualised:

1. Rights imply responsibilities of a duty-bearer to a rights-holder

First it is necessary to distinguish between a 'moral correlation' of rights and duties, and a 'logical correlation' (Feinberg, 1973). A logical correlation exists if my having a right implies that *someone else* (such as the government) has a corresponding duty towards me. For example, my right to education is meaningless unless the government assumes the obligation to guarantee my access to a school. Shue (1980/1996) proposed that each right can give rise to three different kinds of correlative duty: A duty not to deprive people of their rights, a duty to protect people from being deprived of their rights, and a duty to aid those who have been deprived of their rights. Although philosophers differ on whether this correlation is logically necessary (Donnelly, 1982; Nickel, 1993), it has become a fundamental principle underlying contemporary human rights discourse (Gosselin, 2006; Etinson, 2013). In particular the role of 'duty-bearer' has become central, not just in academic discussion, but in the work of activists, advocates and development agencies around the world, including the children's rights field (United Nations, 2003; Lansdown et al., 2007; Lundy and McEvoy, 2012a).

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synonymous, noting that 'duties' was more commonly used in earlier times and 'responsibilities' is more common nowadays. Also, in English 'rights and responsibilities' is more common than 'rights and duties', but in the Spanish-speaking world the more alliterative '*derechos y deberes*' (rights and duties) is still more commonly heard than '*derechos y responsabilidades*'.

Our first way of connecting rights and responsibilities is therefore the correlation between the rights of a rights-holder and the corresponding duties of a duty-bearer.

2. Rights imply responsibilities through the principle of reciprocity ('If I have rights I must respect your rights')

A 'moral correlation' of rights and duties, by contrast, is when my having a right implies, not that someone has a duty towards me, but that I myself have a duty towards someone else. If rights are held to be universal; that is, based on rules that apply equally to everybody, the idea of reciprocity; that is to say that a rights-holder has a correlative duty to respect the equal rights of others, is appealing as a moral value. For a person to claim the right to freedom from torture while engaged in torturing others would be logically conceivable, but morally repugnant (Feinberg, 1973).

Howe and Covell (2010) call this a 'conceptual linkage' and emphasise that it also applies to children:

> Inherent in the concept of rights – children's rights as well as adult rights – are corresponding responsibilities. If a child has a right not to be bullied at school, she or he has a responsibility not to bully other children. (Howe and Covell, 2010, p. 95)

A second way of relating rights and responsibilities, then, is the reciprocity principle, which says that if I have rights, so does everyone else, and if I want to enjoy my rights, I am obliged to respect your rights.

3. Responsibilities can be derived from rights through the analysis of human rights instruments

Is it possible that other kinds of responsibilities may be identified as the moral correlate of exercising rights, and if so, what might they be? Osler and Starkey (2005) suggest that it may be helpful for the international community to discuss this topic with a view to moving towards a common understanding of agreed responsibilities. With this objective in mind, they reviewed a number of existing human rights instruments, along with reports from various international commiss-ions and expert groups, to see what sort of proposals had emerged that might lead

to a possible codification of human responsibilities. Based on this analysis, they drew up their own list of 'universal responsibilities' (Osler and Starkey, 2005, p. 162).

The reciprocity principle, as discussed above, gives rise to mainly negative responsibilities; for example, if I have the right not to suffer discrimination, I have the corresponding responsibility not to discriminate against others. Osler and Starkey's proposal, however, contains a number of positive responsibilities, which may have been derived from rights documents, but not through the application of simple reciprocity; e.g.: 'work for equity', 'work for freedom, justice, development, democracy and peace', 'develop skills and talents', 'show solidarity and stand up for the rights of others', 'actively participate in governance and civil society', and, 'work to eliminate corruption'. Using Shue's (1996/1980) typology of duties, it is clear that Osler and Starkey's proposal includes duties of all three types: duties not to violate rights (respect); duties to prevent others from violating rights (protect); and duties to aid those whose rights have been violated (fulfil/provide).

A third way of relating rights and responsibilities, then, is to analyse existing codes of human rights, and through a process of ethical reflection and deliberation try to determine what kinds of corresponding responsibilities these may give rise to (which may go above and beyond those derived from simple reciprocity).

4. Responsibilities can be defined alongside rights in legal human rights instruments, nationally or internationally

Some legal instruments enumerate and specify children's responsibilities or duties alongside their rights. Internationally, one of the best known examples of this is the *African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child* (Organisation for African Unity, 1990). This charter, now ratified by 53 African States, includes as Article 31 a list of children's responsibilities including: to work for the cohesion of the family; to respect parents, superiors and elders at all times and assist them in case of need; to serve the national community; to preserve and strengthen social and national solidarity; to preserve and strengthen African cultural values; and to contribute at all times to the promotion and achievement of African Unity (summarised from OAU, 1990, Article 31).

Although these responsibilities are related to some of the child's rights established in the preceding thirty articles, they are not posited as either moral or logical correlates of these rights. The responsibilities come into existence because they have been defined as such by the drafters of the Charter, confirmed by its subsequent adoption, and accepted as such by the states that ratify the Charter. Although they recognise that for a human rights instrument to impose duties on children in this way is contentious, Sloth-Nielsen and Mezmur (2008) believe this article represents a valuable addition to the international human rights agenda, because it shows how:

> Children should be required to play a role at family, community, national and continental levels, in accordance with their age and maturity as they grow up, as part and parcel of their heritage, empowerment and developing citizenship' (p. 188).

In Latin America, a number of individual states, including Nicaragua, have developed their own legal frameworks which define children's responsibilities alongside rights in a similar way.

A fourth way of connecting children's rights and responsibilities, then, is to specify both, side by side in a formal legal instrument. Two things need to be emphasised here: First, children's responsibilities defined in this way cannot be held to be universal. They have no validity outside the jurisdiction(s) where the instrument in question is in force. Secondly, the CRC, the preeminent point of reference for children's human rights throughout the world, does not list any responsibilities of children. Whatever responsibilities children may have, the CRC neither confirms nor denies them.

5. Rights can be promoted whilst acknowledging traditional views about children's responsibilities, seeking to resolve difficulties in ways that are respectful of the context of local culture.

All the above concepts suppose some kind of linkage of rights and responsibilities, however vague. In almost every culture throughout the world, however, children have been held to have duties or obligations since time immemorial, while children's rights are widely considered to be a new-fangled twentieth century

invention. In societies with a Judaeo-Christian heritage, for example, for over two thousand years it has been considered to be the duty of the child to, 'Honour thy father and mother that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee' (Exodus 20:12). Islam, Buddhism and other religions have comparable injunctions in holy texts regarding children's duties to their parents (Browning and Bunge, 2009). In traditional African communities the extended family may be more significant, but here too children's responsibilities to their family are understood as part of their cultural tradition (Cobbah, 1987). These old concepts of children's responsibilities thus predate the newer discourses of children's rights by many centuries. Nowadays a modernising approach that gives primacy to rights over responsibilities may have to seek dialogue with a traditional approach that does the opposite.

A fifth way of connecting children's rights and responsibilities is therefore to promote rights whilst acknowledging traditional ideas about children's duties. Where such traditional attitudes lead to practices that violate children's rights, it may be possible to find positive elements in the local culture that can be brought into play to help protect children's rights without disrespecting traditional values (Kaime, 2005; Zwart, 2012).

6. Responsibilities can be invented as part of a classroom management strategy and rights granted as a reward for fulfilling them

However, research shows that what actually happens in schools is often none of the above, but something more worrying. There is a tendency, observed in research by Howe and Covell (2010) in the UK, and confirmed by young researchers in Nicaragua as part of the present study (Niñas y Niños Investigadores, 2014), for teachers to invent lists of children's responsibilities to suit their own interests, which are often related to behaviour management issues. Such invented responsibilities are often devised and taught in the context of learning about rights, and are presented as corresponding to particular rights. Howe and Covell give the following example:

> You have the right to nutritious and healthy food. It's your responsibility to make sure you eat enough fruits, vegetables, yoghurts, and that you drink

enough water. (Classroom charter in a Hampshire school, cited in Howe and Covell, 2010, p. 98)

Children themselves are often involved in the formulation of these supposed responsibilities, the above example being taken from a 'Classroom Charter of rights and responsibilities' drawn up by children and teacher together. However, as the children have not been given correct information about the nature of rights and responsibilities and the relationship between them, Howe and Covell describe this kind of teaching as 'miseducation'. It could also be described as manipulation of children, as defined by Roger Hart (1992). According to Howe and Covell, not only are responsibilities being made up on the spot, but children are taught that only those who fulfil their responsibilities acceptably are entitled to claim their rights, as if it were a reward: "Children who are naughty, they told us, do not get rights" (Howe and Covell, 2010, p. 99).

This kind of invention of children's responsibilities is not confined to individual teachers. Lists of invented responsibilities have appeared many times in educational materials from governments, NGOs, and even UN agencies. A widely-distributed example is UNICEF UK's 'Little book of children's rights and responsibilities' (UK Committee for UNICEF, 2003), which includes this:

> If children have a right to be educated, then they *have the obligation* to learn as much as their capabilities allow and, where possible, share their knowledge and experience with others. (p. 24; emphasis in the original)

After listing a number of these responsibilities and obligations of children, the booklet concludes by saying, "You can probably think of many more" (p. 25). This gives the impression that, as far as UNICEF UK is concerned, children's responsibilities and obligations are whatever they can think up.

So a sixth way of linking children's rights and responsibilities is to invent responsibilities as a support for classroom management strategies (and/or get children to do it), and teach children that rights are a reward they get if they fulfil their responsibilities correctly.

7. The concept of 'citizenship' can be conceived (and taught) as a contractual arrangement involving both the rights and responsibilities of the citizen as such

The topic of 'Education for Democratic Citizenship' (EDC) as it relates to Human Rights Education will be discussed in Section 7 below. The point to be made here, however, is succinctly stated by the Council of Europe:

> Education for democratic citizenship focuses primarily on democratic rights and responsibilities and active participation, in relation to the civic, political, social, economic, legal and cultural spheres of society. (Council of Europe, 2010, Article 3)

The basic idea here is that being a citizen means having both rights and responsibilities, and that good citizens are those who fulfil their responsibilities as a corollary of enjoying their rights. In some ways this is analogous to the previous relationship where, in the microcosm of the classroom, the good student fulfils her or his responsibilities and enjoys the corresponding rights. In this version, however, the connection is made at a societal level and affects all those who would consider themselves citizens. Jerome (2013) has analysed the "increasingly contractual view of the relationship between rights and responsibilities" (p. 165) that emerged in the philosophy of the 'New Labour' government in the UK (1997-2010), and became a central focus of its approach to citizenship education. Describing this as a project "to create the new citizen of tomorrow" (p. 57), he notes that:

> This has been described as a 'responsibilization' agenda, in which citizens are educated, coerced and ultimately required to demonstrate an appropriate level of responsibility. (Jerome, 2013, p. 165).

The seventh way to connect rights and responsibilities, then, is to establish the connection at the centre of a construction of 'democratic citizenship'.

8. Children, as active citizens, can take on responsibilities, including the promotion and defence of their own rights and the rights of others

Superficially similar, but fundamentally opposed to the previous concept, the eighth and final way of relating rights and responsibilities is to propose that children and adolescents, as active citizens, far from being 'educated, coerced and ultimately

required' to accept responsibility, may themselves choose to take on responsibilities as advocates and activists for children's rights (and indeed all human rights) (Cunningham and Lavalette, 2004; Such and Walker, 2005; Theis, 2009; Smith, 2010; Shier et al., 2014). This is the approach taken by CESESMA in Nicaragua. Writing specifically about the context of rural children's struggle for education rights, Shier and colleagues (2013) explain the relationship between rights and responsibilities as follows:

> While the principal duty bearer in respect of education rights is, and will remain, the state, one thing the Safe Quality Schools project has demonstrated is how active empowered citizens, particularly children and young people themselves, can play a positive role in identifying rights violations, and voluntarily taking on the responsibilities that correspond to them as stakeholders in promoting rights awareness, defending their rights (and other people's), and holding the state to account for its failings. (p. 200)

Several things are worth noting here. First, the assumption of responsibility by children and adolescents as active citizens is not seen as a substitute for the duty of the state to provide education. Children do not take on the state's responsibilities, but rather those that correspond to them as stakeholders, which include 'holding the state to account for its failings'. Secondly, no responsibilities are imposed on children. It is clear that they themselves, as empowered citizens, voluntarily decide to take on responsibilities. Thus these children cannot be seen as victims of the kind of 'responsibilisation' much criticised as a neoliberal governance tool (Jerome, 2013; Cradock, 2007; Kelly, 2001; Liebenberg et al., 2013). Another way of putting it is that these empowered children and adolescents can *assume responsibility*, but this does not mean that they can be '*held responsible*'.

This, then, is the eighth and final way of linking children's rights and responsibilities: Children, as active citizens, can take on responsibilities, including the promotion and defence of their own rights and the rights of others, and the calling of duty-bearers to account; and, in so doing, exercise to the full their right to participate.

This framework will be considered in the light of the findings from the present study in Chapter 6, and its potential use as a route towards a new improved pedagogy for rights and responsibilities will be advocated in the concluding chapter.

6. What children and adolescents tell us about rights in school (and how adults use the information)

Preliminary considerations: Facilitating children's views, engaging with rights

The literature to be reviewed under this heading can be seen as the small intersection of three much larger literatures: the literature on schools and schooling, the literature on children's rights, and the literature that expresses and gives serious consideration to children's views (visualised in the Venn diagram in Figure 2).
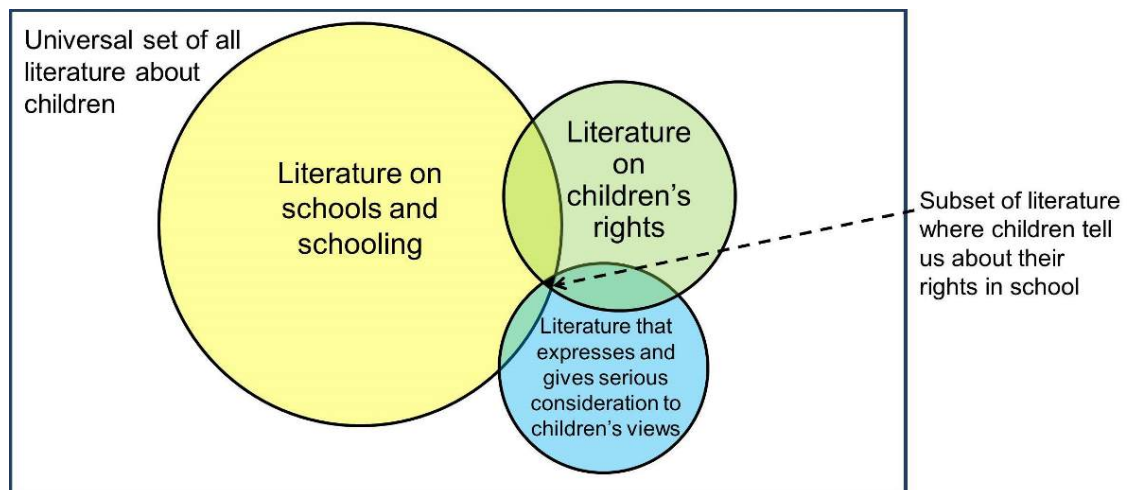
Figure 2: "What children tell us about rights in school" as the intersection of three larger literatures

Before attempting to identify and review the literature in this intersection, some preliminary reflections about how it is produced may be helpful.

To some degree all published literature involves some degree of adult enabling and mediation; selecting, editing, graphic designing, marketing etc. However, in some cases these are consciously minimised, to give the impression that children and adolescents had a fair degree of control over not just the text but also the look of the published product; for example doing their own illustrations instead of having a professional cartoonist add these later (e.g. Tolley at al., 1998; Niñas, Niños y Adolescentes Consultores/as, 2012). Publications of this type are often produced by

NGOs, Children's Commissioners and similar organisations, and are considered to form part of the 'grey literature' around the topic, rather than academic literature (Alderson, 2001; Coad and Lewis, 2004). Beyond this, towards the less-mediated end of the continuum, lie social media such as blogs and smartphone apps where children and adolescents can make public their views with minimal adult inter-ference; but unless such views are gathered and published by adult researchers, they do no enter into the 'literature', and once they do, the adult mediation and editing begin again. This is not to suggest that adult mediation of children's voices is always a bad thing; it clearly has its uses. However it would be a mistake to pretend it does not happen and ignore its effect on the messages we read. It would equally be a mistake to suppose that there can be such a thing as a pure or unmediated child voice. As Janet Maybin (2013) has shown, even when they chat freely amongst themselves:

> Children appropriate and reproduce the authoritative voices of education, popular culture and parents in the course of their induction into social practices. At the same time, they also express varying degrees of commitment to these voices and orchestrate their own and other people's voices within accounts and anecdotes, making voice appropriation an uneven, accumulative process shot through with the dynamics of personal and peer-group experience. (p. 383)

At the other end of the spectrum is most of the formal literature in academic books and journals. Here children's words become data and can be entirely swallowed up by academic theoretical analysis. Synthesised conclusions are presented, and where the child subjects' actual words are cited, they are carefully selected to fit a predetermined theory-driven argument created by the researcher (e.g. Bragg, 2007; Robinson, 2011; Sargeant and Gillett-Swan, 2015).

Another preliminary consideration concerns the human rights orientation of the literature. Though there is a sizeable literature where children talk about their *experiences* at school (the intersection of the yellow and blue circles in Figure 2),

only in a small part of it do they do this from a rights-based perspective, or talk explicitly about their *rights* in school (the small intersection of the three circles). This is evident, for example, in the large collection of children's research reports from projects supported by the UK Open University's Children's Research Centre.[8] A good proportion of the children's reports deal with aspects of their school experience, but hardly any explicitly mention their rights or adopt a children's rights focus; notable exceptions (out of over 150 reports) being Cole (2005) and Abhyankar, (2008) (aged 11 and 13 respectively), both strong advocates of children having a greater say in decision-making (see section on student voice below).

Before considering what children have to tell us about their rights, then, it is also worth noting what adult researchers have to say about children's conceptions of the *nature of rights*, and how these are formed. Long before the CRC (and the new sociology of childhood), Melton (1980) proposed that children develop their understanding of rights according to a stage-development process analogous to those of Piaget and Kohlberg, and suggested that a conception of rights as based on abstract moral principles does not emerge until adolescence. However, this view was subsequently challenged by studies showing the importance of context, culture and children's own experiences in determining their developing understanding of rights (Cherney and Perry, 1996; Ruck et al., 1998). Similarly Covell, Howe and McNeil (2008), carrying out mixed quantitative-qualitative research in UK primary schools where the 'Rights, Respect and Responsibilities' (RRR) programme had been implemented, found *no age difference* in children's understanding of rights, but significant differences between schools where the programme had been fully or only partly implemented. This suggests that exposure to HRE, particularly in the form of a properly-implemented whole-school approach, is a factor in children's developing understanding of rights – an idea pertinent to the present study, as will be discussed in Chapter 6.

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[8] Available on the Centre's website: http://www.open.ac.uk/researchprojects/childrens-research-centre/research-children-young-people

However, children do not need to have a fully-developed conceptualisation of the nature of rights, nor do their views have to be framed in rights language, in order to shed light on rights issues. A major study of children's rights in Northern Ireland by Kilkelly and colleagues (2004) offers an example of this approach. In this study, over a thousand children were asked to comment, not on their rights as such, but on what they thought was fair or unfair, what they did not like and what should be changed. Their responses were then used by the research team to compile a thoroughgoing analysis of the situation regarding children's rights in Northern Ireland, including a comprehensive chapter on education rights. There are good methodological reasons for this approach, as children's capacity to express their concerns *in term of rights* depends on the concepts of rights they have previously formed (see above) and the corresponding knowledge they have acquired.[9] However, it is only when children discuss their perceptions of rights *as such* that adult researchers can figure out how they understand and use ideas about rights.

Children's reports to the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child

Turning now to examples of the literature where children have had the opportunity to express their own views about their rights in school: As mentioned above, much of this is grey literature, and though much of the more recent literature is available online, tracking it down in a systematic way continues to be a challenge, particularly if an international perspective is sought. To help narrow the search, many examples of children's views about their rights can be found in the numerous children's reports made over the years to the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child as part of the CRC reporting process (Dimmock, 2009; Heesterman, 2005; Simeunovic Frick, 2011), and a helpful resource here is the collection of some 37 such reports, from 24 different countries, covering the years 1998-2010, compiled

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[9] The present study is another example, where the young researchers did not use rights language in some of their questions, but still used the replies as a basis to discuss important rights issues; see Chapter 4.

by Smiljana Simeunovic Frick (2011).[10] Comparisons are difficult, as there is no standard procedure for the production of these reports or format for their presentation. Some claim to be genuinely 'children's reports', researched and prepared by children and adolescents, while others read more like the work of adults, editing and summarising the views of children they have surveyed. Some involved opinion surveys covering many thousands of children and adolescents, while others seem to be the views of small selected groups or collections of individual testimonies. However some general observations can be made.

Though most of these reports deal with a wide range of children's rights issues, almost all of them give education rights a prominent place, often occupying several pages; and a few identify it as their top priority (Dutch National Youth Council, 2007; Children's Forum Network: Sierra Leone, 2006, p. 9). A difference that can be observed is that in reports from lower-income countries, children often focus on violations of the right *to* education due to the many obstacles they face that make it difficult, or impossible, to attend school (Working Children of India, 1998; National Movement of Working Children: India, 2003, Children's Forum Network: Sierra Leone, 2006); while in wealthier countries, the focus is on violations of rights *in* school, discrimination experienced by certain groups, and concerns about the inadequate quality of schooling (Article 12 in Scotland, 2002; Dutch National Youth Council, 2007; NGO Network for the Rights of the Child: Sweden, 2004).

Three of the reports in the collection represent the views of working children as a specific interest group: two from India (Working Children of India, 1998; National Movement of Working Children, 2003) and one from Peru (MNNATSOP, 2006). Given the tensions that exist in Nicaragua and similar countries between children's right to education and the pressure on them to work for their own and their family's

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[10] Simeunovic Frick's book includes the full text of 10 selected reports, and links are provided to another 24 on-line. In the context of the present study, it is worth noting that Nicaragua's most recent alternative report (CODENI, 2010), though incorporating information from consultations with children and adolescents, is very much an adult production.

survival (discussed in Chapter 3), the different ways the children's reports approach this issue is of interest. The two Indian reports emphasise the desire of many working children to attend school, and set out what needs to be done to make this right a reality, particularly for the poorest and most marginalised children. The Peruvian report, on the other hand, represents the views of organised working children and adolescents who assert their identity as such, and – at least in the pages of the report – express no desire to go to school, nor concern with their right to education. This difference reflects a tension between two opposing strands that run through the wider global literature on working children: one which looks to a future where more and more children realise their right to education, and so work less, if at all (De Janvry et al, 2006; Jensen and Nielsen, 1997); and another which sees working children's movements as exemplars of children's autonomous organisation and the realisation of 'rights from below', and emphasises children's right to fair and respectful treatment as workers, rather than to stop working and go to school (Cussiánovich and Méndez, 2008; Liebel et al., 2012).

Another issue pertinent to the present study is that of human relations in schools, where, overall, the children's reports tend to give more importance to problems between teachers and students, and there is little discussion of issues to do with relations among students. A notable exception is the English 'Get Ready for Geneva' report which reported a national online survey of over 1,300 school students, and identified "bullying and feeling safe in school" as the second most important education rights issue (after involvement in decision-making and being respected in school) (GRFG Drafting Committee, 2008, p. 17). A point to note here is that, though children do have grave concerns about bullying and express these in various ways, bullying is rarely presented as a human rights issue in the way that mistreatment of students by teachers commonly is (Quennersdedt, 2015; and see further discussion of the bullying question in Chapter 6).

A further topic with implications for the present study is that of punishment. Only two of the reports in Simeunovic Frick's collection discuss school punishment as a human rights issue; one from Scotland and one from Japan. The Scottish young people express concern at the unfair use of 'sin-bins', detentions and short-term exclusions, and propose that students should have a right to challenge what are seen

as unjust (and ineffective) punishments (Article 12 in Scotland, 2002). The Japanese report is written in the form of individual testimonies of young people, and includes some quite extreme stories of physical and humiliating punishments (DCI Japan Children's Group, 2004). In none of the other reports, however, is punishment explicitly identified as a rights violation issue (see discussion of how Nicaraguan children see punishments as rights violations in Chapters 5 and 6).

On the topic of participation rights in school, while most of the reports from European countries give a high priority to participation rights, those from poorer countries such as India or Sierra Leone do not do so. This would support the view that in poorer countries the right to attend school tends to be an overriding concern, but when school attendance becomes more nearly universal and compulsory, other issues such as participation (rights *in* school) assume greater importance. However, it can also be noted that participation rights are not highlighted in the reports from Japan or Hong Kong, which are both wealthy countries (Children's Council Working Committee, 2005; DCI Japan Children's Group, 2004). One could hypothesise that this is due to differences in European and Asian socio-cultural attitudes to 'voice' and authority; in other words that this is not just a 'North-South', but, in a different way, also an 'East-West' divide. However, this small sample of reports is not enough to substantiate such a conclusion.

The right to be involved in decision-making is by far the number one problem identified in the English 'Get Ready for Geneva' report, which was, as mentioned above, based on a sizeable on-line survey (GRFG Drafting Committee, 2008). The relative importance of participation in relation to other topics can be seen in the graphic from this report reproduced in Figure 3.
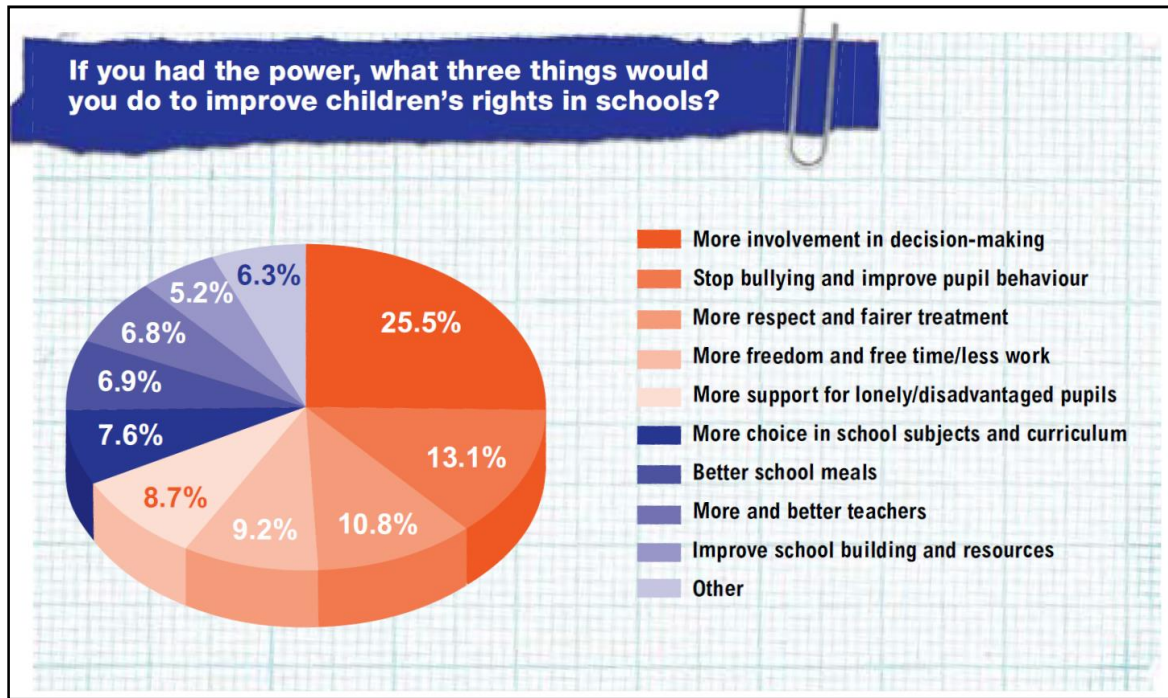
Figure 3: Graphic on what would improve children's rights at school, from "Get Ready for Geneva" report (GRFG Drafting Committee, 2008, p. 18)

The Drafting Committee commented on these findings:

> We thought that these results were really interesting as they show that so many children are not being allowed to enjoy their rights under article 12 of the CRC. We were surprised by the amount of children and young people who are not involved in decision-making on issues that affect them and who feel that adults do not listen to them or respect them. (GRFG Drafting Committee, 2008, p. 18)

Interestingly, a proposal for a 'national union of school students' to strengthen students' voices, which was prominent in the 1999 Article 12 report 'Respect!' (CR 2000 Team: UK, 1999, p. 51) does not reappear in 2008. This is of interest here because, as will be discussed in subsequent chapters, a school students' union model is currently being promoted by the Nicaraguan government as the means to restore children's right to participation in decision-making in schools, in place of the earlier students' council model.

Also on the topic of participation or 'voice' in school, in their 2004 report, Swedish children call for democracy to be 'lived' in schools, and not just taught (NGO Network for the Rights of the Child, 2004, p. 12), while Article 12 in Scotland (2002) comment that, "Pupil councils are seen as tokenistic, issues raised by pupils

are generally only actioned if they are in line with the views of school staff" (p. 5). The Serbian Children's Coalition was unusual in Europe as identifying participation in decision-making as a low priority at school (though still important among family and friends) (Children's Coalition, 2008, p. 2).

Finally, picking up on another issue of significance for the present study; though almost all the children's reports propose that children should have opportunities to learn about their rights in school, in none of them is this linked with responsibilities, and the issue of children having duties or responsibilities is never mentioned.

Children's views on rights in school in Nicaragua

Turning, then, to Nicaragua, there have been many surveys of Nicaraguan children's opinions, but very little published on their perceptions of rights, in or out of school. As mentioned earlier, Nicaragua's 2010 Alternative Report to the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child is entirely an adult production. However, in 2002 (that is, under the previous neo-liberal government) the Children's Rights Commissioner undertook a major national survey of children's perceptions covering many aspects of their lives, including school (López Hurtado and Sánchez Bonilla, 2002). In total 1,200 children and adolescents were interviewed in different parts of the country. The children were not asked about their rights, but were asked more general questions about their lives, and the data were used by the authors to develop a commentary on rights respected and violated (the validity of this approach as a way to shed light on children's rights has been discussed above). In the chapter on education, the results were unexpected: 98% of children liked going to school; 65% described their teachers as happy and cheerful *(alegres)*; and 86% said they taught their classes well; all of which seems surprising given the emphasis on violence, abuse and authoritarianism found in so much writing (by adult experts) on education in Nicaragua from that period. When asked what they felt was lacking in their schools, the children's most frequent replies were: science lab (88%), computer (67%), library (64%), toilets (25%), sports pitch (22%), drinking fountain (18%), and desks (12%), all of which supports the view that the children saw the under-resourcing of schools as a more serious obstacle to their education than human rights abuses by their teachers (López Hurtado and Sánchez Bonilla, 2002, p. 54).

As part of the CESESMA/Save the Children 'Safe, Quality Schools' project, in 2009 CESESMA held a series of workshops with children about what, for them, constituted a safe school and a good quality school, and subsequently included the children's words in a published booklet (CESESMA, 2010). Again, the children were not asked to comment on matters of rights as such; however the right to be safe at school and to a quality education were understood as fundamental to CESESMA's project. A selection of these comments can be seen in Box 4.

Nicaraguan children's ideas on what makes a safe, quality school

- "A safe school is a nice big school, painted, with plenty of desks, a good floor, windows, toilets for everyone."

- "Choose a good place to build it. It shouldn't be close to steep slopes, rivers or cantinas where they sell liquor, and the pupils shouldn't have to walk long distances because something might happen to them."

- "The school should have a big library with all kinds of books: story books, history books, dictionaries, Spanish books, English books."

- "A safe school is where there's a teacher who respects the pupils. We don't want shameless teachers who think they're smart and are too busy flirting with their female pupils to teach the lesson properly."

- "Teachers and school heads should be well prepared so the pupils can learn well. They should have been to university, should be professional teachers."

- "It should be according to the rules, without corruption. When a pupil has money, this shouldn't guarantee them good marks, or that they automatically go up to the next grade."

- "We should have space to play. The school yard should be bigger."

- "It's when your parents attend the parents' meetings and support school activities. Even if they can't read they help us do our homework."

Box 4: Nicaraguan children's ideas on what makes a safe, quality school (originally published in CESESMA, 2010; translation from Shier et al., 2013, p. 194)

Children's views on student voice and participation

A search for instances of children discussing their rights at school in the more academic literature leads to the substantial literatures on 'student voice', children's participation in school decision-making (through student councils and otherwise), and democratic education. It should be noted, however, that very little of the

student voice literature belongs in the small intersection referred to above that is the focus here. Though much of it makes passing reference to the child's right to be heard and other CRC participation rights, it is more often rooted in Deweyan pragmatism than children's rights discourse (Thornberg and Elvstrand, 2012); and its true focus is on school improvement (Rudduck and Flutter, 2004), school governance (Smith, 2003), behaviour management (Lewis and Burman, 2008) or citizenship (Beaudoin, 2013). Though some of it presents and discusses student's opinions, much of it does not, and, as mentioned earlier, a lot of it has more theoretical than practical intent.

As for what children themselves have to say about voice or participation in school, a number of British and Irish studies shed light on the concerns of the present study. Based on focus group research with a diverse range of children in England, Davey and colleagues (2010) found that most children were dissatisfied with their level of input into decision-making processes in school, and many were disillusioned by lack of feedback on how their opinions had been taken into account. They felt that clever, popular, well-behaved children were over-represented on school councils, so that the diversity of students' views was not represented, all of which had a negative effect on teacher-student relationships. Allan and I'anson (2004) studied a single-school whole school approach to children's rights in a Scottish primary school, where children told them that the student council was relatively powerless as teachers decided what was or was not sensible to discuss; but also talked about how they could sometimes 'customise' the limited influence afforded to them to work in their own interests: "We just keep moaning and moaning and moaning. It works for parents" (p. 128). However it was when children mobilised to demand equal rights for their disabled classmates that the researchers saw a distinct change in their approach to rights; a move 'beyond pity' towards solidarity with the rights claims of others (pp. 132-133).

A study that is interesting for its different approach is that of John-Akinola and colleagues (2013). They set out to document children's views on participation in three Irish primary schools. Though their preliminary literature review provided them with a number of definitions of participation, emphasising children's engagement in decision-making processes at different levels within the school; in design-

ing their study they worked with four children to find out how *they* understood the term. On the basis of the feedback from these four children, they decided to use the phrase 'feel a part of' as a proxy for 'participation' (p 23). Through an otherwise well-designed and thoroughly participatory research process, they thus came up with a set of findings about what makes children 'feel a part of their school': things like wearing uniform, going on school trips, sports, friends and nice teachers. However, they learnt nothing about the children's engagement with school decision-making or their right to be heard. What is interesting here is how following their child advisers' ideas about the nature of 'participation' took the research in a very different direction from that originally envisaged. This raises questions about what happens when adult and child researchers work in partnership that will be returned to when looking at methodological issues in due course.

Overall, it may be that this literature tells us more about how adults collect and use children's data, than it does about the reality of rights in school. In the literature, children and adolescents are seldom permitted to speak out on their own terms, and are most often invited to provide data for analysis and interpretation on others' terms. Also, while children and adolescents do talk a lot about their experience of schooling, they seldom talk about this in terms of their human rights; so it is usually left to adults to reinterpret children's views on schooling from a rights perspective. And this point is in tension with the previous one: For children to talk about school from a rights-based perspective may require that an adult frame the discussion for them, so that they cease to speak on their own terms.

Given these complex issues of facilitation and interpretation, it is notable how little self-reflexivity on the part of adult researchers/facilitators is visible in the literature; and without this it is impossible to discern the effect of adult involvement on the words that are eventually published as belonging to the children (McCartan et al., 2012). In some cases, it appears that great efforts were made to come as close as possible to the children's authentic communicative intentions, while in others the children's input may have been distorted to reinforce a different message. Without researcher reflexivity, there is no way to know.

7. Human rights education in schools

Introduction

This section considers literature relating to the theory and practice of human rights education (HRE). Although HRE covers a lot more than schools, a large part of HRE practice occurs in schools and is directed towards children and adolescents, and correspondingly a large part of the literature also focuses on this aspect of HRE. The terms 'children's rights education' (CRE) and 'children's human rights education' have been used interchangeably to refer to this subset of HRE. However CRE has also been used as a way of describing a specific pedagogical approach considered to be distinct from predominant models of HRE (Howe and Covell 2005). This alternative conceptualisation of CRE and its relationship with HRE will be examined later in this section. The term Human Rights Learning (HRL) has also been used as an alternative to HRE, and this too will be discussed later.

This section looks at six aspects of human rights education, which inevitably relate to and affect each other. Following this introduction, the next sub-section considers the nature of HRE; how it is defined and conceptualised, and whether it is in itself a human right. The following sub-section synthesises key writings on the global history and development of HRE, leading up to the 2011 United Nations Declaration on Human Rights Education and Training (UNDHRET). The next sub-section considers the relationship between HRE and Citizenship Education; their compatibility or otherwise, and some of the concerns that have been raised about the relationship between the two. This is followed by sub-sections looking specifically at Howe and Covell's model of Children's Rights Education in relation to HRE, and the pedagogy of HRE, particularly the breach between what is advocated and what is practiced.

On the nature of Human Rights Education

A lot has been written on how to define and theorise the concept of human rights education. Gerber points out that, "there are numerous definitions of HRE, which vary widely according to the vested interests of the proponent of the definition" (Gerber, 2010b, p. 565). Three models that stand out in the literature are those of

Flowers (2004), Tibbitts (2002) and Bajaj (2011). These will be looked at in turn before being brought together to see what can be learnt from a synthesis.

Flowers (2004) considered existing definitions in the literature and suggested that there are three kinds of definitions emphasising different aspects of the idea of HRE, and that these tend to be produced by different categories of social actors. Definitions produced by governments or their agents (including inter-governmental agencies such as those of the United Nations) portray HRE as directed to the preservation of democracy, peace, order and stability, thus tending to support the maintenance of existing institutions – and the power of existing power-holders. On the other hand, definitions produced by human rights activists and advocates, mainly in the NGO sector, tend to focus on human rights violations, and propose responses to these characterised by the use of words like 'empowerment', 'struggle', and 'transformation' which tend to challenge existing structures of power and authority. Finally, definitions produced by academics and educators tend to see human rights education in terms of underlying moral principles, norms and standards. Though Flowers' ideas remain important to our understanding of the nature of HRE, more recent definitions successfully acknowledge and combine all three elements (see particularly the definition in the United Nations Declaration on Human Rights Education and Training discussed below), so the tendencies noticed by Flowers may be starting to merge.

Another important early contribution to the HRE literature was Tibbitts' 2002 paper 'Understanding what we do', which suggested that three distinct types of HRE could be seen emerging in the field: the values and awareness model, the accountability model and the transformation model. Whilst Flowers' analysis focuses on whom the definitions of HRE are *coming from*, Tibbitts' three ways of doing HRE are determined by who it is *directed at*.

The values and awareness model is mainly used in programmes aimed at school students and in public information campaigns. Information is provided about the content and history of human rights and global human rights issues may be discussed with a view to socialisation, building cultural consensus, and legitimising national and international human rights frameworks.

The accountability model is used in training for professionals and public servants; people who, in human rights terms, have some degree of responsibility as duty-bearers. Topics may include human rights monitoring procedures, professional ethics and legal aspects of human rights, with a view to achieving social justice based on the application of laws, standards, codes of practice and ethical guidelines.

In the *transformational model*, HRE is geared towards empowering the individual (and sometimes groups or whole communities) to recognise human rights abuses – maybe as part of their own reality – and take action to prevent these (Tibbitts, 2002).

Such transformational approaches to HRE often draw directly or indirectly on the 'pedagogy of the oppressed' of Paulo Freire (1970). Though Freire did not deal with HRE as such in his own work, human rights educators have used it to forge the crucial links between personal and collective transformations, and thus the path from individual empowerment to social change (Lohrenscheit, 2006). HRE has also been theorised through the lens of the emancipatory critical theory of Habermas and the Frankfurt School (Tibbitts and Kirshlaeger, 2010, p. 12), and the related critical pedagogy of Michael Apple (Apple, 1995; Wies et al., 2006) and Henry Giroux (2006, 2011), particularly in Latin America (Magendzo, 1994, 2005; and see section on HRE in Latin America below).

Also influential has been Mezirow's theory of transformative learning (Mezirow, 1997; Tibbitts, 2005). However Mezirow did not believe that children or adolescents were capable of transformational learning and saw his theories as only applicable to adult education (Mezirow, 1990). The possibilities for transformative learning in childhood are therefore little theorised (but for an exception see Elsey, 2011).

More recently Bajaj (2011) has suggested that three distinct types of HRE can be distinguished, based not on who they are defined by (as in Flowers' version), or who they are aimed at (Tibbitts' version), but on the ideological positioning of their proponents, with particular reference to, "where such programs locate themselves in relation to local, national and international sites of power" (Bajaj, 2011, p. 489).

Bajaj's three types are: HRE for Global Citizenship, HRE for Coexistence, and HRE for Transformative Action, outlined as follows:

> HRE for Global Citizenship seeks to provide learners with membership to an international community through fostering knowledge and skills related to universal values and standards. HRE for Coexistence focuses on the inter-personal and inter-group aspects of rights and is usually a strategy utilized where conflict emerges not from absolute deprivation, but from ethnic or civil strife. The third approach, HRE for Transformative Action, usually involves learners who are marginalized from economic and political power and for whom HRE includes a significant process of understanding their own realities. This approach is most akin to Paulo Freire's process of developing a critical consciousness and what Meintjes terms a 'critical human rights consciousness'. (Bajaj, 2011, p. 489).

Bajaj supports her claim that these three types of HRE owe more to ideological positioning than to cultural, institutional or geographical considerations by describing examples of all three found in the work of NGOs in India (Bajaj, 2011, pp. 496-506).

Implementations of HRE around the world are bound to be varied, distinctive and multi-faceted. Looking at Flowers, Tibbitts and Bajaj together in the light of Gerber's observation about the vested interests of the proponents of different approaches, we can see that, in seeking to understand the nature and purpose of an intervention, it is important to consider first who is behind it (the originator), and more specifically what is the political interest on the part of the originator that leads them to engage in HRE (Flowers); then who is it intended for (the target group) – but not so much the expressed needs of the target group, rather the purpose that the originator has in mind in relation to the target group (Tibbitts). And to complete the picture, it is important to question the power position and ideological orientation espoused by the originator (Bajaj). In observing, researching or evaluating any instance of HRE, it is necessary to ask all these questions in order to understand what is really going on, or, as Bajaj puts it, "develop a more nuanced picture of the vitality and promise of these social constructs and compacts." (Bajaj, 2011, p. 508).

Many writers have mentioned that Human Rights Education is itself a human right (Howe and Covell, 2005; Krappmann, 2006; Lohrenscheit, 2006; Osler and Starkey, 2010), but the provenance and nature of this right have been considered in more detail by Alfredsson (1995) and more recently Gerber (2013). Article 26 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights can be identified as a non-binding but nonetheless significant starting point, and Articles 13 of the ICESCR and 29 of the CRC as the most important provisions binding on States Parties. Gerber points out that neither of these articles mentions a right to HRE as such, merely stating that States Parties agree that education shall be directed to this end amongst others. However she notes that the Committee on Economic Social and Cultural Rights has issued a General Comment on the Right to Education (CESCR, 1999) which, read in conjunction with Article 13, "provides a clear mandate for HRE with which States Parties are required to comply, albeit in a progressive rather than immediate manner" (Gerber, 2013, p. 20). The same can be said of the Committee on the Rights of the Child's General Comment No. 1 relating to Article 29 of the CRC.

A right to HRE is also established in Article 42 of the CRC which requires States Parties, "to make the principles and provisions of the Convention widely known, by appropriate and active means, to adults and children alike" (Howe and Covell, 2005; Krappmann, 2006). Although the word 'education' is not mentioned here, it is inconceivable that 'appropriate' means for making the convention known to children would not include educational activities, especially when Article 42 is read together with Article 29. The 2011 United Nations Declaration on Human Rights Education and Training (discussed further below) is unequivocal that "Everyone has the right to know, seek and receive information about all human rights and fundamental freedoms and should have access to human rights education" (UNDHRET, 2011, Article 1), and gives states the primary responsibility to promote and ensure this (Article 7). Like The UDHR, this is declaratory and not legally binding, but nevertheless is another argument for the existence of a human right to HRE (Gerber, 2011).

The above discussion notwithstanding, some governments still refuse to recognise HRE as a human right (Benedek, 2012). In the UN debates during the drafting of the UNDHRET, the UK, US and Canadian representatives stated that their govern-

ments did not recognise the existence of a right to human rights education under international law (UNDPI, 2011; also cited in Gerber, 2011, p. 248).

The development of HRE globally, from the Universal Declaration of Human Rights to the UN Declaration on Human Rights Education and Training

In the international literature, there has been a focus on the UN and its agencies' work to develop and promote HRE throughout the world. The rise of HRE as a global phenomenon is well-documented (Baxi, 1997; Mihr, 2010) and has even been quantified (Ramirez et al., 2007). Although most commentators cite the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights as a starting point (e.g. Baxi, 1997; Gerber 2010a; Mihr, 2010), Suarez et al. (2009) identify the launch of the UNESCO Associated Schools programme in 1953 as the first coordinated international effort to promote and develop the practice of HRE in schools. Although this programme continues to this day, it remained something of a one-off, with limited wider influence, until in 1993 the Vienna Declaration of the World Conference on Human Rights stated unequivocally that:

> States are duty-bound, as stipulated in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and in other international human rights instruments, to ensure that education is aimed at strengthening the respect of human rights and fundamental freedoms. (UN Vienna Declaration, 1993, Article 33).

The Vienna Declaration and the programme of action that accompanied it are seen as having kick-started the growth period that HRE has experienced for the past two decades (Lohrenscheit, 2006), starting with the UN Decade for Human Rights Education (1995-2004), which in turn led to the World Programme for Human Rights Education, launched in 2005 and entering its third phase in 2015 (Gerber 2013; United Nations, 2014).

There are contrasting views on the effectiveness of these programmes. Ramirez and colleagues' (2007) quantification of the worldwide growth of HRE suggests a major success story. However it has been observed that this success is far from universal, with most of the real work being done by NGOs rather than governments (Mihr, 2010). Howe and Covell (2005) believe that the limited impact of the UN

Decade was due to "persisting disagreements over the goals of education and an emphasis on education for global economic competitiveness" (p. 15). Researchers who have looked at progress in specific countries have also been disappointed. For example Gerber, looking at the Australian context, concludes that neither the Decade nor the World Programme have enjoyed much success in increasing HRE in schools, and describes them as "one of the UN's best kept secrets!" (Gerber, 2010a, p. 190). Evaluating these developments on a global scale, she suggests that, despite some progress made, the overall results have been disappointing because:

> The many attempts to promote HRE, including the work of the OHCHR [Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights], the monitoring by treaty bodies, and the HRC's [Human Rights Council] Universal Periodic Review process, have lacked cohesion, coordination, long-term vision and sustainability. (Gerber, 2013, p. 212)

A notable milestone in the global development of HRE was the adoption of the United Nations Declaration on Human Rights Education and Training by the UN General Assembly in 2011. Although it is not a binding treaty, its status as a resolution of the UN General Assembly, not to mention the five-year worldwide consultation process leading up to its drafting, make it a significant document (Gerber, 2011). The definition of Human Rights Education *and Training* given in Articles 2 and 3 of the Declaration is shown in Box 5.[11]

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[11] Gerber (2011, p. 247) believes the unexplained addition of '…and Training' in its title is a weakness of the UNDHRET. However, the definition in Box 5 makes perfect sense with or without this addition.

United Nations Declaration on Human Rights Education and Training

Article 2

1. Human rights education and training comprises all educational, training, information, awareness-raising and learning activities aimed at promoting universal respect for and observance of all human rights and fundamental freedoms and thus contributing, inter alia, to the prevention of human rights violations and abuses by providing persons with knowledge, skills and understanding and developing their attitudes and behaviours, to empower them to contribute to the building and promotion of a universal culture of human rights.

2. Human rights education and training encompasses:

    (a) 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;

    (b) Education through human rights, which includes learning and teaching in a way that respects the rights of both educators and learners;

    (c) Education for human rights, which includes empowering persons to enjoy and exercise their rights and to respect and uphold the rights of others.

Article 3

1. Human rights education and training is a lifelong process that concerns all ages.

2. Human rights education and training concerns all parts of society, at all levels, including preschool, primary, secondary and higher education, taking into account academic freedom where applicable, and all forms of education, training and learning, whether in a public or private, formal, informal or non-formal setting. It includes, inter alia, vocational training, particularly the training of trainers, teachers and State officials, continuing education, popular education, and public information and awareness activities.

3. Human rights education and training should use languages and methods suited to target groups, taking into account their specific needs and conditions.

Box 5: Definition of Human Rights Education and Training from the UN Declaration on Human Rights Education and Training (United Nations, 2011, Articles 2 and 3)

This definition shows how understandings of HRE have continued to develop since Tibbitts' (2002) and Flowers' (2004) analyses discussed above. Although it starts with a focus on 'universal respect and observance' (for Flowers, a governmental view), it goes on to talk about empowering people to prevent violations (an activist approach), and also includes the understanding of norms, principles and values (an academic's approach). Similarly it encompasses all three of Tibbitts' approaches:

awareness, accountability and transformation (Benedek, 2012). This may be attributable in part to the fact that, although it is an official UN document, NGOs had a high level of engagement with the drafting process (CIVICUS and other NGOs, 2011; Gerber, 2011, p. 245).

Of particular interest here is the way Article 2.2 formulates HRE as a triad: Education *about* human rights, education *through* human rights, and education *for* human rights.[12] The first of these is closest to a traditional teaching approach, making sure learners have the necessary information *about* their rights; but note that as well as the rights themselves, this includes knowledge of underpinning values and principles and also of mechanisms for protection. The second aspect, education *through* rights, is a recognition that rights are caught as well as taught; that is, the school or other educational setting must itself be a rights-respecting environment. Finally, education *for* rights emphasises that HRE is about empower-ing people to enjoy and exercise their rights, as well as upholding those of others. Though the wording does not specifically mention claiming, advocating or defending rights, where rights are being violated their enjoyment and exercise must involve one or more of these activities as well.

Despite the advent of the UN Declaration, however, a recent UNICEF-sponsored investigation of Children's Rights Education in 26 more developed countries found that in only eleven of them did children have a legal entitlement to learn about their rights as part of the school curriculum, and in many countries they were not taught about the universal human rights they held under the CRC, but were led to believe that rights were a kind or reward for fulfilling certain responsibilities (as discussed in Section 5 above) (Jerome et al., 2015, p. 8). There is, therefore, work still to be done to fulfil the promise of the declaration

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[12] Though similar triads can be found in earlier literature in relation to *environmental education* and *citizenship education*, this triad is not found in the HRE literature prior to Bajaj (2011, p. 483), who attributes its origin to the Amnesty International Human Rights Friendly Schools project (citing a no-longer-available web link).

Human rights education and citizenship education

So far in this section, HRE has been discussed as a distinct and separate entity, largely ignoring its relationships to other types of education. A widely-discussed aspect of HRE, however, is "the overlapping identities of HRE with other educational approaches, in particular citizenship education and education for democratic citizenship" (Tibbitts, 2011, p. 8). This idea is communicated visually in a diagram from the Council of Europe's HRE manual *'Compasito'* (Flowers et al., 2007, also reproduced in Bajaj, 2011) shown as Figure 4.
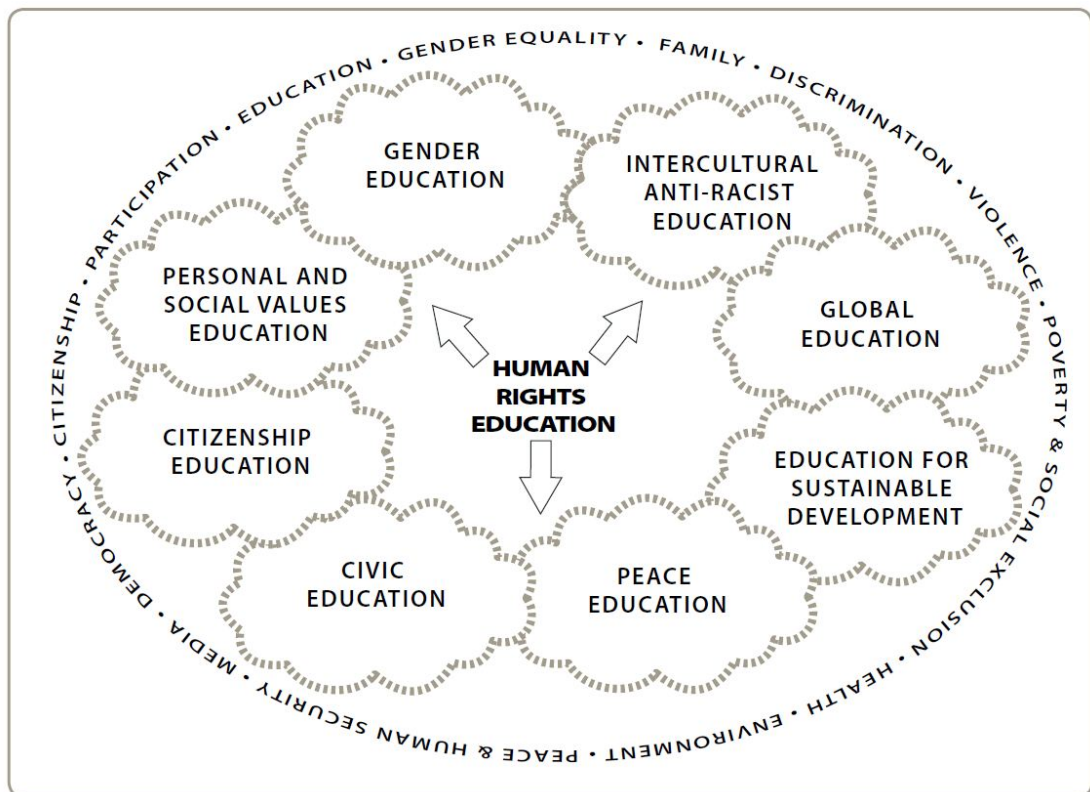
Figure 4: Diagram showing HRE at the centre of a cloud of other educations, from 'Compasito' (Flowers et al. 2007, p. 30)

A significant feature of this diagram is that HRE is shown not as one of a number of inter-related themes, but as the epicentre from which the others radiate. However this perspective is not shared by other commentators. Flowers suggests that educational professionals are unsure about where to locate human rights education in relation to other forms of education already established in school curriculums, and that, "Most feel that human rights are integral to these other forms of education.

…However, most educators remain unclear as to whether one subject subsumes the other" (Flowers, 2004, p. 117).

Particular attention has been paid to the relationship between HRE and Citizenship Education (sometimes known as 'Education for Democratic Citizenship' or EDC). Though the research for the present study did not address this issue, it is one that will have to be addressed as part of any proposal for developing new approaches to HRE in schools that may arise as a result, and so merits brief consideration here.

The Council of Europe (2010) sees HRE and EDC operating as a mutually supportive partnership without difficulty, but there is a large literature that contests this view. Fritzsche (2007) points out the main points of disagreement: HRE is founded on universal human rights, while Citizenship Education focuses on the rights of citizens in a particular polity; HRE emphasises global awareness, while in EDC there is more emphasis on national or European citizenship; HRE discusses the citizen's responsibilities within the framework of human rights (if at all), while EDC focuses on responsibilities as a key feature of (localised) citizenship; and finally EDC is intended to foster stability of the political order, while HRE aims at social change. In addition, for Osler and Starkey (2006), Citizenship Education tends to prepare future citizens, while HRE makes the case for children to be seen as citizens of today (p. 445); and EDC is less likely to be critical of government, aiming to encourage allegiance and patriotism and making citizens governable and compliant, while HRE means holding governments to account (Osler and Starkey, 2010, p. 126). Some writers go so far as to claim that HRE and Citizenship Education are essentially incompatible or even contradictory (Hung, 2012; Kiwan, 2005; Mills, 2013). Finally Osler and Starkey (2010) propose transforming Citizenship Education as it is currently practised into a new concept of 'Education for Cosmopolitan Citizenship' that would be more firmly grounded on human rights principles and integrated with HRE (pp. 118-119); an idea that contains echoes of Habermas's 'post-national citizenship' as represented by Delanty (2000, pp. 64-66).

Human Rights Education or Children's Rights Education?

As mentioned at the start of this section, the expression 'Children's Rights Education' (CRE) is sometimes used to refer to HRE as delivered to children and

adolescents, principally, but not exclusively, in schools. However some scholars use this expression to refer to a specific pedagogical approach, where the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child is used as the principal point of reference for educating children about their rights (Covell et al., 2010; Howe and Covell, 2005; Wernham, 2014).

As leading proponents of this approach, it is worth noting that Howe and Covell's definition of CRE has changed, from "Explicit teaching of the rights described in the Convention [on the Rights of the Child] in an environment that itself models and respects those rights" (Howe and Covell, 2005, p. 13), to, "Education and educational practices that are consistent with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child" (Covell et al., 2010, p. 118). Here the central role of explicitly teaching the CRC to children seems to become less important, while the focus on applying it in practice remains strong.

UNICEF recently published a new definition of Children's Rights Education:

> CRE involves teaching and learning about the provisions and principles of the CRC and the child rights approach in order to empower both adults and children to take action to advocate for and apply these at the family, school, community, national and global levels. (Wernham, 2014, p. 142)

While this restates the emphasis on teaching the rights set out in the CRC, it also specifies that the purpose of doing so is not the knowledge for its own sake, but empowerment leading to advocacy and social action.

Howe and Covell (2005) argue for their version of Children's Rights Education as the best pedagogic approach to achieve the goal of 'effective citizenship', considering all other educational approaches to be ineffective by comparison. The approaches they reject include those they describe as 'values-focused' (character education and moral education); 'behaviour-focused' (anti-racist education, environmental education and peace education); and finally 'knowledge-focused' (civic education, global citizenship education and human rights education). However, their categorisation of HRE as 'knowledge-focused' is contrary to the wider understandings of HRE that have been emerging in recent years (discussed above). Given a modern understanding of the nature of HRE (for example as

defined in the UNDHRET), all their arguments in favour of their CRE approach – and against what they see as traditional HRE – can be shown to be equally applicable to contemporary approaches to HRE: Today's HRE has a clear values base; it reflects a global consensus; it recognises children as citizens; it is relevant to children's lives; and it uses a participatory pedagogy which builds positive identity and enables children to become competent social actors. Modern HRE is, after all, not so different from Howe and Covell's CRE model (Howe and Covell, 2005, p. 107).

The pedagogy of Human Rights Education

In the literature on HRE (including those parts of it where the title CRE is preferred), it has been frequently observed that teaching children about their rights in the traditional classroom can generate contradictions and inconsistencies, as conventional school structures, procedures, and expectations may violate those same rights (for example the right to be heard in Article 12 of the CRC) (Alderson, 1999; Bajaj, 2011; Osler and Starkey, 2010). Decisions on the management and organisation of a school affect its students profoundly, and yet it is rare, anywhere in the world, for children's views on these matters to be heard in anything other than a tokenistic way. Similarly children's rights to freedom of opinion, to freedom of assembly, to privacy, to play and recreation, to their own culture and language, not to be discriminated against, and not to be victims of violence, are consistently infringed by the day-to-day customs and practices of conventional schooling. There is therefore a problem of what to teach children, and how to teach children, about their rights under such circumstances. Adding a few extra lessons on children's rights while leaving the pedagogical approach and classroom ethos unchanged will only serve to highlight these anomalies. Is some kind of alternative pedagogy required?

The idea that human rights pedagogy must be based on underpinning human rights values and principles, which must then find expression in how it is practised in classrooms and in whole schools, is very much the orthodoxy of HRE discourse and rarely contested. Tibbitts (2005), for example says that, "Nearly all formal literature associated with HRE will mention the importance of using participatory methods" (p.107).

Tibbitts and Kirschlaeger's (2010) extensive review of HRE research identified the kinds of pedagogy typically advocated as appropriate for HRE, which should be: experiential and activity-centred; problem-posing; participative; dialectical; analytical; healing; strategic-thinking-oriented; and finally goal and action-oriented (pp. 5-6). Some, notably Reardon (2010), have abandoned the term HRE altogether in favour of the alternative label 'Human Rights Learning' (HRL), as this is seen to represent a more radical, active and political approach to pedagogy, being both, "the conjoined philosophic twin of critical pedagogy" (p. 48), and "a contemporary form of Freirean political pedagogy" (p. 50).

However, those who have researched the reality of HRE in school classrooms have identified difficulties in implementing such alternative pedagogies within existing school systems. Alderson, for example, identified five approaches to HRE in schools, four of which, she claims, "avoid and prevent overt discussion about democracy in schools" (Alderson, 1999, p. 194). In particular, power relations in the typical classroom "militate against nurturing a human rights and democratic culture" (Bajaj, 2011, p. 501). Teachers are often poorly prepared to teach in other than traditional ways (Howe and Covell, 2005), lacking knowledge of the pedagogy necessary for rights-based education, for example the use of cooperative learning and role-play, as well as training on how to listen to children, how to help students express their needs, and how to respect participation rights (Covell et al., 2010).

Recognising these difficulties, Osler and Starkey (2010) suggest that HRE can only be delivered effectively in a genuinely rights-respecting school, because, "Efforts to introduce a human rights curriculum without simultaneous changes to other aspects of school life are likely to be counter-productive and to promote cynicism and scepticism amongst learners" (p. 129). The kind of transformation required, however, they also see as fraught with problems because, "In order to become human rights-friendly institutions, schools may have to embark on a process of transformation that is profoundly political. This process is likely to generate reaction, resistance and conflict" (p. 129).

8. Rights-respecting schools (and other whole-school approaches)

The kind of multi-faceted school transformation advocated by Osler and Starkey requires what is often called a "whole-school approach". As well as the content of

the curriculum and style of pedagogy, other aspects of a school considered in need of transformation may include the school ethos, governance arrangements, and environment (physical as well as socio-cultural); above all the nature of human relationships among and between the actors involved: students, teachers, non-teaching staff, managers, governors, and parents.

The idea of using a 'whole-school approach' to bring about change is not exclusive to the field of children's rights. Whole school approaches have been developed and implemented to tackle a wide range of issues in schools, including bullying (Richard et al., 2012), sustainability (Henderson and Tilbury, 2004, Shallcross et al., 2006), inclusive education (Dean, 1989; Forlin, 2007), ICT (Prain and Hand, 2003), mental health and wellbeing (Weare, 2000), and even school meals (Expert Panel on School Meals, 2002). Children's Rights is therefore just one of a growing number of 'whole school approaches' that schools may be encouraged to sign up for, some of which may also be described as 'integrated' or 'holistic' approaches. Depending on the issue addressed, the elements that make up a whole-school approach may vary, but the underpinning idea that links them is expressed by Shallcross and colleagues (2006) as follows:

> Whole school development implies that schools 'practise what they teach' by modelling the … knowledge and values taught in the formal curriculum in actions in their institutional, social, community and evaluative practices. In this way the power of the nonformal curriculum to help actions become habituated is optimised because of the relative consistency of message between formal and nonformal curricula; between espoused values and values in use. (p. 286).

Other core elements that tend to be found across the full range of whole school approaches are strong leadership buy-in, and engagement of all the actors who make up the 'school community' (in distinct but appropriate ways) (Henderson and Tilbury, 2004; Shallcross et al., 2006).

Focusing on those whole-school approaches whose purpose is specifically and explicitly to address the issue of children's rights, a number of questions arise: What examples can be identified and how widespread are they in their espousal and implementation? What are the similarities and differences among them, and what is

the significance of these? And finally, what effect do they have; or rather, what evidence is there of their effectiveness? In seeking answers to these questions from a global perspective, limitations must be recognised: Most such experiences are never evaluated or written up; of those that are, many are unpublished, and of those that are published, few are found in the academic literature; also many are not available in English, particularly those from Latin America.

Bearing in mind these limitations, a focused literature search identified seven examples where published (including on-line) information was available from the agency responsible, and where, based on the general criteria outlined above, the information warranted describing the initiative as a whole-school approach to human rights. A number of other HRE initiatives were considered but were found not to warrant being described as whole-school approaches because, while they undoubtedly made positive contributions to the development of HRE in schools, there was insufficient evidence of effort to involve all the relevant actors, or of a serious commitment to change the nature of the school itself in terms of values, ethos, human relations etc.[13] A number of other important international right-to-education initiatives were also excluded as their specific focus on the right to go to school was not seen as being equivalent to a whole-school approach as described here.[14]

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[13] The South African guidelines on the promotion and protection of human rights, values and inclusivity in schools (Keet et al 2001); the Cambodian Child Rights Foundation's 'Child Rights Mainstreaming' model (Child Rights Foundation, 2004); the Indian Institute of Human Right's Education's 'Schooling for Justice and Rights' model (People's Watch, 2008); Colombia's 'Education for the Exercise of Human Rights' programme (EduDerechos) run by the Ministry of Education in partnership with an NGO network (Ministerio de Educación Nacional, 2010); Amnesty International Norway's 'Rights Education Action Programme', which uses a 'multiplier' model to train human rights educators in Africa, Asia and Eastern Europe (Tibbitts, 2010); and the UK Ministry of Justice's 'Right Here Right Now' initiative for a human-rights-based approach to citizenship teaching (Hunter and Evans, 2010; Bowring, 2012).

[14] Action Aid's 'Promoting Rights in Schools' programme, based on a ten point rights charter, and a toolkit for surveying the extent to which each right is realised, implemented

Of the initiatives that genuinely warranted description as 'whole school approaches to human rights', some were projects developed and implemented in a single school, and these will be mentioned below. After setting these aside, seven multi-school initiatives were identified, as listed in Box 6.

Whole-school approaches to children's rights

1. UNICEF UK's 'Rights-Respecting School Award' (RRSA) (UNICEF UK, 2010, 2013; Sebba and Robinson, 2010).

2. Hampshire County Council's 'Rights, Respect and Responsibility' (RRR).

3. UNICEF Canada's 'Rights-Respecting Schools' programme (UNICEF Canada, 2012).

4. New Zealand's 'Human Rights in Education' initiative (Human Rights Commission NZ, 2010; Human Rights in Education, 2008):

5. Amnesty International's 'Human-Rights-Friendly Schools' programme (Amnesty International, 2012; Mejias and Starkey, 2012).

6. Amnesty International Ireland's 'Whole school approach to human rights education' (Amnesty International Ireland, 2012).

7. Save the Children Nicaragua's 'Safe, Quality Schools' project (Shier et al., 2013).

Box 6: List of 7 whole-school approaches to children's rights (see Appendix 5 for more information on these)

As well as these multi-school initiatives, a number of studies were found on whole-school approaches to children's rights in individual schools: Ó Cuanacháin (2004) based his PhD on an action-research study of developing and implementing a whole-school approach in an Irish primary school; Allan and colleagues (2005) developed a similar approach in a Scottish primary school; Yuen and colleagues

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widely in Africa and Asia (Action Aid 2011); Amnesty International's programme, 'Safe Schools: Every Girl's Right' (Amnesty International 2008); and Plan Ireland's 'EQuIP' programme (Education: Quality, Inclusive and Participative) in four countries in West Africa (see: http://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/EQuIP%20-%20Mid%20Term%20Evaluation%2009%2009%2013.pdf).

(2013) discuss a case study of developing a human-rights-friendly ethos in a school in Hong Kong; and a Swedish team visited Colombia to introduce a child-rights classroom culture in the context of the government's '*Eduderechos*' programme (Pardo et al., 2013). It is likely that there are many more such single-school initiatives taking place around the world that have not been written up in the academic literature. The following discussion, however, is based mainly on the seven documented multi-school initiatives listed above.

All seven initiatives share a number of general characteristics as described above that enable them to be characterised as 'whole-school approaches'. They also all have features that make them distinctive, some of which are mentioned in the table in Appendix 5. Here three important aspects of the seven schemes will be compared more closely: their approach to the CRC; to children's participation; and to children's responsibilities.

Three of the schemes (the most widely cited and so probably the most influential), UNICEF UK, UNICEF Canada and RRR, focus explicitly on the rights in the CRC as their foundation. The NZ scheme has a framework that gives the CRC and the UDHR equal weight; similarly the Nicaraguan scheme gives equal weight to the CRC and Nicaragua's own national children's rights code. The two Amnesty International schemes, however, are not linked to the CRC, and it is given very little space in their core documentation. The AI international scheme refers to the UDHR as its foundation, while the Irish version makes little reference to any human rights instruments. Perhaps all that can be learnt from this is that there are differences of opinion amongst experts on whether or not the CRC should have centrality in HRE in schools, or how much weight it should be given in relation to other relevant human rights instruments.

Children's participation is an important element of all seven initiatives, as a rights-respecting school ethos inevitably implies respect for children's right to be heard and for their views to be taken into account. All the initiatives clearly state that children should be involved in decision-making in school, though there is vague-ness on which kinds of decisions they can expect to be involved in, and how much power (if any) they can expect to have over these decisions. Only RRR and UNICEF Canada mention democratic approaches to teaching and learning (Hamp-

shire County Council, 2009, p. 1; UNICEF Canada, 2012, p. 13). UNICEF UK, Canada and RRR also want children to be 'active citizens', suggesting that their participation is encouraged and supported in the wider community outside the school (Hampshire County Council, 2009, p. 1; UNICEF Canada, 2012, p. 13; UNICEF UK, 2010, p. 4). In the AI initiatives the emphasis is on children being part of the global community and taking action on global issues, or starting an Amnesty International student group in their school (Amnesty International, 2012, p. 20; Amnesty International Ireland, 2012, pp. 10-11). By comparison the New Zealand initiative seems to downplay the participation aspect, though it does speak of students participating in decision-making and working in a strong partnership with adults (Human Rights in Education, 2008, p. 5). The Nicaraguan scheme has one of the strongest statements on participation, giving one of its objectives as:

> To promote the participation of children and young people and other stake-holders in the community, in order to generate capacity and encourage collective action in defence of children's rights. (Castillo Zamora, 2013, p. 3)

On the whole, then, all of these constitute valid proposals for working towards 'rights-respecting' or 'rights-friendly' schools. They clearly fall short of the kind of 'radical democratic education' proposed by Fielding and Moss (2011); but that is hardly surprising, given that their main orientation is towards school heads and teachers, who it is hoped will agree to sign up to and implement them.

The vexed question of how to deal with the topic of children's responsibilities in HRE has been discussed earlier, and will be returned to in the discussion of findings in due course. The seven initiatives under consideration here take very different approaches to the matter. The UNICEF UK and AI Ireland materials do not mention children's responsibilities at all; they have no role in their conceptual frameworks (if the word 'responsibilities' is used at all in these schemes, it is always to refer to the responsibilities of the relevant duty-bearers). In the Hampshire scheme, on the other hand, 'Responsibilities' is the third 'R' of the title, and thus fundamental to the whole approach. In their evaluation report, Covell and Howe (2008) recognised that lack of clarity about the relationship between rights and responsibilities was a weakness in the implementation of the programme, especially where the approach was adopted only partially and not fully. There is

evidence, however, that the County Council has since sought to address this problem, as the programme's 'Getting started' web page now advises users that there are two key principles of RRR that both pupils and adults have to understand, the second of which is that: "Rights are not conditional on responsibilities".[15] The New Zealand initiative, strongly influenced by RRR, does not have 'responsibilities' as part of its title, but repeatedly refers to 'rights and responsibilities' as a binomial throughout its materials (see Human Rights in Education, 2008). Somewhere in the middle, UNICEF Canada proposes that students should have regular opportunities to learn about and exercise both rights and responsibilities, but elsewhere focuses more on the responsibilities of duty-bearers (UNICEF Canada, 2012, p. 13). AI International says that rights and responsibilities go together and sees the need for, "a shared understanding of the balance between rights and responsibilities" (Amnesty International, 2012, p. 37). Finally Save the Children Nicaragua wants children to recognise themselves as persons with both rights and responsibilities (Shier et al., 2013, p. 200). As with the RRR scheme, lack of clarity about the relationship between these two has been identified as a problem as the initiative is implemented in schools (specifically in the course of the present study).

To arrive at an overview of these seven 'whole school approaches', another line of inquiry is to look at the family ties that link them together. The UNICEF Canada and New Zealand initiatives draw their inspiration from UNICEF UK and RRR, and, despite their individual differences, these four can be thought of as forming a distinctive 'family' of whole-school approaches. Similarly, the AI Ireland scheme is derived from the AI global programme, and these two together form a related, but separate, family. The Save the Children Nicaragua project is an orphan here, belonging to neither family and having different linguistic and cultural roots (as the main focus of the research to be described in this thesis, the distinctive features of this project will be discussed in more detail in the next chapter). The idea that these whole-school approaches belong to 'families' also helps to explain their uneven

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[15] http://www3.hants.gov.uk/education/hias/rrr-navigator/gettingstarted.htm (the other key principle emphasised here is that: "The CRC has to be at the heart of everything we do").

geographical spread. Despite wide-ranging literature searches in both English and Spanish, six of the seven initiatives identified originated in England, or in countries that have historically been influenced by British imperialism and culture (Canada, New Zealand, Ireland). Although the Amnesty International programme is truly global in scope, it too originated from AI's head office in London (as was mentioned earlier, many other interesting and innovative HRE initiatives from around the world were identified in the course of this research, but did not warrant bring characterised as 'whole-school approaches': see footnotes 13 and 14 above). Another significant feature of these approaches is the central role played by international NGOs in their design, development and promotion (UNICEF national associations, Amnesty International, and Save the Children). Hampshire County Council stands out as the only actual duty-bearer committed to such a leading role. Mejias and Starkey (2012) believe this may lead to tensions as the NGOs that promote the schemes appear to have different objectives from the schools who have to implement them.

Having considered their origins and some of their characteristics, what is known about the effectiveness of these whole-school approaches? At the time of writing (August 2015), only two of the seven initiatives have published independent evaluations: UNICEF UK (Sebba and Robinson, 2010), and Hampshire's RRR (Covell and Howe, 2008), both of which are overall very positive.[16] Covell and Howe visited 18 schools in Hampshire, using a mixed approach of observation, questionnaires, interviews and focus groups, involving head teachers, teachers and students. They found improvements in levels of student engagement, behaviour, participation, and understanding of rights and responsibilities. Students enjoyed school more and had better relationships. Teachers experienced a greater sense of achievement and reduced risk of burnout. Covell and Howe concluded that, "RRR has been demonstrated to be a very effective means not only of children's rights education, but also of education", and that, "Hampshire has provided an outstand-

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[16]Save the Children Nicaragua's project has also had external evaluation, though not published, which will be drawn on in the following chapters (Castillo Zamora, 2013).

ing model of how to provide children's rights education. It is a model that can and should be emulated in all education jurisdictions" (Covell and Howe, 2008, p. 2). A follow-up report in 2011, though less conclusive, found that RRR may also contribute to building 'educational resilience' for socially disadvantaged children (Covell and Howe, 2011, p. 20).

Sebba and Robinson were charged with assessing principally the impact of the RRSA on children's *wellbeing* and *progress*. They visited twelve schools repeatedly over three years and made one-off visits to a further 19 schools, interviewing head teachers, teachers, teaching assistants, midday supervisors, parents, governors and pupils. They found evidence of increased sense of wellbeing and belonging, improved behaviour, engagement and relationships, and some evidence of increased attainment (Sebba and Robinson, 2009, pp. 4-6).

However a closer look at the evidence produced by these evaluations (Trivers and Starkey, 2012) suggests that the schools involved were in fact watering down human rights principles, and teaching children to understand rights as privileges dependent on good behaviour, in the guise of a 'rights and responsibilities' binomial (see the earlier section on Rights and Responsibilities for more on this). Children were learning to be 'responsible' in the sense of being conformist, but not how to organise and challenge rights violations. Trivers and Starkey suggest that human rights talk is being used to engender conformity rather than emancipation, and that therefore these programmes, as currently implemented, do not represent HRE as properly understood in international agreements. To be fair, Howe and Covell had themselves pointed out that this is what happens when such a whole-school approach is only partially implemented, and described this practice within the RRR programme in a paper entitled "Miseducating children about their rights" (Howe and Covell, 2010). In their 2011 report, they provide the following example:

> Misuse – primarily reflected in the use of RRR to coerce children in behaving – teaches children that rights are yet another weapon in adults' arsenal of annoying admonitions. … over time, RRR has devolved into what the children described to us in this research as something the teachers 'kept going on about' to control their behavior. (Covell and Howe, 2011, p. 24)

Mejias and Starkey (2012) carried out a similar assessment of the Amnesty International Human Rights Friendly Schools programme as implemented in a London secondary school, and came to similar conclusions. They saw HRE being instrumentalised as part of the school's behaviour management strategy under the guise of 'rights with responsibilities'. They concluded that, "The utopian vision inherent in human rights and the transformative potential of HRE are aspirations that are severely tested by the realities of school life in an age of conservative modernisation" (Mejias and Starkey, 2012, p. 134). The accusation of instrumentalisation is hardly surprising, given that at least five of the seven initiatives discussed above, in their on-line and printed materials, seek to sell themselves to school leaders by offering benefits *other than* the creation of a school where human rights are respected, including reduced behaviour problems, improved academic attainment, improved teacher-student relations and reduced teacher stress (Amnesty International, 2012, p. 4; Hampshire County Council, 2009, p. 2; Human Rights in Education NZ website[17]; UNICEF Canada, 2012, p. 11; UNICEF UK, 2010, p. 5).[18]

To sum up then, whilst these whole-school approaches potentially offer a way forward for human rights education, this evidence suggests there is still a long way to go to overcome the barriers that prevent their full and adequate delivery when faced with the realities of school life.

The above discussion has focused specifically on *human-rights-based* whole-school approaches. However, given the importance attached to the *human-relations* aspect of their school experience by participants in the present study (to be discussed in Chapters 5 and 6), before moving on it is important to look at a number of closely related, yet conceptually distinct, ideas that can help to consolidate positive human relations within the framework of a rights-respecting school: First UNICEF's concept of 'Child-Friendly Schools', then three linked approaches that can contrib-

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[17]http://www.hrie.net.nz/hrie/what-were-about

[18]These are described as "AMAZING AND PROVEN BENEFITS" in the UNICEF Canada promotional video: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OSjKiCK91sU

ute to the creation of such schools: the eco-systems approach; community-building; and democratic decision-making.

UNICEF's Child-Friendly Schools (CFS) initiative originated in Thailand in the early 1990s and is now said to be implemented in up to 100 countries as UNICEF's flagship education programme (Osher et al., 2009). The principle features of UNICEF's child-friendly schools are shown in Box 7.

Child-Friendly School principles and features, according to UNICEF

1. Inclusiveness
    - Child-seeking
    - Inclusive and welcoming for all students
    - Gender-sensitive and girl-friendly
    - Policies and services encourage attendance and retention

2. Child-centredness
    - Child-centred pedagogy in which children are active participants, provided by reflective practitioners
    - Healthy, safe and protective learning environment provided through appropriate architecture, services, policies and action

3. Democratic participation
    - Children, families and communities are active participants in school decision-making
    - Strong links among home, school and community
    - Policies and services support fairness, non-discrimination and participation.

Box 7: Child-Friendly School principles and features (Osher et al., 2009, p.2)

If this is compared to the UNICEF/UNESCO 'Human Rights-Based Approach to Education for All' framework mentioned earlier (Lansdown et al., 2007), the different focus of the two approaches can be seen. While the Child-Friendly School model takes CRC rights as the basis for constructing a *child-friendly approach*, the 'Human Rights-Based Approach to Education for All' framework constructs an explicitly *rights-based approach* which incorporates the child-friendly school as one of its elements. It could thus be said that all child-friendly schools must respect

rights, and all rights respecting schools must be child friendly, however, the two are not conceptually synonymous.

Porteus and colleagues (2001) identify three approaches that might add to or be integrated with a rights-based approach in order to ensure every child's right to a child-friendly school: the eco-systems approach; community-building; and democratic decision-making.

The eco-systems approach derives from Bronfenbrenner's (1979) theory of the ecology of human development, and particularly the way human behaviour is a response not merely to what is happening in a person's immediate surroundings (such as a classroom), but also to influences of other systems that surround and relate to this (home and family, school and community), and of the society, economy, polity and culture in which these are situated. In practice, it means that responding to problems that present themselves in school requires seeking to understand the 'whole child' in the context of his or her family relationships, home culture, living environment etc. (Croninger and Finkelstein, 2002). Espelage (2014) has used Bronfenbrenner's theory as a framework to review the problem of bullying and aggression at school, and develop an eco-systemic approach to prevention. The ecological approach has also been put into practice by CESESMA in Nicaragua as one of the strategic foci for its work (see the current Strategic Plan: CESESMA, 2014).

The community-building approach brings together a number of aspects: For some the focus is on the school itself becoming a community, with recognition of shared interests and values, or 'connectedness' amongst those who belong to it (Bower et al, 2015). For others it is the engagement of parents and their role as part of the school community that is most important (Beckett et al, 2012). In both cases, a particular challenge is seen as building a community of shared interests out of diversity, so that recognition of and respect for difference can be used to tackle oppression and transform conflicts (McCaleb, 1994; Shields, 2002). Another level is building a vision of the school as an important and vibrant part of a local geographical community, whether urban or rural (Mawhinney and Kerchner, 1997). Whilst some communitarian thinkers, notably Etzioni (1994), have suggested that in order to build strong communities, there needs to be a reconfiguration of rights

and responsibilities (fewer rights, more responsibilities), this is not a rejection of rights as such, but rather of a view of rights as primarily demands made by individuals against others. However, as can be seen in CESESMA's work in Nicaragua, a rights-based approach can also mean children and adolescents coming together to support one another against violations of their rights, and organise collective action to advocate and defend these rights.

Finally there is the democratic decision-making approach. Again this can be understood at different levels. Where the focus is on classroom behaviour, it may simply refer to the idea that children may more willingly obey rules that they have had a say in making (DeVreis and Zan, 2003); but it can also refer to a culture of active participation in all areas of school decision-making (Apple and Beane, 2007; Mannion et al., 2015); or to a radical transformation of the school into a democratic institution, involving significant empowerment of the students, and a consequent challenge to the established order (Fielding and Moss, 2011). Whilst such transformations may provide a level of democratic participation beyond the minimum limit set by CRC Article 12, they are entirely compatible with, and complementary to, the rights-based approach.

Thus we have three different but related approaches to building positive human relations in schools, all of which can help deliver to children their right to quality education in a child-friendly setting; and all of which sit comfortably with, extend and complement the human-rights-based approach, which can be seen as both underpinning and over-arching.

Taking the discussion thus far as a starting point, the next two sections will consider in more detail what we know about education rights and human rights education in Latin America.

9. Education rights in Latin America

This section starts by establishing the broad historical context for education rights in Latin America,[19] then considers the legal frameworks for education rights that now exist in all Latin American countries. Noting the wide gaps that exist between what these legal frameworks promise and the reality of life for Latin America's children, it goes on to synthesise a number of recent reports on the practical problems that prevent the full realisation of education rights in the region. It then reviews a number of key issues in the discourse on education rights among Latin American scholars, and some of the proposals they have put forward to tackle the persistent problems.

Although every country in Latin America has its unique historical trajectory, analysts have identified patterns that created a broad context for the development of education rights – in both political discourse and real life – across the region. The 1980s and 90s have been characterised as Latin America's 'third wave of democratisation", with most countries in the region undergoing some form of political transition, in many cases from military dictatorships towards more democratic forms of government, and engaging in the development of 'modern democracies' (Payne et al., 2007; Pérez-Liñán and Mainwaring, 2013). This wave of democratisation happened to coincide with the boom years of the so-called 'Washington Consensus', which demanded neoliberal economic policies, leading to the privatisation of public services and the dominance of free-market economics

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[19] 'Latin America' here refers to all those territories of the Americas (North, South and Central America and the Caribbean islands) that were once colonised by Spain, France or Portugal, and have Spanish, French or Portuguese as a main language. This means Mexico, in North America, is included, while Guyana in South America, and Belize in Central America, both former British colonies, are excluded. In the Caribbean, the Dominican Republic, Haiti and Cuba are in; Jamaica, Barbados, Trinidad and Tobago are out. Using this definition, it can be said that substantial parts of the USA belong to Latin America, as they were originally colonised by Spain or France and today have large Spanish-speaking populations. However, only those parts of Latin America that are independent countries are discussed here.

(Rovira Kaltwasser, 2010), all of which had profound effects on the right to education (Sacavino, 2009). The new millennium, however, saw the start of a pronounced shift to the left, which gradually spread across the region, leading to the election of socialist or left-of-centre governments, the revival of social movements with new forms of citizen power (Castañeda, 2006; Barrett et al., 2008; Ellner, 2012), and 'post-neoliberal politics' (Arditi, 2008; Grugel and Riggirozzi, 2012).

During the wave of democratization, many governments signed up to international human rights treaties (Rodríguez, 1999), and many also acquired new constitutions and legislation that recognised human rights standards (Cardenas, 2010). As well as the principal United Nations human rights instruments, many Latin American countries ratified the *American Convention on Human Rights*, developed by the Organization of American States (OAS), which came into force in 1978. This treaty, however, was drawn up in the 1960s and dealt only with civil and political rights. It was not until 1999 that an additional protocol on economic, social and cultural rights, known as the 'Protocol of San Salvador', came into force (Barrios, 2006). This Protocol, now ratified by 16 of the OAS's 35 member states (including Nicaragua in 2009), includes an article on education (No 13), which is shown in Box 8.

American Convention on Human Rights

Article 13: Right to Education

1. Everyone has the right to education.

2. The States Parties to this Protocol agree that education should be directed towards the full development of the human personality and human dignity and should strengthen respect for human rights, ideological pluralism, fundamental freedoms, justice and peace. They further agree that education ought to enable everyone to participate effectively in a democratic and pluralistic society and achieve a decent existence and should foster understanding, tolerance and friendship among all nations and all racial, ethnic or religious groups and promote activities for the maintenance of peace.

3. The States Parties to this Protocol recognize that in order to achieve the full exercise of the right to education:

    a. Primary education should be compulsory and accessible to all without cost;

    b. Secondary education in its different forms, including technical and vocational secondary education, should be made generally available and accessible to all by every appropriate means, and in particular, by the progressive introduction of free education;

    c. Higher education should be made equally accessible to all, on the basis of individual capacity, by every appropriate means, and in particular, by the progressive introduction of free education;

    d. Basic education should be encouraged or intensified as far as possible for those persons who have not received or completed the whole cycle of primary instruction;

    e. Programs of special education should be established for the handicapped, so as to provide special instruction and training to persons with physical disabilities or mental deficiencies.

4. In conformity with the domestic legislation of the States Parties, parents should have the right to select the type of education to be given to their children, provided that it conforms to the principles set forth above.

5. Nothing in this Protocol shall be interpreted as a restriction of the freedom of individuals and entities to establish and direct educational institutions in accordance with the domestic legislation of the States Parties.

Box 8: Education Rights in the Protocol of San Salvador
(Organisation of American States, 1999)

The Protocol thus provides an additional source of legal backing for rights claims in relation to education in Latin America; claims which are justiciable before the Inter-American Court of Human Rights (based in San José, Costa Rica) – at least

for those who have the resources to bring their case to the court. Although the content is very similar to that of the ICESCR and CRC, it does introduce some distinctive elements: notably the aims of education include respect for 'ideological pluralism', and enabling everyone to participate in a 'democratic and pluralist society', which are significant in the Latin American context as marking a rejection of the formerly widespread practice of government by dictatorship. Also clause 3(e) requires that, 'Programs of special education should be established for the handicapped'. This reflects the age of the Convention; drafted at a time when special education for disabled children was better than none at all, and the idea of an inclusive and equitable education was barely on the horizon.[20]

Despite the Protocol of San Salvador having an International Court to enforce it, Latin American commentators have tended to focus more on the ICESCR and the CRC than their regional counterpart.

Almost all the countries of Latin America have a specific reference, or references, to education in their current constitutions (PDBA, 2006). All of them also have a children's legal code; that is, a basic statute that codifies the national law relating to children, including children's rights, in national law (Dávila and Naya, 2012, p. 443). Although all the post-1990 codes acknowledge and draw on the CRC to a greater or lesser extent, it is worth noting that most Latin American states do not go along with the CRC's use of the word 'child' ('niño' in Spanish) as covering everyone up to their 18th birthday, and their legal codes establish separate categories of children (generally 0-12) and adolescents (13-17); an approach which has been adopted for the present study for reasons discussed in the opening chapter.

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[20] It is interesting to note that, on ratifying the Protocol in 2009, the government of Nicaragua formally declared its objection to the use of the term 'handicapped' in this clause and elsewhere in the Protocol, and said it would understand this in the currently accepted sense of referring to people with disabilities (Organisation of American States, 2014). The word used in the Spanish text is 'minusválidos', which literally means 'less valid people', and has negative connotations at least as strong as the word 'handicapped' now has in English.

Dávila and Naya (2012) analysed all these children's legal codes by comparing them to the CRC, focusing specifically on what each document said about the right to education. They conclude that, for the most part, the national children's legal codes recognise and are consistent with states' obligations under the CRC in relation to education rights. Not only that, but in doing so they break with traditional ways of thinking in the region, following the CRC in recognising children as rights-holders and the states themselves as duty-bearers. Dávila and Naya then used Tomaševski 4 'A's framework to review the content of the national codes with regard to education rights, and concluded that in general, the codes included elements relating to all four 'A's (Availability, Accessibility, Acceptability and Adaptability) and could therefore be seen as guaranteeing a number of rights *in* education, as well as the more clearly articulated right *to* education. On the other hand, they suggest that most of the national codes pay little attention to participation rights, and only three of them (Venezuela, El Salvador and the Dominican Republic) adequately reflect the spirit of the CRC in relation to children's participation. Despite this, their overall view of Latin America's children's legal codes is positive, and brings them to the following conclusion:

> It can be argued that, in legal terms, the codes are consistent with the CRC, and in some cases provide indicators to analyse both the right to education and rights in education. Therefore, the continuing problems faced by children in Latin America are the result, not of their laws, but rather of the gap between these and the reality of inequality and social exclusion. (Dávila and Naya, 2012, p. 453)

The observation that the problems facing Latin American children in realising their right to education cannot be blamed on the shortcomings of the legal frameworks in their respective countries is confirmed by other analysts (Barrios, 2006; Gentili, 2009; Latapi Sarré, 2009; Pérez Murcia, 2007), all of whom draw attention to the wide and persistent gaps between what the law promises children as theirs by right, and the reality of their daily lives.

The practical problems to be addressed across the region are identified in a number of recent international reports (Körner, 2012; UNESCO Regional Bureau of Education, 2011; UNESCO, 2012). These were all drawn up under the UNESCO 'Education for All' framework and therefore tend to present problems as failures to

meet programme goals rather than rights violations. However, the problems they identify can readily be seen as both. The three reports broadly agree that these problems include the following: Insufficient access to pre-school education; high levels of repetition of grades and drop-out (*deserción*) in both primary and secondary schools (seen as a complex phenomenon related to poor quality in education); low level of secondary completion across the region and large disparities; low academic attainment (using international measures such as PISA); low status and inadequate training of teachers; poor school organisation and infrastructure and lack of materials, especially in low-income and rural areas; limited or ineffective use of ICT; lack of effective school leadership capacity; lack of a positive social climate in schools, with little feeling of community or respect for diversity; and finally violence in schools which is described as "an ever-increasing problem in the region" (UNESCO Regional Bureau of Education, 2011, p. 10). Two underlying issues are identified as causing or exacerbating these problems: lack of public policies to address the problems (this despite the 'looking-good-on-paper' legal frameworks discussed above); and the persistent and intractable social and economic inequality in the region, shown to have a strong correlation with education outcomes.

Gender discrimination in education is no longer seen as a priority problem in the region, as statistics show that overall gender parity has been achieved, and many countries now have more girls than boys at school at both primary and secondary levels. A historical tendency in Latin American culture for parents to favour the education of sons over daughters appears to be gradually losing force, and girls are also tending to stay in school longer. Gender discrimination is still recognised as a problem, but is seen as a major human rights issue only in certain areas and amongst certain populations.

To add to what can be learnt from the education statistics, some Latin American scholars have also analysed the *discourses* around education rights in the region. A recent study by Ruiz Muñoz (2012) drew largely on interview data from Mexico, but the themes that emerged seem pertinent in other countries of the region as well. Ruiz Muñoz identified four key ideas in Latin American discourses on education rights; in Spanish: *gratuidad, obligatoriedad, justiciabilidad,* and *exigibilidad.*

However the true meanings of these concepts are likely to get lost in translation (except possibly *justiciabilidad* which is the same as 'justiciability' in English), and therefore warrant further explanation.

Gratuidad means that something is free of cost, and therefore relates to the fundamental right to free education established in the CRC, the ICESCR, and almost all of Latin America's national legal codes (Dávila and Naya, 2012, p. 449). However, there is an important distinction to be drawn between what is *free of charge* (i.e. that which is given for free), and what is *free of cost* (i.e. that which can be availed of without having to pay). Common examples would be where there is no charge made for school attendance but the wearing of uniform is required, or where the school is some way from home and costs of public transport must be found. For *gratuidad* to be meaningful, education must be free of all costs, direct and indirect, and this must include secondary education as well as primary, as otherwise children of poor families will face insuperable obstacles and so be denied access (Ruiz Muñoz, 2012, p. 55) (this has been an important issue in the recent history of the right to education in Nicaragua, as will be discussed in the next chapter).

Obligatoriedad means that the state is obliged to provide education to all children of school age in its territory without exception. This is a challenge in many Latin American countries where there are small isolated communities dispersed over vast areas; the Amazon rainforest of Brazil is an obvious example, and the same is true, though on a much smaller scale, in north-eastern Nicaragua. There can be no justification for the authorities failing to provide schools, whatever the circumstances (Ruiz Muñoz, 2012, p. 56). The concept of *obligatoriedad* as understood in Latin America is different from the concept of compulsory education found in Europe and other wealthy economies. In Latin America, the obligation falls clearly on the state to provide education, and there is no equivalent legal obligation on parents to ensure their children's attendance at school, nor legal action to sanction parents who send their children out to work instead.

Justiciabilidad, as mentioned earlier, is the same as 'justiciability' in English. It means that a rights claim can be set before a court or tribunal, which can give a legally binding decision on the matter. If the court finds in favour of the claimant, it

can require the duty-bearer to take specified actions to meet the claim (Ruiz Muñoz, 2012, p. 57). As discussed above, all the Latin American countries have a legal framework where children's rights are incorporated into domestic law through children's legal codes and are often in their constitutions as well; and these legal frameworks include channels for bringing claims to the national courts. Most Latin American states also have semi-independent human rights commissions or ombudsmen to help with this process. There is also the Inter-American Court of Human Rights, with jurisdiction over rights claims originating in those countries that are parties to the Protocol of San Salvador. Thus education rights are, in theory, justiciable throughout Latin America. Once again, the problem lies not in the legal framework, but in the huge gap between what that framework promises, and the real conditions of life for Latin American children. In bringing a case to a court, they may face any or indeed all of the following obstacles: poverty, remoteness and isolation, racism, corruption, obstructive bureaucracy, language barriers, party-politicised courts, and ombudsmen serving political interests (Latapi Sarré, 2009). The limitations of justiciability serve to highlight the importance of the fourth key concept, *exigibilidad.*

Exigibilidad is not easy to translate into English. It comes from the verb *exigir,* which means to demand something of someone, but has the added force, missing from the English verb 'to demand', that the demandee is under an obligation to meet the demand. *Exigibilidad*, then, as an abstract noun, is the condition of something that can be demanded, and when demanded must be given. While *justiciabilidad* refers only to demands made through formal legal channels, *exigibilidad* is wider, and covers any and all ways in which human rights can be demanded, including administrative channels, lobbying and political influence, media campaigns, social movements and public protest (Latapi Sarré, 2009, p. 269). *Exigibilidad* is sometimes translated into English as 'enforceability', but this is subtly misleading. When a demand is enforceable (like a tax demand, for example), the implication is that the demander has the power to force the demandee to give what is demanded. *Exigibilidad*, however, signifies that the demandee is under a legal or moral obligation to give what is demanded, regardless of whether the demander has the power to force them to do so.

Another key theme in Latin American education rights discourse is that of inequality, discrimination and exclusion. Though Ruiz Muñoz sees this as a subsidiary issue to his four key ideas discussed above, other analysts place it at the heart of the discourse (Barrios, 2006; Gentili, 2009; Sacavino, 2009). Education policy in the region has tended to focus only on access to schooling, and indeed across the region as a whole most poor and minority group children do now start school. However without attention to the underlying problems of poverty, discrimination and social exclusion, or improvements in the relevance and quality of education, these children suffer high levels of repetition and drop-out, leading to poor educational outcomes and limited life opportunities (Barrios, 2006, pp. 9-10). As Gentili (2009) puts it, the conditions of inequality and exclusion that previously denied access to education to poor and minority children have simply followed them into the schools, where they continue to restrict their chances of progress and opportunities. Equal enjoyment of the right to education, therefore, requires first the dismantling of the underlying social relations that give rise to exclusion (pp. 34-35).

A final theme that stands out in Latin American education rights discourse is the perceived tendency of certain governments to treat education as merchandise (*mercancías*); that is, a service to be bought and sold in the market; an approach seen to be at odds with the legal recognition of its status as a human right (Gentili, 2009; Pérez Murcia, 2007; Sacavino, 2009). This 'marketization' of education was of particular concern to Katarina Tomaševski in her role as UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Education, as can be seen in this extract from her report to the UN Economic and Social Council after a mission to Colombia in October 2003, which is interesting for the parallel she draws with Britain under Thatcher in the 1980s:

> The changes are similar to the education policies pursued by Margaret Thatcher in the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland in the 1980s. These placed emphasis on 'educational output', the hiring of private education companies, testing, evaluation of teachers according to their students' success in examinations, and resource allocation based on results rather than costs. Subsidies enabling certain poor pupils to pay private school fees … are also modelled on the British system from the 1980s. (Tomaševski, 2004b, p. 9)

Having identified and discussed all these issues, Latin American analysts have also put forward various proposals on what should be done about the situation. Given that the existing legal frameworks are seen as broadly satisfactory, but that education policies in most countries fail to respect, protect or fulfil the rights guaranteed by these frameworks, some call for public policies to be rewritten, to bring them into line with the human rights frameworks already in place (Pérez Murcia, 2007), and for the establishment of human-rights-based indicators to monitor compliance (Latapi Sarré, 2009; Pérez Murcia, 2007). Others highlight the need to deal with the existing barriers so as to make education rights justiciable in the courts in practice as well as theory, and for organised social action in political arenas, in the media and on the streets to support these demands (Barrios, 2006; Ruiz Muñoz, 2012).

To conclude, human rights discourse and rights-based practice are nothing new in Latin America (Cardenas, 2010), but throughout the second half of the 20th Century the region's troubled politics and erratic development tended to limit their focus to civil and political rights. In the 21st century, however, economic, social and cultural rights, including education rights, have come to be claimed and defended throughout the region, supported by legal frameworks that are as good, on paper, as any in the world. However, despite these frameworks, and the overall advances shown in the regional statistical reports, Latin America's poor, marginal-ised and socially excluded children remain trapped in a cycle of poor quality education which reproduces patterns of exclusion and inequality. Until national policies can be brought into line with states' obligations to respect, protect and fulfil human rights in education, there is little prospect of reversing this cycle.

10. Human Rights Education in Latin America

This section starts with the struggle to establish HRE under military dictatorships in the 1980s, and the effects this had on its subsequent development in the region. It then draws on the legacy of a massive regional research programme run by the Inter-American Institute for Human Rights, which gathered data on the development of HRE in 19 Latin American countries from 2000 to 2013, to review both the main achievements during this period and the challenges that remain to be faced. It

concludes with a brief synthesis of Abraham Magendzo's account of nine 'forceful ideas' that have shaped this development.

The development of Human Rights Education in Latin America has inevitably been affected by the recent history referred to in the previous section. Early pioneers worked under conditions of military dictatorship, and these experiences influenced their subsequent approach, as in this reflection from Abraham Magendzo, who started his work as a human rights educator under the Pinochet dictatorship in Chile in the mid-1980s:

> Fear was an essential part of this experience. It sounds dramatic, but it is also true, that feelings of fear have been a constant since the beginning of our work. Memories of this fear still linger. One of the first tasks we undertook was to manage our apprehension, and to integrate fear into the process of transformative learning. Many of the educators participating in the seminar were people who had been tortured, kept in jail for long periods, humiliated and denigrated in horrible manners. This led me to ask myself why the only ones who were reflecting on human rights education were those who had suffered the most during the repression. I came to the conclusion that when democracy was recovered, human rights education should be the center of education. It should be the main objective. (Magendzo, 2005, p. 138)

The wave of democratisation that started around this time meant that human rights educators could come out of hiding and propose the introduction of HRE into new school curriculums. However, even as the military dictatorships gave way to a new phase of democracy-building, there was resistance to HRE in schools. It was seen as potentially a source of conflict, seeking to rake over a past that was better forgotten, and thus undermining efforts at reconciliation and social cohesion. It was also seen as incompatible with a drive towards technical education for employability, which was the watchword of the new 'Washington Consensus' market democracies (Misgeld, 1994). Educators working on official programmes were encouraged to use a different language such as 'education for peace', 'education for mutual understanding', or 'education for conflict resolution'; anything to avoid facing the challenge of human rights in education (Magendzo, 2005, p. 137).

Educators such as Magendzo and Misgeld came to believe that new curriculums would not provide the solution, and what was needed was a new pedagogy for human rights (Magendzo, 2005, p. 141). This led them to the critical pedagogy of Apple (1995), the transformative learning of Mezirow (1997), and the emancipatory approach of Freire (1970). In particular, teachers should be helped to experience transformation so they could fully identify themselves – and by extension their students – as subjects of rights (Misgeld, 1994). This expression, 'subject of rights' ('*sujeto de derecho'* in Spanish), is of central importance in Latin American rights discourse. Although it is commonly used where in English we might say 'rights-holder' (in preference to of a more literal equivalent, *'titular de derechos'*), *sujeto de derecho* is charged with additional layers of meaning, as it means both 'subject of rights' and 'subject of law'. It thus suggests that I hold rights because I live under the rule of law; the same rule of law which allows me to claim and defend rights, and allows others to claim and defend rights against me (Cillero Bruñol, 1997). This is an important idea for societies emerging from military dictatorship, where arbitrariness, repression and extra-judicial violence had been the norm.

Another transformation that Magendzo and his followers hoped to see as an essential foundation for human rights pedagogy was that educators would learn to accept and respect 'otherness' (*alteriedad*). Magendzo believed that for historical reasons there existed in Latin American society, "The cultural 'incapacity' to recognize the 'other' as a legitimate 'other' and to accept the existence of social and cultural diversity" (Magendzo, 2005, p. 137). Building this capacity in teachers was therefore another of the key challenges to be addressed by the new transformative human rights pedagogy.

As Latin America entered the 1990s, memories of authoritarian rule receded as the new democracies began to embed themselves. The resistances to HRE encountered during the transition period were overcome and a new phase began which saw the gradual incorporation of HRE into education curriculums across the region (Rodino, 2014). In 2000, the Inter-American Institute of Human Rights in Costa Rica launched a major international data-gathering and research programme to examine Human Rights Education in 19 countries of Latin America. Methodo-logically they sought to get beyond the idea of a comparative snapshot showing the

state of affairs in each country by establishing indicators that would allow them to measure progress over time, in and between countries, and across the region as a whole (Iturralde and Rodino, 2004). The programme issued an 'Inter-American Report on Human Rights Education', published in both Spanish and English, every year from 2002 to 2011, each one focusing on a specific aspect of HRE across the 19 countries: (I) the regulatory framework, (II) school curriculum development, (III) teacher education, (IV) national planning, (V) curriculum and course content (compilation of reports I-V: Iturralde et al., 2009), (VI) HRE and student councils (Rodino et al., 2007), (VII) human rights concepts in the curriculum (Rodino et al., 2008), (VIII) textbook content (Rodino et al., 2009), (IX) HRE methodology (Rodino et al., 2010), and finally (X) school culture, relationships and prevention of violence (Rodino et al., 2011). This was followed up with a regional consultation exercise across all 19 countries leading to a final report (Barillas et al., 2013). There is thus a great deal of data available on the development of HRE in Latin America up to and including 2013, with the programme's final report providing a synthesis of the extensive analysis carried out by the research team in the previous ten reports. The research director, Ana María Rodino (2014), has further summarised this, providing a synthesis of the synthesis, where she suggests that the most significant findings are the following.

HRE has been gradually incorporated into national legal frameworks for education, so that this incorporation is now universal across the region. This includes the establishment in law of a role for student councils or equivalent forms of student voice in most countries. Ministries of Education have developed policies and taken administrative actions to respond to these developments. HRE has been systematically incorporated into curriculums or programmes of study at both primary and secondary levels (often alongside study of the values and concepts of democracy) (Rodino, 2014, pp. 258-259). Topics related to diversity and non-discrimination are also strongly covered, except for diversity in relation to sexual orientation which is still largely invisible (p. 258). More recently, human-rights-based approaches have been applied to the development of policies and programmes around school security, anti-violence, anti-bullying and *'convivencia'* (living together/harmony) (p. 259).

Although HRE is well-embedded in school curriculums, Rodino does find some weaknesses in these: Often they are weak at the conceptual level (they do not help children to understand concepts such as human rights, democracy, and diversity) and on the history of the struggle for human rights and those who fought it; in particular they tend to ignore the massive violations of human rights that were such a prominent feature of recent Latin American history (p. 258). They tend to teach a traditional vision of 'citizenship', as relating to a homogeneous group of people in a specific place, with no room for modern notions of global citizenship, or diversity within citizenship. Finally they concentrate on human rights norms and values, but do not teach about the human rights institutions and systems that help people to protect and defend their rights (p. 258).

Rodino praises the development of school textbooks in line with this new curriculum content, noting that many of these now include a wide range of activities and exercises using participatory approaches. However, they nearly all deal with HRE as an isolated topic and do not present a consistently human-rights-based approach to other social issues that would merit such an approach, such as migration, poverty, sustainability, or sexual and reproductive health (p. 259). Teacher training continues to be a weak link in HRE in the region; there is little evidence of HRE in initial teacher training, and what little in-service training is provided has limited reach (p. 259). Considering possible ways forward, Rodino concludes that what is needed is a whole school approach, where human rights norms and principles, curriculum, school text-books, teacher training, school culture and atmosphere all work together within a supportive legal and policy framework (pp. 262-263).[21]

Abraham Magendzo, who was introduced earlier as a pioneer of HRE in Latin America, also provides an overview to conclude this section. Writing in 2008, he identified the following nine 'ideas with force' (*'ideas fuerza'* – can be translated as

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[21] If the above three paragraphs seem to lack critique, this is out of respect for the awe-inspiring amount of research Rodino and her team have carried out over 13 years, and the copious, detailed reports that underpin this brief synthesis.

'key ideas' but loses something in the translation) that have been – and still are – important to the development of HRE in Latin America: (1) HRE is a contextualised education, responsive to and shaped by the history of each country; (2) it is an education aimed at constructing democracy; and therefore, (3) it is oriented towards political transformation (often taking shape as part of the struggle against undemocratic regimes); (4) it is a holistic/integral education which involves the internalisation of human rights and their implementation in everyday life; (5) it involves learning about ethics and values (in particular relating to democracy, inclusion, empowerment and critical thinking); (6) it is education for peace-building; (7) it helps its participants develop a sense of themselves (and others) as 'subjects of rights'; (8) it has continually worked for the reform of curriculums and alternative pedagogies, and sought to influence education policy from a rights-based position; and (9) it faces up to underlying tensions like those between authoritarianism and autonomy, between trust and fear, and between ideological neutrality and political commitment (Magendzo, 2008).

This, then, is the broader regional context which has provided the backdrop for the more localised development of human rights education, and human rights to and in education, in Nicaragua, which is the subject of the next chapter.

11. Children's engagement in research

The literature on how children and adolescents have engaged in research will be considered in detail in Chapter 4, where it will inform discussion on the method-ological approach selected for the present study. However, the idea of "children as researchers" is such an essential part of the overarching theoretical framework on which this thesis is built that it warrants an introduction here as well.

A number of frameworks have been suggested for analysing the relationship of children to research. Christensen and Prout identified four ways of seeing children and childhood in the research literature: "The child as object, the child as subject and the child as social actor… and a nascent approach seeing children as participants and co-researchers" (Christensen and Prout, 2002, p. 480). Kellett proposes a slightly different fourfold distinction, identifying research *on, about, with* and *by* children. Drawing on James, Jenks and Prout's (1998) account of how

childhood has historically been theorised, she sees these four research approaches as products of a historical evolution:

> Instead of research *on* children as we saw in early developmental psychology experiments, or research *about* children in explorations of socially constructed childhoods, or research *with* children in the participatory agendas driven by *Every Child Matters*, came the prospect of research *by* children. Research *by* children goes a step further than children as participant or co-researchers. (Kellett, 2010a, p. 22)

As will be set out in detail in chapter 4, the present study is clearly committed to the fourth approach, research *by* children (though, following the terminology defined in chapter 1, the term used here is "research by children and adolescents"). However, by the concluding chapters, critical reflection on practice will lead to a more nuanced reconsideration of Kellett's distinctions. Since almost all research *by* children and adolescents is facilitated by adults who have both an interest in and an influence on the research process, such research inevitably involves some form of partnership between children and adults. Facilitation of research *by* children requires adults to work *with* children, or rather, children and adults to work together.

As mentioned above, chapter 4 will explore the literature on this issue in more detail, drawing largely on Kellett's groundbreaking work in conceptualising and justifying the "research *by* children" approach, and also on work by Alderson, Kim, Uprichard, Brownlie, and Lundy and McEvoy amongst others, who tackle some of the theoretical and practical complexities that this approach gives rise to. Chapter 4 will also look at the earlier work by Shier, and by CESESMA in Nicaragua, that built the foundations for the 'Transformative Research by Children and Adolescents' approach used in this study. In this context, what can be considered primarily as methodological concerns can also be viewed through a children's rights lens, both from the perspective of children's "right to be properly researched" (Ennew et al., 2009), and as a tool for advocacy and influence to ensure children's views are given due weight in decision-making (Lundy, 2007; Shier, 2015).

12. Conclusion

In reviewing the literature most relevant to the interests of the present study, this chapter started with the framework for education rights in international law, and the main conceptual models that have been found helpful in analysing and promoting education rights; particularly the different types of states' obligations as duty-bearers, Tomaševski's 4 'A's model, the concept of rights *to, in* and *through* education, and the UNICEF/UNESCO 'Human rights-based approach to education for all' with its three fundamental education rights: access, quality and respect. It has gone on to explore the literature on a number of key issues that have particular resonance for the present study: the concept of 'quality' in education that underpins the notion of a right to quality education; the problematic nature of the relationship between rights and responsibilities; and what children themselves have said about their rights in school. It has considered the literature on human rights education (HRE), including its pedagogy and how it relates to children's rights in particular. Of fundamental importance to the present study, it has looked in some detail at whole school approaches to education rights, particularly the idea of rights-respecting schools, as well as related approaches such as child-friendly schools, the eco-systems approach, community-building and democratic decision-making in schools. It has provided a review of what is known about the context for, and the development of, education rights and HRE of Latin America, and it has introduced the concept of 'children as researchers' as fundamental to this thesis, setting the scene for a fuller discussion of this topic in chapter 4.

All this wealth of research and extraordinary scholarship from both the English-speaking and Spanish-speaking worlds – acknowledging in particular those scholars who inhabit both worlds – is relevant to the concerns of the present study. However, little has been said so far about the specific context of this study, the Central American state of Nicaragua, land of lakes and volcanoes, so this must be the topic of the next chapter.

Chapter Three: The context: Children and schooling in rural Nicaragua

1. Introduction

This chapter describes the national and local context in which this research study was carried out, and is divided into ten sections. A full history of Nicaragua is outside the scope of this thesis; however some elements of the country's history are relevant to understanding the educational and human rights context of Nicaragua today, and therefore, following this introduction, Section 2 reviews these historical aspects. Child labour is a major factor affecting children's access to education in Nicaragua, and in the area where the research took place the cultivation of coffee is of particular importance, so Section 3 looks at child labour in the Nicaraguan coffee industry. Section 4 considers how national education policies have developed in recent decades, noting the changes in direction brought about by each change of the political landscape, and how these have affected children's education rights. Section 5 looks at the legal framework for children's rights, including education rights, in Nicaragua, locating this in the wider Latin American context discussed in the previous chapter. Section 6 focuses on the present Sandinista government's approach to Human Rights Education in schools, and the related pedagogy as described in its official publications. Section 7 briefly describes the two non-governmental organisations whose work was significant for this study: Save the Children Nicaragua, who designed, oversaw and financed the 'Safe Quality Schools' programme (already briefly introduced in the previous chapter), and CESESMA, the local partner organisation which implemented the project on the ground in La Dalia. Section 8 describes the Safe Quality Schools project, drawing

on previous research in the area by Shier and colleagues (Shier et al., 2013). Section 9 draws on earlier work by local child researchers to provide background information on the four rural communities where the research was carried out and their schools, and is followed by a brief conclusion in Section 10.

It is important to mention here that writing about Nicaragua, including discussion on educational topics, tends to come from polarised ideological positions, either pro- or anti-Sandinista, and that this positioning is evident in much of the peer-reviewed academic literature as well as in government papers, journalism and popular discourses. Recent examples of this would be Muhr (2013) unreservedly praising the current Sandinista government, and Martí i Puig (2013) complaining about how the same government is undermining democracy. To search for objectivity would be both philosophically and practically fruitless, so the approach taken here is (a) to consider material from different ideological positions (hence wherever possible a variety of references are given for key topics), and (b) to make the reader aware that, whatever arguments may be put forward here, they are constructed by drawing selectively from material that may already be steeped in ideological bias.

2. History

Most of what is now Nicaragua was conquered and colonised by Spain from the start of the 16th Century. Over centuries the colonisers mixed with the indigenous population, so that today at least 80% of the population identifies as mixed race (*mestizo* in Spanish*)* (Field, 1998; Hooker, 2014; Lancaster, 1991; Smith, 1997). Although the claiming of indigenous identity and the rights that go with it – particularly land rights – is an important issue in present-day Nicaragua, it is a live issue in certain areas only; mostly more remote areas where the indigenous communities have maintained a greater degree of separation and in some cases still speak their own languages (Larson and Lewis Mendoza, 2012; Stocks, 2005). Thus, in the area where the present study was carried out, whilst almost everyone would recognise themselves as having indigenous heritage (Field, 1998), there was no organised movement to claim human rights on this basis (and as will be seen in the findings in due course, the education rights of indigenous people as such were not mentioned by participants in this study). Another consequence is that, while there is

considerable variation in skin colour, and some prejudice against darker skin, skin colour is seen as a continuum, and is not used as a criterion to divide people into separate ethnic or racial groups (Lancaster, 1991). In the area where this study was carried out, ethnic and cultural differences have rarely been highlighted as issues of major social concern (Espinoza et al., 2013).

Although Nicaragua became independent from Spain in 1821, the country's national language (Spanish) and dominant religious tradition (Roman Catholicism) are significant and enduring legacies of Spanish colonisation (Kirk, 1992; Lancaster, 1991). In the 20th Century, however, the influence of the USA became stronger (Morley, 2002; Tessendorf, 1987). From 1934 to 1979, with US backing, Nicaragua was ruled by three successive dictators of the Somoza dynasty, until in 1979 a revolutionary guerrilla movement, the Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN in Spanish), inspired by the earlier Cuban revolution, overthrew Somoza's forces and established a popular revolutionary government (Close et al., 2012; Hodges, 2014; Smith, 1993; Walker, 1991). Advancing education was a priority for the Sandinista government, and one of its most celebrated achievements was the National Literacy Crusade of 1980, which took 100,000 young volunteers into the countryside, teaching people to read and write, and reducing the illiteracy rate from 50% to 13% in less than a year (Arnove, 1981; Hanemann, 2006). Free education became widely available for the first time as schools were built throughout the country (Arnove and Dewees, 1991; Williams, 1991).

Although the revolution was popular, especially among the poor, the US government under Ronald Reagan considered the Sandinistas' links with Cuba and the USSR a threat to US hegemony in Central America, and so provided weapons and finance for a terrorist organisation known as the *Contras* to start a civil war in an attempt to destabilise the government (Morley, 2002; Robinson and Norsworthy, 1987; Turner, 1987; Walker, 1987). The harsh conditions brought about by the civil war eroded popular support for the revolutionary government, allowing a US-backed anti-Sandinista coalition to win a narrow election victory in 1990, thus ending the first period of Sandinista rule (Prevost and Vanden, 1991; Walker, 1991). This marked the start of a 16-year succession of pro-USA neo-liberal governments who began to dismantle the achievements of the Sandinistas. In line

with the then-prevailing 'Washington consensus' on macro-economic management, free-market economic reforms were introduced, including cuts in spending on health and education, and the removal of food subsidies and agricultural credit. These policies led to a rapid rise in unemployment and pushed many thousands back into poverty (Close, 2004; Godek, 2007; Vanden, 2002; Walker, 1997).

By 2006, however, after 16 years in power, the ruling neo-liberal elite was split by corruption scandals (Brown and Cloke, 2005), and this, together with their persistent failure to tackle poverty, permitted the Sandinistas to return to government (Close et al., 2012). However, unlike the revolutionary 1980s, the new Sandinista Government adopted a moderate 'twenty-first century socialism' with a mixed economy, and launched programmes to regenerate the economy and encourage sustainable development (GRUN, 2012; Martí i Puig, 2012; Perla and Cruz Feliciano, 2013; Ström, 2014).

3. Poverty, coffee and child labour

In terms of Gross National Income per capita, Nicaragua has long been the second poorest country in the Americas (after Haiti) (IFAD, 2012; World Food Programme, 2013), although in 2014 neighbouring Honduras was neck and neck with Nicaragua for this honour (UNDP, 2014a). This intractable poverty, despite geographical and climatic conditions ideal for agricultural production, has been attributed to a mixture of adverse factors over the years, including colonial and neo-colonial exploitation, oppressive dictatorship, incompetent and/or corrupt government, economic mismanagement, US interference, civil war, neoliberal structural adjustment, and a propensity to natural disasters, notably earthquakes, hurricanes and floods (Close, 2004; Close et al., 2012, pp. 1-16; Kagan, 1996).

According to the World Food Programme, in 2011 42% of the population lived in poverty (income less than 2 US dollars per person per day) and 15% in extreme poverty (less than US$1.25 per person per day). In rural areas, including those covered by the present study, these figures rise to 63% in poverty and 37% in extreme poverty (IFAD, 2012; World Food Programme, 2013). The Sandinista government, elected in 2006 and re-elected in 2011, has introduced a range of social and economic programmes to support poor rural families and develop the rural economy (Muhr, 2008; GRUN, 2012). However, these measures have

coincided with a period of global economic crisis followed by recession which has held back economic progress (World Bank, 2014).

Coffee, introduced to Latin America by the Dutch in the 18th Century (Perfecto et al., 1996), became Nicaragua's biggest export earner in the 1900s. It was super-seded by cotton in the 1930s, but became the principal export again when the cotton industry collapsed in the 1950s (Biderman, 1983; Paige, 1998; Ruben and Zuniga, 2010) and continued as such till 2013.[22] The tropical mountain forest climate found in northern central Nicaragua, particularly in the provinces of Jinotega and Matagalpa, is ideal for the production of high-quality Arabica coffee. This kind of coffee is best grown, not in open fields or orchards, but on forested mountain slopes, where the overhead forest canopy ensures optimum levels of shade and humidity (Jha et al., 2011; Perfecto et al., 1996). Although initially the cultivation of coffee was carried out on large privately-owned plantations, during the revolutionary period of the 1980s much of the land was redistributed to small farmers who were organised into cooperatives. During the subsequent free-market liberal governments of the 1990s, however, large landowners were able to reacquire much of the land, and thus the two systems now operate side by side. The sector is dominated by the large plantations, many of which are run on almost feudal lines by their owners, who are often absentee landlords employing managers to run the business for them (Everingham, 2001; Young consultants of Santa Martha, 2011). However alongside this there exists a significant sector made up of independent small farmers, owning just a few hectares and producing coffee on their own land; many of them still involved in the producers' cooperatives set up after the revolution (Vakis et al., 2004). These small farmers are able to sell part of their crop to the Fair Trade market, and some have gone over to organic farming to further increase their income (Bacon, 2005). Although larger producers also have access to quality certification schemes, their access to the Fair Trade market is more limited, so most of their produce is sold in the conventional global coffee market

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[22] In recent years beef exports have been increasing and beef overtook coffee as the top export earner in 2014 (CETREX, 2015).

(Ruben and Zuniga, 2010). This means that families of small independent Fair Trade producers can generally count on a higher household income and better overall living standards than the landless families who live and work on the large plantations (Bacon et al., 2008; Vakis et al., 2004). Although coffee is one of Nicaragua's biggest export earners, with most of the crop being exported to Europe and North America, most of it is exported as raw beans, so that much of the value added, and thus profit, accrues to large international processing companies (Nestlé, Starbucks, Kraft etc.), and very little to the Nicaraguan producers (Jha et al., 2011).

Because of the way coffee is grown in Nicaragua, on steep forested slopes in remote mountainous areas, the possibilities for mechanisation are limited and the industry remains labour intensive, particularly during the harvest season (November to February), when all the coffee must be picked and sorted by hand before it can be bagged up for processing. This means that, while there may be severe unemployment or underemployment in rural communities for most of the year, there is plentiful seasonal work during the three-month harvest period. In order to take full advantage of this window of opportunity, it is common for entire families – men, women and children – to work full-time throughout the coffee-picking season (INTO, 2008; Young Consultants of Santa Martha, 2011).

Because Nicaragua's labour laws prohibit the employment of children under 14, child workers on the coffee plantations are not registered. The coffee they pick is usually added to the sacks of an older family member, and since they are not paid directly for their work, they can easily be kept hidden from the official records. In 2010, researchers investigating child labour in the coffee sector in Matagalpa and Jinotega for Save the Children noted: "We were able to observe children working at various tasks, although not all of them admitted to it, or they hid when they knew of our presence" (Lacayo Parajón et al., 2010, p. 27). Because of this there are no reliable statistics on child workers in the coffee industry. However, based on surveys by local NGOs, it is estimated that there are over 65,000 children and adolescents between the ages of 5 and 14 working in the Nicaraguan coffee sector at harvest time (Castillo and Benzaken Koosed, 2010).

For children to work on family farms is not in itself a human rights violation; indeed it happens throughout the world, including wealthy countries like Ireland

and the UK, and is an important way for children to learn skills and habits that will be important to them if they later choose to carry on in the family business (Gasson el al., 1988; Riley, 2009; Sanderson et al., 2010). However, the involvement of children in agricultural labour places them at risk of a range of rights violations, which include: the possibility of forced labour; inappropriate types or excessive hours of labour; economic exploitation; discrimination; denial of the right to rest, leisure and play; and violence, including sexual harassment, abuse and exploitation. Of particular concern, given the topic of the present study, is that the pressure to work may interfere with, or deny altogether, access to education (Corriols and Aragón, 2010; INTO, 2008; Shier et al., 2013; Rolston, 2009; Rosati and Rossi, 2003; Young Consultants of Santa Martha, 2011). In this context it is worth recalling a key point made in Chapter 1: In Nicaragua, unlike countries like Ireland and Britain, school attendance is not enforced by the state, but is a choice made by children and their families based on their assessment of their options.

4. Education policy

All public schooling in Nicaragua is under the direct control of the Ministry of Education. There are no local education authorities as there are in the UK, and the work that such local authorities would do is carried out by a hierarchy of Ministry of Education departmental and district offices all under central control. This means that when the government changes (e.g. from military dictatorship to revolutionary socialist in 1979, from socialist to neo-liberal in 1990, and back again in 2007) all staff in leadership positions are changed, along with all their policies and programmes (Woodward, 2011).

During the Somoza dictatorship from the 1940s to the 1970s, education, like everything else in Nicaragua, was under the personal control of the President. Kraft (1983) reports that, when the primary school curriculum was revised in the 1960s, "Somoza went through each curriculum guide prepared by a team of educators and red-penciled-in suggestions and 'corrections'" (Kraft, 1983, p. 85). Under the Somozas, the purpose of the education system was, "as a tool to train a technical cadre to run the family enterprises [of the President] and the state bureaucracies, with the emphasis generally in that order" (Kraft, 1983, p. 85). Although schools were built, this was mainly funded by aid from the USA, a firm ally and supporter

of the successive Somoza dictators. Most rural schools only offered primary grades 1 to 3, giving poor children no chance to continue their education beyond this level, meaning that most of the rural poor were illiterate. Meanwhile private schools flourished to provide for the elite and middle classes (Kraft, 1983, pp. 89-90). To explain the apparent lack of commitment to universal basic education in the Somoza period, Kraft suggests that:

> In nations such as pre-revolutionary Nicaragua, where a large supply of docile, cheap manpower was needed to man the Somoza and foreign-owned enterprises, a literate population was not high on the list of priorities. A literate populace might question why they were not given the guaranteed rights in their own constitution. (Kraft, 1983, p. 88)

When the Sandinistas came to power in 1979, overhauling education was one of their priorities. The new government saw the education system as an integral component of an ongoing revolution and, towards this end, expected it:

> to foster the formation of a 'new person', a more critically conscious and participatory citizen motivated by collective goals, and also to promote the transmission of the skills and knowledge necessary to overcome decades of underdevelopment and set the nation on the path of self-sustaining growth. (Arnove, 1995, p. 28)

With a doubling of the education budget, hundreds of new schools were built in previously neglected rural areas, school attendance increased over 50%, and thousands of new teachers were trained (Arnove and Dewees, 1991; Williams, 1991). Textbooks were rewritten and pedagogies modernised in line with the drive for a revolutionary transformation of society (Arnove, 1995; Woodward, 2011, pp. 23-25).

But the revolutionary period lasted only 11 years, and when the Sandinistas were voted out in the 1990 elections, Nicaragua switched to neo-liberal, pro-USA, pro-free-market government for the next 16 years. Along with other Latin American countries at this time, influenced by neo-liberal ideas about cutting state spending and reducing state control, the new government embarked on a policy of 'educational decentralisation' and the promotion of 'school autonomy' (Rivarola

and Fuller, 1999). This started in 1993 and continued in various forms until the Sandinistas returned to power in 2007. Many of the administrative reforms were eventually formalised in a new 'Law of Educational Participation' in 2002 (Asamblea Nacional de Nicaragua, 2002). The decentralisation programme involved giving new parent-led management boards substantial control over school budgets and financial management, as well as considerable autonomous decision-making on curriculum, appointments, school policies and procedures (Gershberg and Meade, 2005; King et al., 1999). To reduce education spending while maintaining the appearance of respect for the constitutional guarantee of free primary education, the funds transferred by central government were just enough to cover teachers' salaries, but not enough to pay for materials, books, running costs or repairs. Schools were expected to resolve this problem for themselves, and this was done by means of a range of unofficial charges for goods and services. While classes ostensibly remained free, at least in primary schools, children were required to pay for cleaning and maintenance, books and materials, annual re-registration, assessments, report cards and more. In some cases these were described as 'voluntary contributions', but parents were aware that failure to make them affected their children's outcomes (Rivarola and Fuller, 1999). Head teachers also added thousands of 'phantom pupils' to school rolls (i.e. they registered children who did not really exist), as this increased the budget support they received from central government (Jacobs, 2008). Officially, the school autonomy programme was promoted as a way of empowering parents by giving them greater control over their children's education. A 2002 study of the programme by Alec Gershberg (2002) was aptly entitled, 'Empowering parents while making them pay'.

In 2006, on the eve of the elections that finally put an end to Nicaragua's 16 years of neo-liberal government, Miguel De Castilla, an internationally-known education expert and author who was soon to become Minister of Education in the new Sandinista government (and in this role will be encountered again below), completed an in-depth evidence-based study of the school autonomy model (De Castilla, 2007). Taking a human rights perspective, he analysed a range of evidence using Tomaševski's 4 'A's criteria, and showed how the school autonomy policy had significantly diminished the realisation of the right to education against all four criteria: education had become less available, less accessible, and, despite the

appearance of greater parental control, less adaptable and less acceptable (De Castilla, 2007, pp. 62-110). Though this study drew on a wide range of evidence, including a survey of over 500 parents who were members of school management councils, it appears that the views of children were not sought, and this is a limitation in what is otherwise a substantial and convincing study.

On the topic of students' voices, it is interesting to note that while the school autonomy policy provided for the election of representative student councils (*gobiernos estudiantiles)* in all schools, places for student representatives on the parent-led school management boards were strictly limited and without voting rights (King et al., 1999, p. 4). Researching the role of these autonomous school boards in 1999, Gershberg (1999) found "very little significant student participation" (p. 17). It is also important to bear in mind that, at the same time as parents were being forced to bear more of the costs of their children's schooling, the promotion of a free-market approach to economic development was encouraging producers, both agricultural and industrial, to reduce costs by making maximum use of cheap child labour. Thus poor families had to take into account not only the rising costs of sending their children to school, but also the earnings lost by not sending them out to work (Shier et al., 2013).

On returning to power after winning the 2006 elections, President Ortega appointed Miguel De Castilla, the noted educational researcher whose study of the school autonomy model was cited above, as Minister of Education. De Castilla's first official act on entering office was to issue a legally-binding Ministerial Decree prohibiting all charging of fees or other 'contributions' in public schools throughout the country (Jacobs, 2008). The school autonomy policy was reversed, and centralised control over finance, staffing, curriculum and school organisation reintroduced. A major national consultation was held on curriculum reform, and a new national education strategy drawn up (GRUN, 2011a; Muhr, 2013; Woodward, 2011). Predictably, the abolition of fee charging in public schools led to a large increase in enrolment. It is impossible to quantify this reliably because of the thousands of phantom pupils enrolled under the previous system, but Minister De Castilla estimated that there were as many as 100,000 additional students in 2007 (Jacobs, 2008). However, without a corresponding increase in national education

spending (exacerbated by the loss of the income schools had been generating locally by charging parents), there were no new teachers, classrooms, desks, books, or funds to carry out repairs (Shier et al., 2013, p. 191). Critics of the government's approach, while recognising the advances made in increasing school attendance, drew attention to continuing problems related to the lack of investment, including overcrowded and collapsing classrooms, insufficient teachers (especially in rural areas) and inadequate teacher training (Flórez, 2014; Castro, 2012; Rogers, 2012; Vijil, 2013). The fact that every change of government produces major ruptures and reforms of the education system, based on ideology rather than evidence, is itself seen as an obstacle to long-term progress and development (Vigil, 2008; Woodward, 2011).

Another policy development from this period which is relevant to the concerns of the present study is the decree prohibiting all forms of physical punishment in schools issued by the Ministry of Education in April 2009 when De Castilla was still at the helm (Ministerio de Educación, 2009a). The implications of this will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 6 in the context of the research findings on school punishment.

An issue highlighted by critics of the Sandinista government has been the party-politicisation of schools, for example the overt display of FSLN posters and propaganda in schools, and the regular cancelling of classes so children can take part in pro-Sandinista marches and demonstrations. Whilst government supporters consider this to be no more than the vindication of children's right to be political actors, to freedom of expression and freedom of assembly, opponents see it as political indoctrination and manipulation (Bureau of Democracy Human Rights and Labor, 2014; Rogers, 2012). A related issue is the way the existing autonomous student councils (legally-mandated by the previous government's 2002 Law of Educational Participation) have increasingly been sidelined by the development of new national student organisations based on a trade union model, closely linked to the ruling FSLN party (the Federation of Secondary Students, FES, and later the Federation of Primary Students, FEP). While this new trade union model offers children and adolescents greater access to power and influence in important decisions, as compared to the often tokenistic role of the previous student councils

(Ministerio de Educación, 2010; Shier et al., 2013), there are concerns that it is open to manipulation, since it is under the control of a centralised, adult-run political machine (Castillo Bermúdez, 2010).[23]

5. The legal framework for children's rights in Nicaragua

Nicaragua's revolutionary Sandinista government seized power in July 1979, and within a matter of months acceded to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (UN Treaty Collection website, 2015b). In October 1990, the newly-elected anti-Sandinista government of President Violeta de Chamorro ratified the Convention on the Rights of the Child (over a year before the UK and almost two years before Ireland) (UN Treaty Collection website, 2015a). In 1995, the same government passed a constitutional amendment which, among other things, stated that the CRC had full force of law *(plena vigencia)* in Nicaragua (Asamblea Nacional de Nicaragua, 2005). In December 2009, the returning, and less revolutionary, Sandinista government ratified the Protocol of San Salvador, which adds an economic, social and cultural rights component to the American Convention on Human Rights (Inter-American Commission on Human Rights website, 2011). Thus in Nicaragua over the years, governments of left, right and centre have demonstrated the same alacrity in ratifying or acceding to major international human rights instruments with significant education rights content.

Following the ratification of the CRC, work began on the development of a new children and adolescents' legal code, re-codifying many of the children's rights in the CRC in relation to the Nicaraguan context, and at the same time establishing a new penal justice system for dealing with adolescents in conflict with the law (children, defined as under 13, are not legally liable and not subject to penal justice). The new legal code was eventually passed into law in 1998 under the

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[23] I have not been able to find any serious research on the nature and functioning of these school students' unions, or their relationship to, and displacement of, the previous student councils (in either English or Spanish). This will be picked up in the concluding chapter as an interesting, though challenging, area for future research.

government of Chamorro's successor, Arnoldo Alemán (Asamblea Nacional de Nicaragua, 1998), where it replaced a 'Protection of Minors Law' dating back to 1973. An important feature of the new Code is that it is firmly based on the principle of children as rights-holders, or more specifically the Latin American concept of 'subject of rights' *(sujeto de derecho)* discussed in the previous chapter. This is stated in Article 3, which can be seen as a fundamental principle:

> Every child and adolescent is a social subject and a subject of rights, and therefore has the right to participate actively in all spheres of social and juridical life without any limitations other than those established in the Laws. (Código de la Niñez y la Adolescencia, Article 3)

This principle was ground-breaking for its time and place, since previously in Nicaragua (as in much of Latin America) it was common for children to be treated as if they were the property of their fathers, on much the same level as farm animals (Shier, 2010a, p. 31).

A feature that distinguishes the Nicaraguan Code from the CRC is that amongst its 222 articles there is one (Article 55) which sets out a number of duties and responsibilities *(deberes y responsabilidades)* of children and adolescents. This was mentioned in Chapter 2, and its significance will be discussed further in Chapter 6.

To explain how such a comprehensive and far-reaching measure came to be drafted and passed into law by a reactionary and far-from-progressive government, Rocha (2005) suggests that President Alemán, finding himself and his government mired in deepening corruption scandals, looked towards legal reform and fashionable, but superficial, human-rights discourse as a way to keep on the right side of his international donors and supporters (principally the USA, the European Union and the IMF). The Children and Adolescents' Legal Code was drafted by a small elite group with limited public consultation, and passed through parliament without serious debate. Using Habermas's concepts, Rocha suggests that the new law may have had juridical validity, but it lacked public legitimacy (Rocha, 2005, p. 8). Because of this, the new Code was almost immediately the subject of controversy. What its critics found objectionable, however, was not so much the idea that children have rights, but more specifically the proposal for a new system of penal

justice for adolescent offenders, which many saw as a charter of impunity for juvenile delinquents. With the passing of time, the notion of children as rights-holders has gained an ever-stronger foothold in public consciousness, but objections to the juvenile justice system continue to surface in the media; for example in 2011, when the death of an adolescent at the hands of other adolescents in Managua brought renewed calls for long prison terms for adolescent offenders (Gutiérrez Baca, 2011).

Shortly after the adoption of the Children and Adolescents' Legal Code, an Ombudsman (*Procurador)* for Children and Adolescents' Rights was appointed to the team in the existing Human Rights Ombudsman's office. In a 2009 comparative study of Latin American national human rights institutions, the Nicaraguan Human Rights Ombudsman's office was rated relatively highly on formal autonomy and one of the highest on formal legal powers (Pegram, 2009). However, under the current Sandinista administration its de facto independence from government and capacity to criticise government policy have been questioned, and a number of independent NGOs, notably the Nicaraguan Centre for Human Rights (*CENIDH* in Spanish), do similar work in parallel, where they have more freedom to criticise government policies and actions, but no formal powers (Bureau of Democracy Human Rights and Labor, 2013, p. 20). Nicaragua, thus provides an example of the phenomenon, common to many Latin American countries, highlighted in the previous chapter, where there are modern, comprehensive legal frameworks to guarantee protection of children's rights, but at the same time there are wide and persistent gaps between what the law promises children as theirs by right, and the reality of their daily lives.

The Sandinista government which came to power in 2007 developed a distinctive new discourse of children's rights. In counterpoint to prevailing ideas about the 'promotion', 'defence' and 'claiming' of rights by children themselves and those advocating on their behalf, the government spoke of the 'restitution' of rights. For example, in the government's Early Years Policy Framework Document, (GRUN, 2011b), the phrase 'restitution of rights' *(restitución de derechos)* occurs 43 times in 61 pages. Instead of a duty-bearer, against whom rights claims can be made, the government paints itself as the guardian of rights, and specifically as the restorer to

children of rights which had been taken from them by previous governments. For example, under the heading 'Restitution of the Right to Education', the policy document states:

> The educational system which the Citizen Power government inherited in 2007 was marked by the privatization which, through the school autonomy programme, had transformed the human right to education into merchandise available only to those who could pay for it. (GRUN, 2011b, p. 15)

There is no quibble with the truth of this statement; this is exactly what happened, as has been described above. The policy document, however, provides a good example of the government's new children's rights discourse in action. The same approach and the same phraseology are used consistently in government documents relating to education policy and planning.

6. Children's rights in school: the pedagogical framework

The Government's 2011-2015 Strategic Plan for Education is explicitly rights-focused, with the 'restitution of rights' discourse appearing strongly throughout; for example in the second paragraph of the introduction: "With the rupture of the neo-liberal model there began the process of the restitution of rights to education" (GRUN, 2011a, p. 6). It goes on to state that Human Rights Education is one of the cross-cutting themes *(temas transversales)* established in the new primary curriculum, developed through a process that included popular participation (pp. 29-30).

The incorporation of human rights as a cross-cutting theme is followed through in supporting documentation produced by the Ministry of Education. For example, the document setting out the design of the new primary education curriculum says:

> The Government of Reconciliation and National Unity sees education as the cornerstone *(eje fundamental)* of the development of the country, anticipating that it will contribute not only to reducing poverty, but also to creating opportunities for sustainable development through academic, scientific and technical education of the population; guaranteeing the right to education for

everyone, as well as *knowledge and understanding of all their rights and how to claim and defend them*. (Ministerio de Educación, 2009b, p. 8; emphasis added)

Another Ministry document provides a summary of the curriculum and describes the 'Human Rights' cross-cutting theme as follows:

Education in Human Rights: This is a holistic, gradual and ongoing process in society, which is built from relationships, values, attitudes, traditions, behaviours and ways of life that reflect respect for people and their dignity, based on the sense of shared duties *(deberes)* and rights, the exercise of dialogue, negotiation, equity and equality between men and women, the rejection of violence, and adherence to the principles of freedom, justice and democracy as part of human rights. (Ministerio de Educación, 2009c, p. 4)

The same thinking is reflected in the more detailed teacher's guides for each primary grade, and is carried through into a new curriculum for initial teacher training, which emphasises the importance of the cross-cutting themes, and describes how new teachers will be trained to approach the theme of human rights in the classroom:

Theme: Human rights. The teacher should take on board *(asumir)* and promote the practice of human duties and rights as a way of life, especially those relating to children and adolescents in their educational environment. The classroom teaching should be based on equal opportunities and human rights, through constructivist pedagogy and in the teacher training processes, so that group reflection [on the theme of human rights] will enable them to re-signify them and translate them into new attitudes. Disciplines suggested [i.e. classes in which human rights should be taught]: In all disciplines. (Ministerio de Educación, 2012, p. 4)

In all these documents, references to rights and duties together are common. To some extent this can be justified as the Nicaraguan Children and Adolescents Legal Code is an important point of reference. As mentioned above, unlike the CRC, this contains an article which formally sets out 'duties and responsibilities' of children and adolescents. However in none of these documents is the nature of the relationship between rights and responsibilities spelt out for the benefit of the teacher (who

not only has to teach them in a holistic way, but also practice them as a way of life). This topic will be discussed further in subsequent chapters in the light of the findings of the present study.

Failure to explain the relationship between rights and responsibilities notwith-standing, this extensive documentation leaves no doubt that the current Nicaraguan Ministry of Education (in 2013 when this information was collected) wants the teaching of human rights to be seen as an important, indeed fundamental, part of primary education (though this account focuses on primary education, the same approach to human rights was noted in documentation relating to secondary education). How this translates into lived experience in the primary classroom is one of the main concerns of the present study, and will be considered in detail in subsequent chapters.

7. Save the Children Nicaragua and CESESMA

The research presented in this thesis was carried out in the context of four rural primary schools which had been participating for five years or more in a rights-based whole-school development programme called 'Safe, Quality Schools' *(Escuelas Seguras y de Calidad)*, coordinated and funded by Save the Children Nicaragua, and carried out on the ground by local partner organisation CESESMA, working in partnership with the district office of the Ministry of Education. Although the methodology used in the present study was such that it cannot claim to measure the effects of this programme, the involvement of these four schools in the Safe Quality Schools project is an important part of the context for this study, and therefore the roles of Save the Children and its partner CESESMA will be briefly explained here, before going on to describe the Safe Quality Schools programme itself.

Save the Children Nicaragua, the Nicaraguan affiliate of the International Save the Children Alliance, was formed in 2008, when national offices of Save the Children Norway, Save the Children Canada and Save the Children USA merged under a new local management system (Save the Children Sweden had left Nicaragua a few years previously, and Save the Children UK and Ireland had never had a presence on the ground in Nicaragua). One of the main programmes that Save the Children Nicaragua inherited was an Education Programme, which, in general terms, sought

to apply a rights-based focus to improving access to, and the quality of, education for the poorest, most marginalised and vulnerable of Nicaragua's children (Save the Children Nicaragua, 2008).

On the basis of previous research, Save the Children identified the northern coffee-growing zone as one of the areas where the right to education was most fragile, largely due to the influence of the coffee industry and its demand for child labour as discussed above. Working with local partner organisations CESESMA (based in San Ramón) and La Cuculmeca (based in Jinotega), they developed the 'Safe, Quality Schools' project, focusing on five of the poorest and educationally least well-served of the coffee-growing districts (Save the Children Nicaragua, 2008).

CESESMA is an independent non-governmental organisation working with children and adolescents in this region. It was founded in 1992 as an environmental education action group, and incorporated as a not-for-profit voluntary organisation in 1998. The organisation's full name is *'Centro de Servicios Educativos en Salud y Medio Ambiente'* (Centre for Education in Health and Environment), but since the adoption of its first Strategic Plan in 2004, the organisation has taken on a broader children's-rights-based agenda, so the full title is seldom used, and it is more commonly known simply by its initials followed by the slogan *'Promoción y defensa de los derechos de la niñez'* (Promotion and defense of children's rights). CESESMA has a full-time staff of around 30, all but two of whom are Nicaraguans. Most of these are local people, and a growing number were themselves adolescent community education volunteers (*promotores/as*), who developed knowledge and skills through voluntary participation in activities with CESESMA over a number of years, before being offered paid employment as community education workers (Shier, 2010b[24]; Wheeler, 2010).

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[24] The original Spanish version of this paper (Shier, 2008b) is more detailed and includes life-stories of adolescents who were involved in this process, which were cut from the published English version.

CESESMA's mission statement is "To contribute to the promotion and defence of the rights of children and adolescents through processes of educational empowerment in families, schools and rural communities in partnership with children, adolescents and other social actors" (CESESMA, 2014, p. 6). CESESMA has also adopted a statement of shared vision which is of: "Children and adolescents and their families living in safe environments, with equality, equity and respect; with opportunities for an integrated education, able to organise and advocate proactively *(incidir con protagonismo)* to promote and defend their rights and contribute to the development of their communities" (CESESMA, 2014, p. 6). Important elements here are that CESESMA proposes to work 'in partnership with' children and adolescents, rather than for them or on their behalf; and that the young people are considered 'able to organise and advocate proactively'. If they are not already doing this, this vision implies a belief that they have the potential to do so, given a facilitative and supportive environment.

8. Safe, Quality Schools

The 'Safe, Quality Schools' project had the overall aim to "Contribute to the realisation of children and adolescents' rights with emphasis on the rights to quality education, to live without violence, and to participate" (Castillo Zamora, 2013, p. 2). The specific objectives were: (1) To improve the quality of education by promoting the active role of children and adolescents in school, improving access and retention of students; (2) To promote relationships based on positive human relations *(afectividad)*, equality and respect toward children and adolescents in school; (3) To promote the participation of children and adolescents and other stakeholders in the community in order to generate capacity and encourage collective action in defense of children's rights; and (4) To develop capacity in local organisations for promotion of social change (Castillo Zamora, 2013, p. 3).

The project identified just over 4,000 children as directly involved, with an additional 35,000 as indirect beneficiaries, and – as a long-term goal – the potential to influence national education policies. A notable aspect of this project is that it recognises children not only as consumers of education (or, in NGO language, 'beneficiaries'), but as researchers, advocates, and change agents, organising to influence the educational system in which they are the central actors. This marked a

significant challenge to prevailing approaches to educational development in this region (Save the Children, 2008).

In 2012, about 5 years into the project, the team that worked on it met to review its progress and reflect on what had been achieved, which led to a published account of the project incorporating these deliberations (Shier et al., 2013). This paper identified the following as the main achievements at that time (the following indented text is taken verbatim from Shier and colleagues' paper, pp. 195-196).

> *Children's reading network:* Children became volunteer reading promoters orga-nising storytelling sessions and sharing story books to encourage reading for pleasure, in contrast to the way reading was treated as no more than a taxing chore in the typical classroom.

> *Parents' groups undertaking school mapping:* School mapping is an established method of identifying those features that affect access to education in a community or neighborhood, and in this case it was found to be useful in identifying why some children were not attending school, and involving the community in looking for ways to overcome the barriers.

> *Alternative crafts, media, and vocational workshops:* These included carpentry, dressmaking, organic food-growing courses, arts and crafts workshops, children's theatre groups, and a children's radio project.

> *Work with student councils:* Nicaragua's 2002 Law of Educational Participation provides for every school – primary and secondary – to have an elected student council with the right to be consulted on decisions affecting the students. However, many of these were said to be ineffective, as they were dominated and manipulated by school heads and thus were relegated to token status. Workshops were conducted for student council members to help them assert themselves in decision making, particularly in relation to claiming rights on behalf of the students they represented.

> …

> [The paper notes here that this work with student councils was complicated by the growing imposition of the governing FSLN party's new student-union

model, which tended to sideline the established student councils, as described above in the section on Education Policy.]

Girls groups and 'reconstructing masculinity' groups with boys and young men: Working with girls was a well-established area in CESESMA, seen as vital in working toward gender equality in a male-dominated society and realising girls' and young women's right to live without violence or discrimination. The parallel work with boys and young men was a more recent initiative, helping them to recognise that being a real man does not need to involve subjugation of or violence towards women and girls.

Children and adolescents' participation in local and national policy initiatives: This included lobbying for increased investment in children and youth in local council budgets, a national campaign for investment in education, a national youth campaign against sexism, and participation in the National Movement Against Sexual Abuse.

Children as researchers and consultants: Children researched the state of environmental education in their schools and communities and made recommendations to improve this. Another group was involved in writing and designing a child-friendly version of the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child's recommendations to the government of Nicaragua (CODENI, 2012). In 2012, three children's advisory groups were elected to advise CESESMA on program and policy development, with a special emphasis on monitoring and evaluation. Also in 2012, teams of young researchers were formed to investigate perceptions of, and attitudes toward, child workers in their communities as part of an international Save the Children program aimed at reducing economic exploitation of child workers.

Child protection policies: One area in which children had significant policy influence was the development of child protection policies in local schools. Though it may seem surprising from a northern perspective, child protection had not previously been recognised as an issue in Nicaraguan schools. In this project, instead of the usual top-down process, child protection policies were developed in a participatory way from the bottom up. Children worked in teams to identify

the risks they felt they were exposed to – both at school and travelling to and from school – and to propose changes in conditions, practices, attitudes, and abilities that would help safeguard them from these risks. Groups of parents and teachers carried out similar analyses. Next, smaller working groups involving students, parents, and teachers met to synthesise their findings and develop draft policy guidelines. Finally, there were meetings among teachers, parents, and students to review and adopt the policies.

[The paper notes that this was to be followed by an implementation phase, with children and adolescents also taking a leading role in monitoring and evaluation.]

9. The four communities featured in this study and their schools

As part of the ongoing 'Safe Quality Schools' programme, in 2012 CESESMA supported the formation of teams of child and adolescent researchers (aged 9-17) in twelve communities covered by the programme to carry out a community appraisal *('diagnóstico comunitario')* in each one. Each team produced a final report which they called a *'caracterización'* of the community, meaning a general description. These were not published, but the reports relating to the four communities involved in the present study were made available by CESESMA for this project.[25]

In their reports the young researcher teams describe their methodology, which consisted of a transect walk[26], followed by a period of reflection leading to the

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[25] A few of the young researchers from these four teams went on to become researchers in the present investigation (by chance, one from each community, though this was not planned). The present author contributed to the methodology for this work, but was not involved in the facilitation. Although important sources of contextual information, the children's reports are not included in the reference list as this would negate the decision to use pseudonyms for the four communities.

[26] *Transect walk* is a Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) technique where local people lead an appraisal team on a walk around their community pointing out key features, identifying problems and areas of concern, then return to a base where they discuss and reflect on what has been seen. It has been adapted for use by children (ARC, 2009, Module

development of a survey instrument, and finally a complete census of every house in the community to gather data on the inhabitants (70-113 houses). They compiled their data into reports which also included concluding observations and recommendations. The following description draws on these reports. In some cases differences between the communities are mentioned, but unless stated otherwise the following is based on aggregating the data from the four communities.

The four communities are in the heart of the north-central Nicaraguan coffee-growing zone; about 13° north of the equator and 600-700 metres above sea level, in the municipality of Tuma-La Dalia, between 20 and 30 kilometres from the administrative centre and market town of La Dalia (see map in Appendix 1 and photographs in Appendix 2). It is a mountainous area, partly forested and partly cleared for farming, where the climate is ideal for the production of high-quality shade-grown Arabica coffee. Land ownership is fairly evenly divided between large to medium-sized coffee plantations and family-owned smallholdings or 'parcelas' (see discussion of the coffee industry earlier in this chapter). In all four villages, economic activity was heavily dominated by coffee production. In two communities (El Ayote and Las Brisas) coffee-growing on family holdings predominated, and in the other two (El Colibrí and Darío) most people depended on paid employment on the plantations.[27] There was some cultivation of other crops including the local staples of maize and beans, and fruit and vegetables, some of which were consumed, and some sold in local markets. There was also a little livestock rearing, mainly cows, pigs and farmyard chickens. The survey reports do not mention any other kinds of employment (in these communities it is common for teachers and other professionals to live elsewhere and come to the communities only to do their job, so, as non-residents, such people would not have been included).

4; Lansdown and O'Kane, 2014, Booklet 4, p. 12), and the version used here was further modified by CESESMA.

[27] These pseudonyms for the four communities/schools will be used throughout this report.

Although it is still common in Nicaragua for large coffee plantations to be organised on almost feudal lines, with families living in houses owned by the plantation owner, and thus dependent on the plantation for shelter as well as work and sustenance, this was not the case in any of the communities researched. Although the villages were surrounded by coffee plantations and heavily dependent on them, most families (81%) owned their own homes.

The village populations varied from 556, living in 113 houses (El Ayote) to 398 in 73 houses (El Colibrí), with an average of 5 people per household (given the high levels of migration experienced in rural Nicaragua, it is likely that many people had left the communities, but this was outside the scope of the young researchers' surveys). Of the total population of the four villages (2,036), 37% were aged 0-13, 14% aged 14-18 and 49% aged 19 and over.

The survey includes data on the construction of houses in each village. Most were made of wooden boards (69%), with only 20% having concrete or brick walls, and the rest made of earth (using wattle-and-daub construction) or plastic sheeting. Roofs were mainly of corrugated iron sheeting (81%) or plastic sheeting. Only 15% of houses had concrete or tiled floors, the rest being of bare earth (see photograph in Appendix 2). Only 66% of homes had piped water, 46% had mains electricity, and only 57% had latrines (outside toilets, usually consisting of a concrete seat over a large hole in the ground contained in a small galvanised iron enclosure).

Although the young researchers collected data on educational levels, in their reports they did not separate these by age ranges, so without access to the original data, the usefulness of this is limited.[28] The data do show, however, that only 14% of the surveyed population had completed secondary school (which in Nicaragua is 5 years). Also, of the total population of just over 2,000, 9 people had a technical qualification and 21 had been to university. Although this is just 1% of the

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[28] There may be a lesson here about the need for appropriate capacity-building for young researchers who are involved in collecting and analysing statistical data.

population, it can be considered quite an achievement for this area. However the data do not allow for any explanation (e.g. could CESESMA's work in the area have been a contributing factor?). The data do not reveal how many children of school age were not attending school, which would have been one of the most useful statistics to know.

The village school at El Ayote includes a secondary department which acts as a nucleus for the district; that is, children from the surrounding villages who want to continue with post-primary education have to travel to El Ayote, a distance of 3 to 6 kilometres from the other three villages. It is worth noting that until recently there were no secondary schools in rural communities in Nicaragua, and the Ministry of Education's programme of establishing such schools, though still in its early stages, is gradually making secondary education a realistic possibility for many rural children, which was not the case for their parents' generation. As well as regular primary classes, the schools at El Ayote and Darío offer a catch-up programme for adolescents, so that those who have failed to complete their primary education (often due to working on the coffee plantations) can make up what they missed and prepare for secondary school. The El Ayote school also offers a week-end secondary school for adolescents who are already in work during the week. As explained earlier in this chapter, these initiatives are seen by the government as part of a drive to restore to children and adolescents the right to education that was denied them by previous governments.

In their reports the young researchers also comment on health services in their communities. As with the education service, El Ayote acts as a nucleus for the surrounding area and has a health centre which serves 13 neighbouring communities. It has one permanent community nurse and a visiting doctor. The El Ayote young researchers interviewed the community nurse, who told them that the priority issues were pregnancy and childbirth (with a high percentage of adolescent pregnancies), respiratory infections, accidents and emergencies. The centre also deals with a regular vaccination programme and family planning, and is in contact with two disabled children who do not attend school.

In their concluding observations, the four teams list the main areas of concern that they see as priorities for the development of their communities, and these are summarised in Box 9.

Issues of concern to the young researchers in four community appraisal reports

Education-related

- The village is surrounded by large coffee plantations. Children attend school but then go to work on the coffee harvest and fail to complete the school year.

- Not enough schoolrooms for the school population.

- School has no kitchen to prepare food for students (referring to government-sponsored morning snack).

- No internet café (for children to access internet for school work).

- No sports pitch or playing field.

Other

- Many houses without running water, electricity and/or toilets.

- No health centre (in Las Brisas, El Colibrí or Darío).

- No police post; no police presence.

- Road in poor condition (in the case of El Ayote, access via a narrow, dangerous bridge).

- No community centre *(casa communal)* for community activities.

- No secure waste dump.

Box 9: Issues of concern to young researchers in four community appraisal reports
(Source: Unpublished reports provided by CESESMA)

10. Conclusion

All social research takes place in a social context, which affects the social actors involved in different ways. This context affects both those who inhabit it: who have grown up in a place and been moulded by it in different ways; and those who enter it from outside and confront its differentness – often the researcher him- or herself. In the case of the present author, it was a mixture of both; having been partially 're-moulded' by eleven years of life in Nicaragua's coffee zone, but at the same time seeing Nicaragua through an outsider's eyes and seeking to explain its 'otherness' to myself and others.

The preceding discussion has covered many aspects of the context that affect how Nicaraguan children experience their education, and provide the elements that enable them to make meaning of it. Some of the factors described: colonialism, dictatorship, revolution, war, poverty, structural adjustment and the prevalence of child labour, are by no means unique to Nicaragua but have occurred throughout much of the world. However, in every country, they interact with what is particularly local to produce a unique historical trajectory that leads to a unique present; a process of which Nicaragua is a perfect example.

At national level, the evolution of the Frente Sandinista from a revolutionary guerrilla movement to a victorious radical Marxist government, then through years of opposition and resistance to return as today's moderate-leftist Catholic-socialist government, with its vision of itself as the restorer to children of the human rights that its predecessors had taken away from them, is a uniquely Nicaraguan story, and as such determines much of the policy and practice in Nicaragua's schools, and thus the children's experience.

At a more local level, the *Safe Quality Schools* programme, operating as a partnership between Save the Children, the Ministry of Education and local NGO CESESMA, with its distinctive rights-based programme for local schools, has few if any close equivalents – at least none that have been found in either the English or Spanish HRE literature.

As the context for a research project, this distinctiveness cuts both ways. It makes for an interesting study, but at the same time, it warns us to question the transferability of the findings to any other context. The following chapter, then, will describe the methodology of the study, and, in doing so, show why the findings are relevant and useful beyond its unique educational context.

Chapter 4: Research methods

1. Introduction

This chapter describes the research methodology and the methods used in this study. The methodological approach used, known as *'Transformative Research by Children and Adolescents'*, derives from an approach to working with child researchers which was developed by the present author in collaboration with many colleagues, starting in 1997 first in the UK and later in Nicaragua, through a continuous process of practice, evaluation, reflection, reengineering and modified practice. The origins, development and basic principles of the approach are described in Shier (2015) and a summary of these is provided in Appendix 6.

The chapter is in nine sections. After this introduction, Section 2 outlines the Transformative Paradigm, chosen to reflect the world-view underpinning the research with regard to ontology, epistemology and axiology. Section 3 considers the methodological approach used in the research. In particular it seeks to situate *'Transformative Research by Children and Adolescents'* in relation to other established approaches in social research. Three of these are considered particularly relevant: action research; children as researchers; and child-rights based research, so each of these is further discussed and its relation to the present research explored. The last part of Section 3 sums up the reasons why this particular methodology was chosen.

Section 4 discusses this study as an example of 'cross-language research', meaning research where data are collected in one language and findings presented in another. It considers some of the translation issues inherent in cross-language research and the options available to the researcher. It looks particularly at the case

of the bilingual researcher, and, from this position, explains why it was decided not to translate the data, and the implications of this decision

Sections 5 and 6 describe the methods used in fieldwork and data analysis respectively. Section 7 summarises the steps that were taken to ensure the trustworthiness of the findings and section 8 is a discussion of ethical aspects of the research and some of the issues arising. Section 9 is a brief conclusion and summary. An extensive post hoc reflection on, and critique of, the methods used, will be developed separately in Chapter 7.

2. The Transformative Paradigm

Although the methodology used was an approach that had evolved through fieldwork practice and was not founded on any established research paradigm, identifying a paradigm for it was a useful exercise, as it brought into focus the assumptions inherent in the underlying 'world view', which would otherwise remain behind a veil, unacknowledged and undefined (Creswell, 2003). On reviewing the social research paradigms prevalent in the literature, Donna Mertens' *Transformative Paradigm* was found to be particularly useful in providing a framework for critical reflection on, and ultimately validation of the approach used (Mertens, 2009). However, the 'Transformative Paradigm' label is not universally accepted, so it is worth considering what it is, and where it sits in relation to the different paradigm schemes proposed by other scholars. In developing the concept, Mertens drew on two earlier proposals. First, in 1992, Patti Lather adapted Habermas's three categories of human interests to name four approaches to generating and legitimating knowledge: 'Predict', 'Understand', 'Emancipate', and the non-Habermasian 'Deconstruct'; and showed how these labels could be used as categories for grouping and comparing the many research paradigms around at the time (Lather, 1992). Second, in 1994, Guba and Lincoln offered a new scheme of four research paradigms: Positivism, Postpositivism, Constructivism, and 'Critical theory et al' (Guba and Lincoln, 1994). Also influential was Creswell's four-category scheme, which subsumed Positivism into Postpositivism, kept Constructivism, and added Advocacy/participatory and also Pragmatism (Creswell, 2003; see also Heron and Reason, 1997, on the Participatory Paradigm, and Morgan, 2014, on the Pragmatic Paradigm). In the first formulation of her own four-category scheme

in 1998, Mertens followed Lather in using the label 'Emancipatory' for her third category (preceded by Postpositive and Constructivist, and followed by Pragmatic). As she explains, however:

> In 2005, I changed the name of the emancipatory paradigm to transformative because of a desire to emphasize the agency role for the people involved in the research. Rather than being emancipated, we work together for personal and social transformation. (Mertens, 2009, p. 2)

Following Lincoln et al. (2011) on the four sets of basic beliefs that make up a paradigm, Mertens' characterisation of the Transformative Paradigm is shown in Box 10.

Beliefs of the Transformative Paradigm

Axiology: Ethical considerations include respect for cultural norms of interaction; beneficence is defined in terms of the promotion of human rights and increase in social justice.

Ontology: Rejects cultural relativism and recognizes influence of privilege in sensing what is real and consequences of accepting versions of reality. Multiple realities are shaped by social, political, cultural, economic, ethnic, gender, disability and other values.

Epistemology: Recognises an interactive link between researcher/evaluator and participants/co-researchers/evaluators; knowledge is socially and historically situated; issues of power and privilege are explicitly addressed; development of a trusting relationship is critical.

Methodology: Inclusion of qualitative methods (dialogic) are critical; quantitative and mixed methods can be used; interactive link between the researcher/ evaluator and participants in the definition of the focus and questions; methods would be adjusted to accommodate cultural complexity; power issues would be explicitly addressed; and contextual and historic factors are acknowledged, especially as they relate to discrimination and oppression.

Box 10: Beliefs of the transformative paradigm (from Mertens, 2010, p. 11)

Although *Transformative Research by Children and Adolescents* came into existence without explicit reference to this or any other research paradigm, there is a good fit, which goes beyond the convenient synchronicity of names. The sets of beliefs suit the researcher's world-view (see the discussion on researcher identity in

Chapter 1), and the value-system of the host organisation in Nicaragua, CESESMA (Chapter 3). In particular, Mertens has stressed on different occasions that the Transformative Paradigm is "rooted in a human rights agenda" (e.g. Mertens, 2009, p. 12).

Although Mertens chose the label 'Transformative' for this paradigm as a substitute for 'Emancipatory', she does not write much about the concept of transformation; either what it signifies or how it occurs. The concept is, however, common in organisational theory, where it is used to suggest that something changes into something new or different – as opposed to just a bigger or better version of what it was before (the transformation of a caterpillar into a butterfly is a common example), and there is often the implication that a transformation is more likely to be permanent, or at least harder to reverse, than a normal change (Appelbaum and Wohl, 2000; Daszko el al., 2005). In development studies, transformative participation, or 'participation as empowerment', which is seen as transforming both people's reality and their sense of it (White, 1996), has been contrasted with oppressive, even tyrannical styles of top-down or instrumental participation (Hickey and Mohan, 2004; Kesby, 2005). Recently, Tisdall (2013) and Teamey and Hinton (2014) have speculated about possible linkages between children's participation and transformative processes in society.

'Transformation' is also central to the theory of 'transformative learning', where it implies that an individual is able, not just to acquire new knowledge, but to change the frame of reference that they habitually use to understand the world (Mezirow, 1997). As propounded by Mezirow and his followers, however, this is exclusively a theory of *adult* learning, where children are categorically excluded (Mezirow, 1990). Freire's pedagogy of the oppressed is also seen as generating transformation, and has been interpreted more flexibly (Freire, 1970; Tibbetts, 2005).[29]

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[29] 'Transformative learning' has also been discussed in Chapter 2 as a concept in the literature on Human Rights Education.

CESESMA, on the other hand, has started to develop a framework for describing how children can bring about transformations through their engagement in research. Based on experience of supporting and facilitating children as researchers, CESESMA has proposed that this approach can produce four distinct kinds of transformations: (1) Becoming a researcher has an empowering effect on children involved (also stated by Kellett [2010b] as one of the main benefits of engaging with children as researchers); (2) Changes in attitudes of those around them, particularly parents, teachers and community leaders; (3) The shared learning experience also changes attitudes and practices of adult facilitators/supporters; and (4) There is the possibility of achieving social change through follow-up advocacy or campaigning on the issues researched (CESESMA, 2012a, p. 52; Shier, 2015, pp. 213-215). Although CESESMA has collected evidence of these transform-ations, to date this is mainly anecdotal, so CESESMA's formulation of the 'Four Transformations' can best be seen as an appealing conceptual framework in search of further empirical validation. *Transformative Research by Children and Adoles-cents*, therefore, not only fits the Transformative Paradigm, but has the potential to advance its conceptualisation.

Although the Transformative Paradigm offers an excellent fit, *Transformative Research by Children and Adolescents* has aspects that lean towards other paradigms. If Lincoln and colleagues' paradigm-choice scheme were followed instead of Mertens', it could be aligned with either the Critical Theory or the Participatory paradigms (Lincoln et al., 2011). It also has much that it can share with the Interpretative and Constructivist world-views, and seeks to maintain dialog with these too (Greig et al., 2007; Hatch, 1995).

3. The methodological approach

Whilst a paradigm guides selection of methodology, it does not prescribe it. As mentioned earlier, *Transformative Research by Children and Adolescents* was not developed with reference to any established paradigm or methodological approach. However it does have close correspondences with a number of methodological approaches described in the literature, all of which can be accommodated within the Transformative Paradigm as consonant with Mertens' guidance on appropriate methodology cited in Box 10 above. This can be summarised in the following five

points: (1) primacy of qualitative methods; (2) interactive link between researcher and participants; (3) accommodating cultural complexity; (4) explicitly addressing power issues; and (5) acknowledging contextual and historical factors linked to discrimination and oppression (Mertens, 2010, p. 11). Three of these approaches are considered particularly relevant: action research; children as researchers; and child-rights based research, so each of these will now be discussed and its link to the present research explained.

Action research

'Action Research' is an umbrella label for a loosely-related extended family of approaches which share a number of family characteristics. Reason and Bradbury (2001) identify five of these, suggesting that all action research:

> Responds to people's practical and often pressing issues in their lives in organizations and communities;

> engages with people in collaborative relationships, opening new 'communicative spaces' in which dialogue and development can flourish;

> draws on many ways of knowing, both in the evidence that is generated in inquiry and its expression in diverse forms of presentation as we speak to wider audiences;

> is strongly value oriented, seeking to address issues of significance concerning the flourishing of human persons, their communities, and the wider ecology in which we participate;

> is a living, emergent process that cannot be pre-determined but changes and develops as those engaged deepen their understanding of the issues to be addressed, and develop their capacity as co-inquirers both individually and collectively. (p. xxii)

The work of the team of young researchers that will be described below shows all these characteristics, although it was not designed according to any particular template for action research in the literature. It does not, for example fit the classic cyclical model first proposed by Lewin (1946) or the more recent 'Critical

Participatory Action Research' model of McTaggart and Kemmis (1988), though it takes much from both.[30]

It is not unusual for NGOs working with marginalised or disadvantaged groups (with or without a rights-based orientation) to provide opportunities for members of these groups to undertake research, the findings of which may be significant in generating action to improve their conditions of life. Although many of these local research projects are not written up in the academic literature, a good number have been (Bradbury, 2015; Noffke and Somekh, 2009). Though most of these action research projects were carried out by adults, much of the research done by children and adolescents around the world, including the present study, fits this action research category. CESESMA as an organisation has always accepted the label 'Action Research' *(Investigación Acción)* for its work with children as researchers. Furthermore, in Latin America the established tradition of 'popular education' *(educación popular)*, which recognises and values local and traditional knowledge, meshes easily with the action research approach (Brydon-Miller et al., 2009). In the case of the present study, for example, the CESESMA team's grounding in popular education concepts and methods meant that the idea of children becoming researchers could be accommodated as an extension of existing educational practices, rather than a foreign novelty.

To use action research concepts in a project such as the present one, however, is not without challenges. In a much-cited book on action research in education, Carr and Kemmis (1986) state that, "There are two essential aims of all action research: to *improve* and to *involve"*, and that these two aims stand shoulder to shoulder (p. 165, original emphasis). In doctoral research, by contrast, while improvement and involvement are not unwelcome outcomes, the essential purpose is neither of these, but the generation of new knowledge. Hammersley's (2004) critique of action research as a contradiction in terms is relevant here. He suggests that in any such project, the primary goal must either be the research (knowledge generation), which

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[30] This point is revisited in the critical commentary in Chapter 7.

may then inform social action, or the social action component, which may or may not make use of research. Trying to bring them together as equals leads to contradiction.

A concept related to, but distinct from, action research is that of 'engaged scholarship' or the 'engaged researcher', although again this is a loosely defined and open-ended concept, and the nature of the proposed 'engagement' of the researcher with the research subjects and their problems is open to various interpretations (Edwards, 2002; Van de Ven, 2007; Whitmer et al., 2010). Whilst researcher engagement is a central feature of much action research, it can equally occur in other types of research; that is, a researcher can study a problem using an approach that falls outside the action research category, but still engage responsibly with the researched community to help them use the findings to improve their lives. And of course there are many ways that research can be used to improve people's lives without such direct engagement.

Children as researchers [31]

This topic was briefly introduced in chapter 2, which presented both Christensen and Prout's (2002) four ways of seeing children in research literature: as object, as subject, as social actor and as participant researcher; and Kellett's slightly different disctinction between research *on, about, with* and *by* children. It was noted that the present study is committed to the "research *by* children" approach. Here, then, it is appropriate to explore further the literature relating to children as researchers and the theoretical and practical complexities that this approach gives rise to.

Alderson (2008) identified three broad ways in which children assume the role of researcher. The first is at school, where doing research projects is now commonly part of the curriculum (Spalding, 2011). Here the emphasis is usually on what the children themselves learn from the process, rather than publishing the findings or

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[31] Much of the text of this section was subsequently used in a journal article in *Global Studies of Childhood* (Shier, 2015). However, this is the original, not a copy.

using them to advocate for change. The second way is when children participate in adult-run research projects, where it is increasingly common for them to be offered roles as 'co-researchers'. What this actually means, and the amount of decision-making power devolved to children, varies from project to project. However, Alderson (2008) says that "besides providing data in their traditional role as research subjects, increasingly, children help to plan questions, collect, analyse or report evidence, and publicise the findings" (p. 279).

The third way for children to become researchers is in research projects which are mainly initiated and directed by children themselves. This approach does not lend itself to the constraints of academic, university-based research (though there are exceptions), so most of this type of research is facilitated by adults working in the NGO sector. Whilst a search of the academic literature suggests a paucity of such research by children, there are many examples to be found in the practitioner-orientated and campaigning literature (Funky Dragon, 2011; GRFG Drafting Committee, 2008) and on NGO websites. A review carried out for the Scottish Executive in 2005 discovered:

> a raft of small, often one-off projects involving children and young people as researchers in the UK. These are usually funded by voluntary agencies or local authorities and are focused on issues relevant to national or local policy such as young people's health or housing needs. (Brownlie et al., 2006, p. 12)

The term 'child-led research' is sometimes used to describe this kind of work (Kellett, 2012; Save the Children, 2010). However this can be misleading where the nature and degree of leadership exercised by children, adolescents and adults respectively, and their relations to each other in the research processes, are not problematised (Kim, 2015). What may be described as an adult 'facilitator' role is usually a powerful one, involving a degree of leadership in relation to the children's research project that is obscured by the 'child-led' label. For this reason the terms 'children as researchers', or 'research by children' are preferred here, allowing for various blends of child and adult leadership.

Another of Alderson's (2008) observations is that, "Young researchers are usually keen to produce findings that will achieve changes in, for example, provision of

services, and respect for their rights. They therefore often emphasise the follow-up stages of disseminating and implementing the findings" (p. 278); an issue linked to the ideas about action research and engaged scholarship discussed above. Alderson contrasts this with university research which tends to concentrate on collecting and analysing data and writing reports. She considers a lack of funding for the follow-up work that turns research into social action to be one of the barriers to children's participation in research.

A major issue in the literature on child researchers is what Brownlie and colleagues (2006) refer to as the 'participation versus rigor' debate (p. 13). Dyson and Meagher (2001) describe the problem thus:

> The research process has inherent within it certain quality demands which some (perhaps many) young people find difficult to meet. The more fully they are involved in research, therefore, the less likely it is that the research will meet those demands adequately. (p. 65)

The barriers that this raises, particularly where children are involved in data analysis, are described by Coad and Evans (2008) who speak of "the resistance from academic institutions, sponsors, policy-makers and professional researchers working in conventional research paradigms to more participatory approaches" (p50).

In a similar vein, comparing UK experience with examples from elsewhere, Alderson (2008) concludes that, "Child researchers tend to be more adventurously involved in poor and war-torn countries", and suggests that this may be because, "Limitations on child researchers lie not in their incompetence, but in adult attitudes and constraints imposed (concern for protection above participation)" (p. 288). CESESMA's work with child researchers in Nicaragua would seem to support this conclusion.

In response to this, some adult supporters focus on providing specialised training and preparation for child researchers (Kellett, 2005), and others on giving children advisory rather than leading roles (Casas et al., 2013; Lundy and McEvoy, 2012b). Whilst the widely supported view that "Children are experts in their own lives" (Mason and Danby, 2011) suggests that they are therefore already well-qualified to

engage in research related to their daily lives, Kim (2015) puts the counter-argument that being an expert in one's own life does not qualify one to do competent research on anyone else's life. Uprichard (2010), however, urges that, "It is equally important to involve children in research that goes beyond childhood" (p. 3), because, "Including children in more general social research… will re-describe children as agents that are even more powerful than they have so far been constructed through research practice" (p. 11).

A more radical response is to re-think the nature of research. Adele Jones (2004), for example, sees children's engagement in research as profoundly political and suggests that:

> In scrutinising taken-for-granted assumptions about children and in exploring ideas about how to negotiate their role in research, questions about rights, constructions of childhood and the ways in which children's involvement in research may result in their politicisation are brought to the fore. (p. 115)

Having trained and supported children as researchers for over ten years (see Smith and Greene, 2014, pp. 139-148), Mary Kellett has identified four main reasons for espousing and promoting the 'research *by* children' approach (Kellett, 2010b, p. 197). All four are relevant factors in proposing a children-as-researchers methodology for the present study, so will be considered in turn.

(1) *When researching children's experiences and opinions, child researchers can get answers from child subjects that adults would not get:* "They have …immediate access to a peer culture where adults are outsiders" (Kellett, 2010a, p. 8). This is particularly important in schools, were the power adults have over children is likely to limit how freely children feel they can talk about their experiences, especially if those experiences involve conflict with their teachers. Although some researchers seek to adopt a 'least adult' role in studying children (Epstein, 1998; Mandell, 1988; Randall, 2012), it is unlikely that they can completely disengage from the adult-child power dynamic of their situation. Child-to-child interviewing removes this dynamic – not perfectly, but to a large extent – as children sense themselves in a different place in relation to their interviewer, which opens the possibility of different answers, and of sharing different information. This is not to say that the

information gathered by child researchers will always be better than that gathered by adults, but it will usually be different, and this can make a significant contribution to research outcomes (Kellett, 2011).

(2) The work of child researchers adds to the body of knowledge about children's experiences from a genuine child perspective: Children are likely to see problems differently from adult researchers, so including their perspectives in social research can add to existing knowledge on almost any topic. For Kellett (20210a), "Research by children offers a nuanced insider perspective of a relatively powerless minority group" (p. 104). This benefit is highlighted when child researchers are engaged in all stages of the research, such as deciding (or advising on) what questions to ask, and interpreting findings in order to formulate conclusions.

(3) *Dissemination of research carried out by children and, crucially, owned by them contributes to strengthening children's voice in society:* This works whether dissemination is done by the child researchers themselves, or by adults acting on their behalf. Face-to-face advocacy and dissemination events led by children themselves can be very effective (such as, in the present study, the young researchers' presentation of their report to the international Save the Children leadership: see below), but so can getting children's research reports published and using the appropriate media to draw people's attention to them; a job often – though not necessarily – left to adults (such as the publication of the young researchers' report in the Mexican *Rayuela* journal: see below).

(4) The experience of participating as active researchers is empowering: The anecdotal evidence for this claim is plentiful and credible (CESESMA, 2012a, 2013; Young Consultants of Santa Martha, 2009, 2011). CESESMA has many other examples, as do Mary Kellett and her colleagues in England and many NGOs around the world. Indeed, the empowerment effect on participants need not be seen as just a side-effect of research; Lather (1986) argues that such empowerment is a key factor to be taken into account is assessing the value and validity of social research (described as 'catalytic validity'). However, if empowerment is to be claimed as an outcome of children doing research and one of the principal benefits, a challenge for the future is to find a convincing way to demonstrate and record such empowerment (Kim, 2015; Shier, 2015).

Although the connection may not be explicitly recognised, it is worth noting that much research by children and adolescents resonates with aspects of the *grounded theory* approach. Child researchers rarely do literature reviews, so their research is not preceded by the espousal of a particular theoretical perspective. As grounded theory proposes, they seek explanations for what they discover based on their own interpretation of the reality revealed in their data. Child researchers, however, will rarely follow the elaborate analytical procedures required by Glaser and Strauss's (1967) classic version of grounded theory, and the way they analyse data may be closer to Kathy Charmaz's (2008b) "inductive, indeterminate, and open-ended" constructionist revision of it (p. 155).

Finally there is the extensive literature on the ethics of involving children in research. Though this focuses mainly on children as subjects of adult-run research, Alderson and Morrow's (2011) handbook on the subject also discusses ethical issues in involving children as researchers, including the recruitment and selection of child researchers, questions of payment and rewards (especially where volunteer child researchers work alongside paid adult researchers), and the problem of raising expectations that research will be taken seriously by decision-makers which are subsequently frustrated (pp. 55-57). The ethical aspects of the present study are discussed in more detail towards the end of this chapter, after the description of the methods used.

Child-rights based research

A third methodological approach that this project aspires to is that of 'Children's-Rights-Based Research'. There are two main strands of writing about rights-based approaches to research with children: The 'Right to be properly researched', associated with Judith Ennew and colleagues, and the child-rights-based approach developed by Lundy and McEvoy. Although these are closely related, because of

their distinct origins, conceptual bases and emphases, it is worth considering them separately. [32]

The phrase 'the right to be properly researched' appears in Ennew's publications from 2004, but Ennew herself has said she started to develop the approach in Jamaica in 1979 (Smith and Greene, 2014, p. 81). Although it thus predates the CRC, Beazley el al. (2011) mention CRC-inspired international advocacy of children's participation rights as one of the factors that influenced its subsequent development, together with the advent of the new sociology of childhood, and a growing interest in children in the field of human geography. However they go on to suggest that these developments alone were insufficient, and that:

> The impetus for the development of rights-based research with children was the submission of the first reports to the CRC Committee in 1992, and the Committee's realisation that available data, particularly information that fell outside the conventional health-education-psychology-demography nexus, were insufficient for monitoring the CRC. (Beazley et al., 2011, p. 160)

Thus by 2004 the 'Right to be Properly Researched' was established as both a *vision* for rights-based research with children (Beazley et al., 2004), and a step by step how-to-do-it manual (Ennew and Plateau, 2004). By 2009, this had become a boxed set of ten manuals (Ennew et al., 2009).

Proponents of this approach do not claim that 'The right to be properly researched' is itself a legal right, but use this expression as a convenient shorthand to describe how an aggregation of rights in the CRC determine how children must be treated by researchers, focusing in particular on Articles 3.3, 12, 13 and 36, as set out by Ennew and Plateau in Table 1 below:

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[32] Tara Collins (2012) has written about child-rights based research independently of these two strands, and there are probably others, but most references in the literature relate to one or other of these two approaches.

The right to be properly researched	
Article	*What it means for research*
Article 3.3. 'States Parties shall ensure that the institutions, services and facilities responsible for the care or protection of children shall conform with the standards established by competent authorities, particularly in the areas of safety, health, the numbers and suitability of their staff, as well as competent supervision'.	Research must conform to the highest possible scientific standards. Researchers must be carefully recruited and supervised.
Article 12 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, the views of the child being given due weight in accordance with the age and maturity of the child'.	Children's perspectives and opinions must be integral to research.
Article 13 1. 'The child shall have the right to freedom of expression; this right shall include 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'.	Methods need to be found, and used, to help children to express their perspectives and opinions freely in research.
Article 36 protects children against 'all…forms of exploitation prejudicial to any aspects of the child's welfare".	Children must not be harmed or exploited through taking part in research.

Table 1: The right to be properly researched (Ennew and Plateau, 2004, p. 29)

The approach to research with children that is inferred from the combination of these articles is described as having five key characteristics: It is respectful of children as partners in research (i.e. their participation must be meaningful on their own terms, not imposed by adults); it is ethical, and does not exploit children; it is scientifically valid, using methods that are systematic and can be replicated; it involves robust analysis, both descriptive and statistical; and it prioritises local knowledge and expertise (Beazley et al., 2011, p. 161).

A previous statement of these ideas (Beazley et al., 2009) prompted Priscilla Alderson to publish a sustained critique of their approach (Alderson, 2012). Among her objections were: failure to define the word 'properly' leaving it open to dispute – where it is assumed that adults will decide what is 'proper' for children and what is not (p. 235); a false assumption that taking part in research always benefits children (p. 235); the selection of only four of the CRC's 42 rights articles, thus ignoring the implications of the rest of the CRC (p. 236); a focus on the CRC to the

exclusion of other relevant sources (p. 237); and stretching Article 12 beyond its true meaning (p. 237). Alderson also raises a number of objections to Beazley and colleagues' insistence that rights-based research with children must be participatory in nature, mentioning unresolved issues such as: Who gets the opportunity to participate? How are they paid or rewarded? If everything is reduced to children's level, what happens to theoretical, statistical or systematic-synthetic analysis? And finally, "If anyone can do research with similar competence, what is the point of studying for years to become a postdoctoral researcher?" (p. 237). Many of these issues are relevant to the present research study, and will be returned to in due course.

One of the key features of the 'Right to be Properly Researched' approach, stressed in all the publications mentioned, is its insistence that all 'proper' research with children involves rigorous application of scientific method, including replicability. Though Alderson does not contest this aspect, other researchers from ethnographic, narrative, indigenous and reflexive traditions may question whether this must always be the case.

The second important strand of thinking about rights-based research with children is that developed by Lundy and McEvoy. Whilst it acknowledges Ennew's work, this draws its conceptual framing in large part from the way human-rights-based approaches have coalesced in the field of international development, for example the three core principles found in the 'Statement of Common Understanding' agreed by the main UN agencies in 2003: (1) All programmes of development co-operation should further the realisation of human rights; (2) Human rights standards must guide all development cooperation and programming; and (3) Development cooperation should contribute to the development of the capacities of duty-bearers to meet their obligations and/or of rights-holders to claim their rights (United Nations, 2003, p. 1).

Drawing on experience from a number of field studies from 2008 onwards, Lundy and McEvoy reformulate these principles as a new proposal for a children's-rights-based approach to research. For this purpose, where the Statement of Common Understanding speaks of "the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other

international human rights instruments" as its underpinning, they substitute the Convention on the Rights of the Child, so as to restate the principles as follows:

> The research aims should be informed by the CRC standards, the research process should comply with the CRC standards; and the research outcomes should build the capacity of children, as rights-holders, to claim their rights and build the capacity of duty-bearers to fulfil their obligations. Cutting across all of this is a requirement to ensure that the process furthers the realisation of children's rights. (Lundy and McEvoy, 2012a, p. 79)

Using examples from previous studies (Lundy and McEvoy, 2009; Lundy et al., 2011; Lundy and McEvoy, 2012b; Miller et al., 2008), they go on to show how these principles might take effect across the three main phases of the research process: framing, conducting and disseminating research (Lundy and McEvoy, 2012a, pp. 79-90). The main implications of this analysis are summarised in Table 2 below.

Summary of Lundy and McEvoy's proposal for a Children's Rights-Based Approach to Research			
Elements constituting a children's-rights based approach ↓	Stages of the research process		
	Framing	*Conducting*	*Disseminating*
Overall/cross-cutting requirement: Research furthers the realisation of children's rights.	Children's participation in the research design is CRC-compliant.	Researchers' engagement with children is guided by CRC standards.	Children contribute to research outputs, and are informed about how these will be disseminated.
Aims: Research aims are informed by CRC standards.	Research aims to further the realisation of CRC children's rights standards.		
Process: Research process complies with CRC standards.	Research questions are framed with CRC standards and associated jurisprudence (though research questions are often set by funders, there may be opportunities for 'translating non-rights-based research questions into rights-based questions').	The conduct of the research respects the rights of the children involved; Research methods are of high quality and appropriate to address the issues investigated; Children are engaged meaningfully in choices about methods and how these are employed.	Ideally children are involved in dissemination of findings, and engaged in influencing duty-bearers (but this is not considered a necessary component).
***Outcomes*:** (a) Research outcomes build the capacity of children to claim their rights.	An objective of the research is to inform children involved about their CRC rights. Children are meaningfully engaged in development of research questions and instruments used, e.g. working with Children's Research Advisory groups, (CRAGs), and building their capacity in relation to the substantive topic of the research as well as the methods involved.	Deliberate steps are taken to ensure that children have opportunities to form and express their views freely across all stages of the research, including the significance or meaning attributed to findings; Children are made aware of who has responsibility for acting on the research findings.	Children are engaged in shaping the dissemination outputs. Deliberate and conscious effort to engage with children in meaningful ways (directly or indirectly) to influence state actors whose policy and practices impact on their lives.
(b) Research outcomes build the capacity of duty-bearers to fulfil their obligations.	An objective of the research is to inform duty-bearers about their obligations.	Where possible, opportunities are harnessed to engage with duty-bearers during the conduct of the research.	Outputs are presented to duty-bearers in ways that build their capacity to fulfil their obligations to children.

Table 2: Summary of Lundy and McEvoy's proposal for a children's rights-based approach to research (derived from Lundy and McEvoy 2012a)

A distinctive feature of this approach is the way every piece of research is supported by at least one Children's Research Advisory Group (CRAG). Children who become members of CRAGs are considered to have an advisory role (often referred to as co-researchers), and as such are expressly excluded from the category of research subjects (often referred to as participants). That is, CRAG members may advise adult researchers on formulation of research questions, appropriateness of methods, design of data-gathering instruments, analysis and interpretation of findings, design of dissemination materials and methods; but do not provide data for the research. This allows children to be engaged in every stage of the research, as appropriate to the circumstances, and with a considerable amount of flexibility. Time-consuming and complex work such as data-gathering and statistical analysis can be left to appropriately qualified adult researchers, but children know that the advice they give on these matters will be taken on board. Also, if the circumstances are appropriate, CRAG members can go on to engage with duty-bearers in advocacy activities relating to the research, but are not required to do so, and other methods may be proposed for influencing duty-bearers (Lundy and McEvoy, 2012a, pp. 81-86). In critiquing Ennew's approach, Alderson asked: If anyone can do research, what is the point of studying to become a professional researcher? The way adult researcher and child advisor roles are constructed and negotiated here is one way of answering that question.

Another distinctive aspect of Lundy and McEvoy's approach is their emphasis on building capacity in participating children, particularly those who are members of CRAGs. This emphasis is based on interpretation of three key CRC rights in combination: Article 12 provides the right to form and express opinions which must be given due weight by decision-makers; Articles 13 and 17 provide the right to receive information; and Article 5 permits responsible adults to provide 'appropriate direction and guidance' to children on matters relating to the exercise of their rights (Lundy and McEvoy, 2012b). It is, in fact, questionable whether Article 5 applies in the case of researchers carrying out research with children, as the text of the Article restricts it to parents, guardians and "other persons legally responsible for the child". However, even if Article 5 does not apply, the underlying principles that children, "will on occasion need support in the exercise of their rights in accordance with their evolving capacities", and that adult researchers, "are

positioned as potential 'enablers' capable of playing a positive role in guiding and assisting children in the formation and expression of their views", remain relevant (Lundy and McEvoy, 2012b, pp. 141-142). Thus it is proposed that an adult-guided capacity-building process helps children to express opinions that are not just 'formed' but also 'informed', and so enhances their contribution to research.

The central role of capacity-building with children in Lundy and McEvoy's approach does, however, raise an issue about the risk of adult manipulation of children's views. Information-giving is never politically or ethically neutral, so it is inevitable that the capacity-builder, whether described as 'assisting' children (Lundy and McEvoy, 2012b), or 'facilitating' them (O'Kane, 2000; Larkins et al., 2015), influences the kinds of (in)formed views that children are assisted towards. Some may approach this in a self-aware, reflexive way, seeking to recognise their own biases, and modifying the way 'information' is selected, presented and discussed to try and counteract these. Others may not be so aware, and influence children's opinion-forming in certain directions without meaning to. Yet others may have beliefs about what kinds of opinions children *should* form about an issue, and seek to assist children to these views, either honestly (e.g. by confessing a religious or political position) or by less honest manipulation (Hart, 1997, pp 40-42). If the building of children's capacity by adult researchers is to be a central part of rights-based research, guidance is needed on how to recognise, make explicit and minimise the extent to which adults, knowingly or unknowingly, lead children towards the kinds of views that they, the adults, approve of, instead of uncovering those that children themselves are drawn to.

An important difference between Ennew and colleagues' and Lundy and McEvoy's approaches to child-rights-based research is their different orientations. Ennew and colleagues' approach has been packaged and marketed to those doing research in a wide range of institutional settings, including NGOs and community groups, with particular reference to the global South (Ennew et al., 2009). Lundy and McEvoy, on the other hand, are concerned with defining a child-rights-based approach that can also inform the kind of research done in universities. Although the present study was not designed to implement either approach, it does aspire to be described as an example of rights-based research, and to contribute further to our understand-

ing of what this means. The bringing together of NGO-sponsored participatory research and innovative ideas about academic research with and by children is an important part of this challenge. These issues will be returned to in Chapter 7 after describing the implementation and outcomes of the study.

In summary, why use this methodology?

Given the research topic and questions established in Chapter 1, a method is required to gather children's perceptions and explore their perspectives regarding the implementation of the CRC in Schools. This could be done in many ways, and it would be misleading to suggest that a number of options were considered, and the method to be used selected on the basis of careful evaluation of their pros and cons. In fact, the idea of working with a team of child researchers was proposed from the start, and justification provided afterwards.

Broadly three kinds of justifications can be put forward: (1) The observed benefits of this approach as formulated by Kellett (2010b) and later by CESESMA in the 'Four Transformations' (Shier, 2015), which have already been described above; (2) The personal interest and commitment of the researcher (already attended to in the section on researcher identity in the introductory chapter); and (3) The practical and logistical conditions provided by CESESMA in Nicaragua that favoured the use of this approach and increased the likelihood of success.

Regarding this last justification, the role played by CESESMA throughout the course of this project will be described fully below, but briefly it involved five factors that made this research method viable: (1) a solid reputation and relations of trust with local gatekeepers; (2) quasi-insider status for the adult researcher; (3) recruitment of the team of young researchers with ethically-obtained informed consent; (4) trustworthy trained local staff to act as co-facilitators and accompaniers; and (5) generous logistical support including transport, food, meeting venues, local communications and office workspace. The willingness and the capacity of CESESMA, as both an organisation and a team of individuals, to support this research at all levels thus created conditions that turned what might otherwise have been an insurmountable challenge into a viable proposition.

4. The bilingual researcher

All the research data collected for this study are in Spanish. Furthermore, the core data, the interviews with school-children, are in the dialect of Spanish spoken by children among themselves in rural communities in northern Nicaragua. However, the findings of the study are here presented in English. Research of this type, where data are collected in one language and findings presented in another, is commonly referred to as 'cross-language research', and gives rise to a number of methodological issues. In the case of the present study it was decided not to translate the data into English for analysis. However, at the data coding stage, the data in Spanish were matched to codes that were labelled in English, so it was at this stage that a lot of the 'interpretation' of ideas from Spanish to English occurred (this process is described in the section on data analysis below). In this way, translation of the data has been largely eliminated from the process, with only brief extracts from the original Spanish texts translated to provide illustrative quotes for the benefit of non-Spanish-speaking readers. This section aims to contextualise and explain this decision, and indicate its implications for the research.

In planning cross-language research, there are a number of options regarding translation. One is to exclude people who do not speak English from the research sample; in other words, to avoid doing cross-language research. This is not uncommon in research on minority communities in the UK (Temple, 2005; and see Bissell et al., 2004, for an example), but was not an option for a research project in Nicaragua. Another option is to hide the translation process from the reader, putting it in a metaphorical 'black box', the inner workings of which are unknown and of no importance (Müller, 2007). When this approach is used, "Possible differences in the meanings of words or concepts across languages vanish into the space between spoken otherness and written sameness" (Temple, 2002, p. 844), with the result that, "The final text in English writes out the terms on which it was produced" (Temple and Young, 2004, p. 164). Another approach is the use of technical expertise and resources to ensure "rigorously correct translation" (Im et al., 2004; Squires, 2009). Such techniques include the employment of suitably accredited professional translators, synthesising separate translations made by different translators, and 'back-translation' (having another person re-translate the translation back to the original language to check for correctness) (Brislin, 1970; Chen and

Boore, 2010). It should be noted that all the above are likely to have cost implications, and all are predicated on the contested idea that a 'correct' translation is possible.

Ultimately, however, the reflexive researcher will be motivated to problematise language, and to recognise that:

> There is no neutral position from which to translate, and the power relationships within research need to be acknowledged. ...Methodological and epistemological challenges arise from the recognition that people using different languages may construct different ways of seeing social life. The relationships between languages and researchers, translators and the people they seek to represent are as crucial as issues of which word is best in a sentence. (Temple and Young, 2004, p. 164)

Often a researcher is not fluent in the language in which the data are to be gathered, and relies on a third party translator/interpreter. Given the complex issues just referred to, the researcher who is dependent on a translator may be unaware, or only partially aware, of many interpretative or 'meaning-making' decisions their interpreter is making. This means that, when it comes to analysing the data, the researcher is working, not with the original data that were collected, but with an interpreted revision of the data, where it is impossible to know what changes in meaning have occurred, or nuances have been lost in translation (Bujra, 2006; Temple and Edwards, 2002).

If the researcher is fluent in both languages, another possibility is to do one's own translation. Here at least the researcher can be reflexively aware of the interpretations he or she is making in the course of the translation. For Temple and Young (2004):

> The researcher/translator role offers the researcher significant opportunities for close attention to cross-cultural meanings and interpretations, and potentially brings the researcher up close to the problems of meaning equivalence within the research process (p. 168)

However, as they go on to point out: "This is not meant to imply that the final text is nearer 'the truth', since the researcher is herself situated in many and sometimes competing ways in relation to the languages she is working with" (p. 168). Also, even if a researcher does her or his own translation, is aware of how the process of translation has affected the data, and tries to compensate for this in the analysis; it is still not the original data that is being analysed, but an interpretation of it.

The bilingual researcher, however, has another option; that of not translating the data, but analysing it in its original language. When texts are analysed in their original language there are still decisions to be made about how to interpret and reproduce meanings, but this process of meaning-making can become an integral part of the analysis, and can be made visible as such. Interpretation will inevitably occur, but when done by the bilingual researcher him- or herself, it can be more sensitive, contextualised, reflexive and visible, thus maintaining a more reliable connection with participants' originally intended meanings (Shklarov, 2007).

A number of bilingual researchers from various disciplines have used this 'non-translation' approach. Horschelmann (2002), for example, describes how she undertook the thematic analysis of a series of interviews in the original language (German), and then presented the findings in academic publications in English. Literature searches, however, found no serious discussion of this 'non-translation' approach, nor any comparison of this with the use of data that have been translated, whether by the researcher or by a third party.

Although it appears to be under-researched as a method, it was decided to use this 'non-translation' approach for the present study. In choosing this approach, the researcher's biography (discussed in the introductory chapter) was an important factor. The fact that the researcher was equipped with the contextual and linguistic knowledge and the skill set required to analyse the data in the original Spanish and then give a good account of it in English made translation unnecessary, with significant benefits such as those suggested by Temple and Young (2004) and Shklarov (2007) as outlined above.

5. Methods: Fieldwork

Methods: general introduction

The methodology used here was an unusual hybrid. The largest part of the field research was designed, planned and carried out by children as researchers, generating data which they themselves then analysed and interpreted to produce a set of findings, conclusions and recommendations; in other words, the young researchers themselves constructed new knowledge. The young researchers' data, together with their research process, analysis, interpretation, conclusions and recommendations, were then subject to further analysis by the adult researcher, generating additional findings, interpretations and conclusions at another level and thus further new knowledge. This raises interesting questions about 'ownership' of the research and the nature of the power-mediated adult-child relationships involved in the production of knowledge, which are discussed below in the section on ethical issues, and further in Chapter 7.

Two field trips were made to Nicaragua to collect data for this research. The first was for two months (12 October to 17 December 2013), during which the young researchers' project was facilitated from start to finish. The second was for just three weeks (1-25 August 2014) in order to go back to the young researchers to discuss some of the initial findings and ask additional questions that had arisen from the second analysis of the data. Background research with adult informants and documentary research were conducted on both trips.

This introduction is followed by six sub-sections. The first of these introduces the five distinct groups of research participants and how each sample was selected. The remaining sections cover recruitment of the team of young researchers, facilitation of their research process, methods used during the second field trip, follow-up and dissemination work with the young researchers, and background research with adult informants in Nicaragua.

The research participants

The people who participated in this research by providing data of one sort or another (and in the case of the young researchers, also collecting and analysing data) comprised 5 distinct groups. Information about these participants, including

how each group's sample was selected and how they provided data, is summarised in Table 3 (below). The table also indicates where more complete information about each group can be found in the following text and appendices.

In addition, 12 members of the CESESMA team were involved in the research, as co-facilitators and accompaniers, drivers, cooks and caretakers. However they did not provide data to the research, and information about them was not recorded. Thus, while their invaluable contribution is acknowledged (see section 3 above), they are not described here as research participants.

Details of all research participants							
Identifier label	F	M	Total	Age range	Av. age*	**How sampled**	**How they provided data**
Young researchers	9	8	17	9-15	13.1	Recruited by CESESMA, using selection process and criteria described in detail below.	Though not considered primary data subjects, their research process provided multiple types of data: drawings, flipcharts, their final report, written final evaluation (see full list of data below). Focus group discussions were recorded with them on the second field visit (see below).
Interviewees	84	66	150	6-15	10.1	Selected by young researchers from amongst the school-attending children in their home communities (described in Chapter 3, Section 9).	Interviewed by the young researchers; their spoken answers were written down on interview forms which were later transcribed and analysed (see Chapter 5 and Appendices 13, 14 and 20).
Parents	8	4	12	Adult	Adult	All parents of young researchers invited to a focus group meeting. Those who attended participated.	Participated in focus group. Notes were taken, flipcharts saved, report of focus group discussion written up afterwards.
Teachers	6	5	11	Adult	Adult	All teachers at the four schools featured in the research were invited to a focus group meeting. Those who attended participated.	Participated in focus group. Notes were taken, flipcharts saved, report of focus group discussion written up afterwards. They also completed an individual questionnaire on their views on children's rights in schools.
Key informants	4	1	5	Adult	Adult	Selected as holders of key professional roles relating to Safe Quality Schools project (see sub-section on research with adults below).	Gave semi-structured individual interviews of up to 1 hour. Interviews recorded and transcribed.
Total	111	94	195				

* Ages recorded at start of process in October 2013.

Table 3: Details of all research participants

Recruitment of the team of young researchers

By mutual agreement, the local team at CESESMA in Nicaragua undertook the recruitment of the team of young researchers. From the 14 schools in the La Dalia district involved in the Safe Quality Schools programme, CESESMA selected four where the conditions were considered favourable for the project; that is where relationships with the school heads and staff were strong so there was sufficient mutual trust to be able to 'sell' the proposal to the school, and their geographical location made the logistics manageable. The human-rights record of the schools was not a factor in the choice. The four schools selected and the communities they served were described in the previous chapter. The target population from which to recruit the research team was children and adolescents attending these four schools who were already known to CESESMA through their involvement in one or more project activities.

A set of selection criteria was drawn up for the selection of research team members, adapted from criteria used for one of CESESMA's previous child researcher projects. These are shown in Box 11 below. However, in applying the criteria, the CESESMA education workers aimed to be sensitive to individual needs and situations, and applied the criteria with some flexibility. For example, three girls from Darío school were selected, as all three met the criteria and were equally enthusiastic, and the CESESMA workers could not think of a fair way to eliminate one of them. This explains why the final team had 17 members instead of 16. Their school teachers were not consulted and had no say in the selection of the young researchers' team.

Selection criteria for the young researchers' team

1. Total of 16 participants, 2 boys and 2 girls from each of the four schools.

2. Target age range of 10-15 years, aiming for a good age spread throughout this range.

3. Interest in participating in this project and giving up free time to do so. Children who expressed interest were told:

    □ in simple terms, what the project was about, what the work would consist of and the time commitment involved;

    □ that there was no financial reward, but that all necessary expenses such as travel and food would be covered;

    □ that CESESMA staff would always be present and would take responsibility for their safeguarding while working on the project;

    □ that they would always have the right to withdraw.

    Thus they had all the information they needed, provided in an appropriate way, to enable them to make a well-informed decision about whether to put themselves forward.

4. Ability to communicate and participate without excessive shyness or embarrassment.

5. Able to make the necessary time commitment (as these were mostly children who worked as well as attending school, CESESMA staff visited parents and discussed this with them as part of the recruitment process, to ensure team members would have enough free time to undertake the researcher role).

6. Parent or guardian's written permission (in addition to the child's own signed informed consent). This was provided in response to a formal letter of invitation from CESESMA setting out in writing the timetable, the commitment involved for participants and CESESMA's commitment to them including safeguarding arrangements (copies of the letters used, both the original Spanish and English translations, are attached as Appendices 8 and 9).

Box 11: Selection criteria for the young researchers' team

Though most children in the target group could read and write; to ensure inclusivity, CESESMA gave a commitment to provide literacy or other support required by any potential team member who needed it. In practice, however, all the children who came forward were able to meet the criteria without support. The fact that none of the team members needed individual support simplified the process, but leaves open – and perhaps unanswerable – the question of whether enough was done to identify children with disabilities or other support needs and encourage

them to put themselves forward (see section on ethics below, and reflexive critique of methodology in Chapter 7).

The team consisted of 9 girls and 8 boys; two girls and two boys from each of the villages of El Ayote, Las Brisas, and El Colibrí, and three girls and two boys from Darío. At the start of the project they were aged 9 to15, with an average age of 13.1 years.

All attended the primary schools in their home villages, in 4th, 5th and 6th grades (as noted earlier, in the Nicaraguan education system it is not unusual to find such a disparity of ages, including many teenagers, in primary school classrooms). The young researchers' economic and family backgrounds were typical of their villages, and all were from families whose main economic activity was agriculture. Some families, mainly from El Ayote and Las Brisas, worked family small-holdings or 'parcelas' growing coffee, fruit and subsistence crops of maize and beans on their own land, while others were landless agricultural workers dependent on the neighbouring coffee plantations for work and income. Most lived in small wooden houses with corrugated iron roofs and earth floors. As mentioned above, all were sufficiently competent in reading and writing not to need any individual support to play their part in this project.

Facilitation of the young researchers' investigation

The research team met for six half-day workshops approximately once a week. All workshops were held in CESESMA's purpose-built Community Learning Centre in the village of Casas Blancas, not far from the town of La Dalia, as this was seen as the optimal solution to the logistical challenges of the project. CESESMA provided transport for the young researchers from their home villages to this central venue, and a full cooked lunch each day. Letters were provided to their teachers requesting leave of absence from school and explaining why. The workshops were facilitated

by the lead researcher (myself), supported by at least two other members of CESESMA's full-time education team on each occasion.[33]

All sessions were planned and timetabled in advance, with clear objectives and methods set out for each session. The structure used followed closely the basic structure for 'Transformative Research by Children and Adolescents' as described in CESESMA's *'Learn to live without violence'* report (CESESMA, 2012a). As an example, the session plan for the first workshop is attached as Appendix 12. Co-facilitators received copies of the session plans and were briefed on them in advance, so as to be clear about their own roles and responsibilities. In general what happened in the workshops was close to what was planned, apart from some time-table adjustments. The work done in each workshop is described in Appendix 7, and a summary is provided in Box 12 below. The data generated by this process is listed in Box 13.

Summary of the Young Researchers' research process

Session 1: Becoming a research team, learning about research and education rights, using drawings to reflect on their experience of rights in school.

Session 2: Planning the research, deciding questions to ask and getting ready.

Fieldwork: Between sessions 2 and 3, the young researchers collected data by interviewing other children in their home communities.

Session 3: Analysing the findings and drawing conclusions.

Session 4: Producing a final report and formulating recommendations.

Session 5: Possibilities for dissemination and follow-up, action plan and final evaluation.

Session 6: Preparing to present their report at a public meeting with international Save the Children leadership.

Box 12: The Young Researchers' research process (summarised from Appendix 7)

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[33] I include myself as a member of the CESESMA team, as I have been a full member since May 2003, though currently on sabbatical to do this PhD.

Data generated by Young Researchers' process

- 17 drawings by the young researchers on the theme of human rights in school. As well as using these as a stimulus to share ideas and experiences about rights in school, the young researchers selected a number of them to illustrate their final report.

- 74 flip-chart sheets generated by the young researchers during the workshops. These provide additional information on the step by step research process from the young researchers' perspective, some of which they subsequently summarised in their report.

- The young researchers' interview format, containing the final set of 7 questions they decided on for their field interviews (Appendix 13; English translation, Appendix 14).

- 150 completed interview forms. The team of 17 young researchers carried out 150 interviews with other children, using the interview format they had decided on. The informants spoke their responses, and the interviewers wrote down the answers in a space provided below each question on the interview forms. The raw data therefore consists of 150 x 6 = 900 answers hand-written by the young researchers (plus linked 'yes-no' tick-box data for one of the questions). The written answers varied from 1 to 37 words, with an average of 9.6 words per answer. This can be considered the core data for the study, and was analysed initially by the young researchers themselves and then by the lead adult researcher, as will be further described below.

- 5 summary reports of the workshop sessions. In keeping with CESESMA's professional practice, a brief report was written for each session, summarising who was there, what was done, what outcomes were achieved, equal opportunities, child protection and other issues arising, and general facilitator observations on the session.

- Young researchers' final report. This was produced as a Powerpoint presentation, written and designed collectively by the young researchers themselves with adult technical and process support. The original report is attached as Appendix 3 with parallel English translation. This report has an important place in the body of data, as it is here that the young researchers summarise their findings and present their conclusions and recommendations. Although later converted to a standard text format for journal publication (Niñas y Niños Investigadores, 2014; Appendix 4), the Powerpoint version is the original report as the young researchers intended it.

- Action Plan, drawn up by the young researchers after completing their report and recommendations (Appendix 15).

- 17 completed individual evaluations. In keeping with CESESMA's professional practice, towards the end of workshop 5, each young researcher completed a written evaluation form commenting on their experience of participation in the project. The adult facilitator compiled a summary of these evaluations. The evaluation instrument used (Appendix 16) was appropriate to the skills and capacity of the participants.

- On behalf of CESESMA, Save the Children Nicaragua emailed a request for feedback to all the Save the Children officials who had witnessed the young researchers' public presentation, four of whom replied.

- A photographic record of the entire process (photographs selected by the Young researchers can be seen in their report, Appendix 3).

- Researcher's field journal. The adult researcher kept a field journal, adding personal observations, reflections, insights and memos, complementing the formal data, and strengthening reflexivity (Ortlipp, 2008).

Box 13: List of data generated by the Young Researchers' investigation

It was originally intended to make sound recordings of the young researchers' workshops. However, it quickly became apparent that this was not going to work. In the plenary sessions it was difficult to get an audible recording without disrupting the process, and recording the work in small groups, where most of the interesting discussions occurred, proved impractical. However, given the large amount of data obtained from multiple sources listed above, the lack of sound recordings hardly detracts from the validity of the process. Sound recording was used effectively to gather data in interviews with adult informants and later, during the second field trip, in the follow-up focus group sessions with the young researchers.

Return to La Dalia: Second field trip, August 2014

A second field trip was not included in the original proposal for this research. However, new questions began to emerge from the initial data analysis, and the desirability of holding further discussions with the young researchers became evident. A second field trip was therefore proposed and funding sought. As the objectives were more limited, a shorter trip was planned, and this took place from 1-24 August 2014. As the young researchers had already completed their research and published their findings, the main objective of the second visit was to engage in discussion with them about some of these findings and the new questions that had arisen.

Given the objective of having a thoughtful, reflective discussion with the young researchers, it was decided that this time, instead of gathering the entire team together in a central venue, the adult researcher would travel to meet them in their home villages. Arrangements were made to hold a mini focus group in each village school, with just the four (or five) young researchers from that village participating and one adult facilitating. This had a number of advantages, both logistical and methodological: It used fewer transport resources; it gave the adult researcher a chance to visit and observe the four schools that were central to the research and to meet the teachers at these schools (see sub-section on research with adults, below); it allowed discussion to pick up on issues specific to each school that had emerged in the original data, which turned out to be particularly important in relation to the teaching of human rights in the four schools; and finally it was possible to obtain a

usable sound recording of each focus group. Though these discussions were held on school premises; in each school a separate space was found and teachers did not intrude, so those factors that may have prevented children from speaking their mind were kept to a minimum.

A set of questions was prepared to structure the group discussion, including starter questions to introduce the key issues, and optional supplementary questions to encourage, extend or refocus discussion as necessary (Appendix 17). The discussions lasted from 35 to 60 minutes.

Follow-up, dissemination and social action with young researchers

> Managing child researchers' outcome expectations is one of the responsibilities of adults who support them. (Kellett, 2011, p. 210)

> It is also vital to remind children … that, in itself, research does not bring changes. Children and young people are eager to know what will change as a result of their research or consultation. The more they have invested, the greater their disappointment and perhaps disillusion could be if nothing is achieved. (Alderson and Morrow, 2011, p. 57)

In this research, these concerns were addressed from the start. In their first session, the young researchers learnt that 'research' is about creating new knowledge, and that this knowledge can then be used to try and solve problems or change things that need changing, but that this does not happen automatically unless we plan it into the research process. It was therefore proposed to them that, on completing their research, the facilitators would help them draw up an Action Plan, to include things they could do themselves without help from CESESMA (e.g. discussing their findings with their classmates at school) and others they would need adult help to do (e.g. presenting their findings to national forums or conferences). The resulting action plan (Appendix 15) has four broad objectives: the *organisation* of the young researchers themselves as a team; the *sharing* of their work with other children locally; the *dissemination* of their research more widely; and *advocacy* for the implementation of their recommendations leading to change in schools.

At the time of writing, the young researchers have been involved in three significant dissemination events. The first of these occurred immediately they finished their report when, as part of a five-yearly strategic planning process, quite by coincidence being held in Nicaragua in December 2013, the entire Save the Children regional leadership for Latin America and the Caribbean decided to pay a visit to CESESMA's centre in La Dalia. A programme was prepared to present the work of Save the Children's local partner organisations to the visiting officials, and the young researchers' team was invited to take a central role in this. An additional half-day workshop was quickly planned for them to prepare for this. On the day of the visit, all 17 young researchers took the stage, and shared in the presentation of the report, later answering questions from the audience, and receiving feedback from the Save the Children officials. Additional feedback was later received from Save the Children officials by email, including this comment:

> I found very interesting the eloquence and clarity with which the children presented the results. Although they were reading, it was evident that they felt very comfortable with the results and undoubtedly knew the research well. It could be seen that the children were the owners and authors of the process and the results. Research carried out by children themselves is a model of child participation in the appraisal and problem-solving of their own environment. (Email received from Save the Children Regional Adviser)

This event was unusual in CESESMA's practice of supporting child researchers. It would normally be suggested to the children that they start by presenting their report to a local audience with friendly faces, before going on to make more challenging public presentations. However, a one-off opportunity presented itself, and CESESMA wanted to give the young researchers the chance to take advantage of it, even though this meant turning the usual sequence of events on its head. There are three important points to note here. First; in this case CESESMA's institutional interest (to impress an important donor) coincided with the young researchers' interest (to gain maximum impact for their research). If the young researchers and the adult organisation had had competing or incompatible interests, there would have been a risk of manipulation of the young researchers in pursuit of the adult agenda, but in this case, the problem did not arise. Second; the young researchers

were unanimously enthusiastic about taking on this challenge, so the question of whether they might have been put under pressure to do so did not arise. Third; although the opportunity arose at short notice, there were sufficient time, support and resources available for the young researchers to prepare themselves and practice their presentation, and they would not have been encouraged to do it otherwise.

The second dissemination opportunity was a call for articles put out in February 2014 by the Mexico-based children's rights journal *Rayuela*.[34] CESESMA had contributed to this journal on previous occasions, so it was proposed to submit the young researchers' report for publication. The article submitted was in two parts; first the young researchers' report (only slightly edited for journal publication), followed by a reflection piece written by the adult team, highlighting the problem the children had discovered with the inadequate teaching of 'rights and responsibilities' (Niñas y Niños Investigadores, 2014). It is fair to record that all the work of preparing the report for journal submission was done by adults, though the children did approve and authorise the submission made in their names.

The third dissemination opportunity came about when CESESMA was invited to send a delegation to an international symposium on child participation being held in Trondheim, Norway, in July 2014. Funding was provided for two young people and two accompanying adults to travel to Norway, and similar delegations were invited from Ghana and India. CESESMA offered one of the places to one of the young researchers, which meant that she was able to share her experience of researching children's rights in school in this international forum.

There has thus been some striking success in the area of dissemination. Feedback from CESESMA suggests the team has also done some effective local sharing. However, they have not continued to organise themselves as a team (difficult, given their ages and the fact that they live in four villages which are not within walking

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[34] http://revistarayuela.ednica.org.mx/

distance), and there has been no follow-up work that can seriously be described as advocacy for change. All three of the dissemination opportunities described above were put to the young researchers by adults who were interested in pursuing these opportunities, and were not the result of the children themselves implementing their Action Plan. The issues this raises are key to future discussion about how adults can best support and facilitate children and adolescents as researchers, and will be considered in more detail in Chapter 7.

Additional research with adult informants

Although children's perceptions, opinions and understandings are at the centre of this research, these need to be analysed in the light of information on the local and national context, much of which can best be supplied by adults. Therefore, in parallel with the facilitation of the young researchers' process described above, a number of additional research activities were carried out to gather information from adult informants.

A focus group discussion was held with parents of the young researchers, with 8 mothers and 4 fathers participating. The data generated consisted of a partial digital sound recording, 13 flip-chart sheets, and a summary report of the discussions made immediately afterwards.

A similar focus group discussion was planned with teachers from the four village schools. However this had to be postponed as the Ministry of Education scheduled another activity on the chosen date. Efforts were made to re-schedule, but the first available date fell after the principal researcher had left the area. The focus group eventually took place, ably facilitated by experienced CESESMA staff, following the original session plan and instructions provided, with eleven teachers particip-ating. This generated a detailed written report, and participants also completed an individual questionnaire, giving written responses to nine questions (Appendix 19), which were subsequently analysed and summarised.

Five in-depth individual interviews were carried out with key adult informants: Save the Children's Project Officer and Area Director, and CESESMA's Executive Coordinator, Project Coordinator and Area Coordinator. These lasted from 40 to 65 minutes and were digitally recorded and fully transcribed. The information sheets

and consent forms used with this group are attached as Appendices 10 and 11, and the interview schedule used is Appendix 18.

CESESMA staff also provided access to a wide range of official documents. Although the Nicaraguan Ministry of Education now has a well-resourced website with some documents accessible on-line,[35] many are only available through personal contacts. The same applies to documents from NGOs like Save the Children.

6. Methods: data analysis

There were two separate phases and levels of data analysis. First, as part of their research the team of young researchers analysed their own data, making their own interpretations of it and drawing conclusions from these. Their report can be consulted in Appendix 3 or in the journal article they subsequently published (Niñas y Niños Investigadores, 2014; Appendix 4). The second phase was a further analysis carried out by the adult researcher. In proposing this second analysis, it was understood that the child-to-child interview data belonged to the young researchers' team, not to the adult researcher/facilitator. The ethical implications of this and how they were addressed are discussed in section 8 below.

The position of this project in the social research methodological universe (discussed in Section 2 above) indicated that a variant of thematic analysis would be the most appropriate approach for this second phase of analysis, and so a number of texts on techniques of thematic analysis were consulted (Boyatzis, 1998; Braun and Clarke, 2006; Faherty, 2009; Guest et al., 2012; Saldaña, 2012; and Miles et al., 2014, this last being a revised and updated edition of Miles and Huberman's classic 1984 textbook on qualitative data analysis). However, given that the text data to be analysed consisted of 900 short written answers (averaging 9.6 words per answer) provided by 150 child interviewees, and that it was considered important to be able to disaggregate the data by school and by sex, the above-mentioned literature did

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[35] http://www.mined.gob.ni/

not provide a ready-made coding procedure suited to this particular task. 'Pure' thematic analysis often deals with more substantial texts, such as in-depth interviews with a smaller number of participants, where counting and comparing the number of times a particular answer appears is of little interest. Where there is a focus on the frequency of occurrence of words or phrases, the approach required is that of 'content analysis', rather than thematic analysis proper (Anderson and Arsenault, 1998; Krippendorp, 2004; Vaismoradi et al., 2013).

Although this project was conceived as essentially qualitative research, and the data consist of words not numbers, given the relatively large number of interviewees, and the relatively short answers given, there was clearly the possibility of using this data to generate numerical information, and seeking a way to integrate the analysis of this information into the search for deeper understandings of the meanings expressed by the interviewees (Maxwell, 1992). Though this implies a blurring of traditional quantitative-qualitative boundaries in social research, current thinking suggests that this in itself is not necessarily a problem (Alexander, 2014; Pring, 2014), and further support for such an approach is found in Miles et al. (2014), who maintain that counting and comparing the occurrence of certain responses or expressions can be an effective and appropriate way to communicate some of the information contained within a body of qualitative data. The generation and presentation of such numerical information is particularly useful, they suggest, in helping us capture an overview of what the data tell us, and encouraging greater analytical honesty in dealing with it (or perhaps discouraging distortion through over-interpretation; since it is harder for a researcher to focus attention on a few words that conveniently support his or her preferred interpretation, when the reader can see a table showing that the majority of participants took the opposite view) (Miles et al, 2014, pp. 282-284). In the case of the present study, the numerical data (some of which are presented in tabular form in the following chapter) help to set the scene, or mark out the territory, for the thematic analysis which seeks to understand meanings by looking more deeply into what was said and the context in which it was said.

To take account of the above – both the nature of the data and the nature of the task in hand – ideas and advice from all the above-mentioned sources in the literature

were blended with elements of Charmaz's social-constructivist version of grounded theory (Charmaz, 2008a, 2008b) to produce a bespoke coding system, tailor-made to suit this data-set. Although the use of text analysis computer software such as NVivo was considered (Richards, 2005), it was decided that this would be more trouble than it was worth, particularly as all the data were in Spanish; so Microsoft Word tables were the only software application used in coding. The coding procedure used was as follows.

All 900 answers on the interview forms were transcribed into a single large table, with the 6 questions as column heads, and a horizontal row for each of the 150 interviewees, each of which was given an ID number. Additional columns were added to contain the school, grade, age and gender of the interviewees, and who they were interviewed by (this information is on the forms, though interviewees' names are unknown and they are identified only by their assigned ID numbers). This meant it was easy to automatically re-sort and separate the data according to any of these variables or any combination (for example, all responses from girls in third grade at Las Brisas School). The first page of this transcription, showing data from interviews 1 to 7, is attached as Appendix 20.

Next they were coded, question by question. Another large matrix was created for each question, with separate columns for girls and boys from each school, and a horizontal row for each code (though these kept changing, merging and splitting, as the analysis progressed). Every answer was given at least one code and some answers matched two or three codes. When an answer did not match any existing code, a new code was created, so every single answer could be coded. The code labels were in English, so it was at this stage that much of the interpretation of meanings in the Spanish data took place. As discussed earlier, the data were not translated at any stage, but interpretative decisions were made continuously on how to match up the interview answers in Spanish with the descriptive codes in English. In a few cases, where the Spanish expressions used had no obvious English translation, Spanish words were included in brackets as part of the English label for the code. As the answers were matched to codes, the corresponding interview ID numbers were placed in the appropriate cell of the matrix, in the row for that code, and the column corresponding to the sex of the interviewee and their school. This

technique required the creation of a large number of codes, ending up with an average of 43 codes for each question. However, these were repeatedly grouped and sorted to provide a logical structure. The columns were also combined in different ways to show a presentation according to the schools attended, and another separated by gender. It was thus easy to see at a glance how many answers matched each code; how many boys, how many girls and how many from each school. The use of ID numbers in the matrix meant it was also easy to refer back to the original written answers to confirm the exact words used (and also to check the age and grade of the person who said it and by whom they had been interviewed). These matrices thus provided a rich and comprehensive description of what was in the data (the complete coding matrix for Question 3, on teaching about rights in school, is attached as Appendix 21 as an example). The next chapter is an analysis of the data as seen in these matrices. This in turn leads to the identification of the four main themes that are discussed in the following chapter.

Although a large amount of supplementary data was collected (listed in Box 13 above), none of this was subjected to a similar coding process or systematic analysis. It was all, however, organised, studied and annotated, with particular attention to (a) how the young researchers constructed new knowledge, and (b) observations relevant to the main themes emerging from the core data analysis. The additional data collected from adult informants have been categorised as 'background information' and used mainly to provide contextual underpinning for the discussion of the children's ideas.

7. Trustworthiness of the findings

Although scholars continue to debate the relevance, the appropriate terminology, and indeed the very idea of validity and rigour in qualitative research (Cho and Trent, 2006; Hammersley, 2007; Morse et al., 2008); for the purpose of the present study the classic model proposed by Guba (1981) provides a useful framework. In Guba's model, the goal is trustworthiness (as opposed to validity in quantitative research), and is achieved by demonstrating credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability. A number of authors have provided lists of techniques that qualitative researchers can use to ensure their work demonstrates these

qualities and those of Creswell (2012), Onwuegbuzie and Leech (2007), and Shenton (2004) have been drawn on here.

In the present study, credibility was achieved and demonstrated through a multiplicity of features in both the design and the conditions of the study which have been mentioned in the course of the preceding description of methods, or in some cases in earlier chapters and/or appendices. For convenience they are listed in a summarised form in Box 14.

Summary of features of the design and conditions of this study that contributed to the credibility of the findings

- Explicit relevant criteria used for selection of the team of young researchers.

- Workshop process where young researchers became well-informed about the issues to be investigated, particularly their rights in education.

- Discussing drawings as a way of exploring rights in everyday life.

- Children deciding on the interview questions.

- Child-to-child interviewing.

- Ensuring young researchers were properly equipped (clipboards, ID cards, printed interview forms, Powerpoint for presenting report etc.).

- Collecting data away from schools.

- Adults present at arm's length to ensure protection, but not interfering in data collection activities.

- Children analysing their own data.

- Return to the team on a second visit to discuss issues arising from the initial data analysis (member-checking).

- No teachers present in focus group sessions with children.

- Focus groups with parents and school teachers (triangulation).

- Use of a complete and thorough bespoke coding procedure tailor-made to include and respect everything in the young researchers' interview data.

- Use of a reflexive field journal.

- Clear statement of the identity, experience, values, power and status of the adult researcher, and reflection on possible effects of these on research findings.

- Adult researcher had lived and worked in the area for 11 years, thus being familiar with and sensitive to the language, culture, socio-historical context, and daily lives of the participants.

- A bilingual researcher not dependent on translation.

- Extensive literature review to frame interpretation and discussion of findings.

- Extensive use of reflexivity in interpretation and discussion of findings.

Box 14: Summary of features of the design and conditions of this study that contributed to the credibility of the findings

Transferability is demonstrated by the detailed description of the context provided in Chapter 3.

Dependability and confirmability are demonstrated by the detailed description of the methods and procedures followed (though limited by lack of space in this text, additional detail is provided in extensive appendices), and the situating of these explicitly within a paradigm providing appropriate ontological and epistemological underpinning. These are supported by triangulation and comparison of data from the different participant groups. Limitations and weaknesses in the methodology, and failures to complete procedures as desired or achieve objectives, for whatever reason, are acknowledged and their implications discussed.

As this research is guided by the Transformative Paradigm, it is appropriate that it should also take on board Kirkhart's concept of 'multicultural validity', which Mertens (2009) sees as central to the axiology of the paradigm. Kirkhart (2005) describes the concept as follows:

> Multicultural validity refers to the correctness or authenticity of understandings across multiple, intersecting cultural contexts. It focuses attention on how well evaluation captures meaning across dimensions of cultural diversity, and it scrutinizes the accuracy or trustworthiness of the ensuing judgements of merit and worth. (p. 22)

Several of the factors mentioned above as contributing to credibility also help to ensure multicultural validity; particularly the central role of the young researchers, who shared the same cultural background as the children they were interviewing, the familiarity of the adult researcher with the local culture, the analysis of the data in its original language without need for translation, and the continual practice of reflexivity in relation to cultural issues.

8. Ethical Considerations

This section will consider both the general procedures followed to ensure the research was carried out in an ethical manner (drawing mainly on the work of Alderson and Morrow, 2011, and Graham et al., 2013), and some of the ethical questions thrown up by the research that are interesting in their own right. As a

doctoral research project under the auspices of a UK university, there was a requirement to follow an established ethical scrutiny and approval process, where the main issues that had to be addressed were informed consent, child protection, and confidentiality. Other issues with special relevance to this research were the recruitment of child researchers, rewards and incentives, ownership of the research, and accountability/follow-up.

Informed consent

To ensure informed consent, the information sheets and consent forms to be used with the young researchers and their parents were drafted in such a way as to meet the formal requirements specified, while using a format and language appropriate to local cultural norms and expectations (Appendices 8 and 9). CESESMA workers met with the candidate young researchers, and in most cases their parents as well, to explain and discuss the project face to face, before asking them to sign and return consent forms. Issues covered included the extent and nature of the commitment expected, the voluntary nature of their participation, their right to withdraw without explanation or consequences, the fact that no incentive or reward was offered but travel and subsistence would be provided, and the protective accompaniment that would be offered by CESESMA staff at all times. Consent was also asked for children to be photographed working on the project and for such photographs to be included in published outputs.

In the course of their research, however, the young researchers interviewed other children (referred to as 'interviewees' here as the word 'participants' would be ambiguous), so these children's informed consent was also needed. Since unmediated (or minimally mediated) child-to-child interaction was considered an important aspect of the methodology, it was felt that for the young researchers to insist on signed consent forms from other children (and/or their parents), as well as being out of keeping with local expectations, would be detrimental to the quality of the data. This argument was accepted by the ethical scrutiny committee; thus when the young researchers approached other children and asked if they were willing to be interviewed, they just read them a statement on the nature and purpose of the research which the team had previously agreed, and accepted their verbal assurance that they agreed to be interviewed (or their walking away if they declined).

Although CESESMA, through its local projects, had direct access to the children and adolescents involved, and did not need to approach them via a Ministry of Education gatekeeper, informed consent was also obtained from the heads of the four schools involved. Despite the potentially contentious nature of the research (i.e. the possibility that children might criticise school policies or practices), this proved unproblematic, largely because CESESMA chose schools where they knew they could count on a relationship of mutual trust and respect with the school leadership.

Although adult participants in this study (teachers, parents and key informants) had a more limited role as providers of background information (see Table 3 above), an equivalent ethically-approved procedure was followed to ensure that they too were able to give informed consent before participating.

Child protection

The university's ethical scrutiny process required police vetting of the researcher by both Northern Irish and Nicaraguan police. Primarily, however, ensuring the safety of the young researchers (and their interviewees) was facilitated by the commitment of the CESESMA team to support the research. CESESMA had only the previous year adopted new child protection practice guidelines which provided a solid, locally appropriate framework (CESESMA, 2012c). Trained and experienced community education workers who knew the children and their communities were always on hand, and CESESMA provided transport for the young researchers to and from their home villages for every workshop. As the young researchers' plan involved interviewing other children in their home villages, a serious discussion about this was held during their second workshop and safety guidelines were agreed. Adult workers arranged to be on hand in the communities when interviewing was carried out, available in case of difficulties but not interfering while the children did the interviews. No child protection issues came to light or concerns arose during the course of this research.

Confidentiality, privacy and anonymity

The issue of confidentiality, and particularly the disclosure of participants' identities, was an important issue in the research. Ethical guidelines are generally framed

to protect the *subjects* of research, that is the people data are gathered from (though they may be called 'participants' or another word), and it is assumed that, in normal circumstances, it is in these people's interest to remain anonymous and unidentifiable. In the present study, however, children and adolescents were invited to participate not only as data subjects, but also as researchers, and these issues need to be considered separately in respect of each group.

First, regarding those children and adolescents who took on a researcher role; the norm, at least in academic research, is that researchers put their name on their research and take responsibility for it. In the case of child researchers, therefore, there are multiple interests in play, and an appropriate balance has to be struck. Children should not be allowed to come to any harm as a result of their involvement in research, but they should also be able to take credit for their achievements. Following CRC Article 12, the children's own wishes in this regard need to be given due weight, and in CESESMA's experience, child researchers do not hesitate in identifying themselves by name as the authors of their research. However another important factor is what is in the children's best interests (Article 3), where the views of responsible and informed adults may also be taken into account. These adults may see potential risks in identifying children as the authors of research, but it is always worth asking whether these risks are real or imagined, and to what extent adults may be over-cautious in order to protect themselves. Also, for a child to share the credit for a significant piece of research – whether by standing up in public to present their work, or seeing their name on a published article – is likely to contribute to the child's sense of empowerment and so be very much in their best interest (CESESMA, 2012a; Kellett, 2010b). In this case, the ethical scrutiny committee accepted these arguments and approved the proposal on this basis, provided each young researcher had the option of remaining anonymous or using a pseudonym if they wished. When the children completed their research, however, they were, as expected, keen to identify themselves by putting their names on their report, including their photographs, and standing up in public to present it.

It is also important to consider issues of confidentiality, anonymity and safety in relation to those 150 other children who were interviewed by the young researchers, and so had a more conventional role as data subjects in the research. For them, the

usual safeguards were applied to guarantee their anonymity and the confidentiality of their data; there were no names or other identifying information on the interview forms, and secure procedures were followed for handling, storing and eventually destroying data.

Equivalent safeguards were also applied in the case of the adult research participants referred to above, thus guaranteeing the anonymity, confidentiality and security of the information they provided.

Recruitment of child researchers

A set of selection criteria was agreed and approved as meeting the ethical standards required by both the sponsoring university in the UK and CESESMA in Nicaragua (Box 10). As discussed above, some flexibility was used in applying these criteria, but this was done with ethical intent. For example, although the target age-range was set as 10-15, a nine-year-old was offered a place in the team, as by all the other criteria she had shown herself to be the ideal candidate. Although CESESMA expressed a commitment to provide individual support for any team member who needed it because of disability or for any other reason, none of the young researchers who came forward needed such support. The ethical question that arises here has been mentioned earlier: Was enough done to identify children with disabilities or other support needs and encourage them to put themselves forward?

Rewards and incentives

Carrying out research activities without payment is not in itself unethical, nor is offering other people opportunities to do so. However, when salaried adult researchers work alongside unpaid child researchers doing similar work, the ethical implications need to be considered (Alderson and Morrow, 2011, pp. 56-57). The choice between 'intrinsic' and 'extrinsic' rewards has been identified by Shier (2010a) as one of the tensions to be navigated in all participation work with children and adolescents. CESESMA tends to take the view that when children get involved in its projects the rewards should be intrinsic; that is, found within the work itself, as explained here:

> We do not pay them. This is partly because we don't have the resources, but more importantly because we have always insisted that they do not work for us.

What they do, they do for the good of their community and for the defence of their rights as children and young people. (Shier, 2010b, p. 222)

Though the satisfaction of being an 'active citizen' and contributing something valuable to one's community in this way may be enough of a reward for the young people involved, CESESMA believes there are other kinds of rewards to be found in such community-based project work. Children and adolescents are offered new skills, knowledge and practical and personal learning experiences that may have a significant value to them, both immediately and in the future; all of which contribute to the 'empowerment effect' that has been discussed earlier.

Although all those who signed up to participate as young researchers in the present study had had previous involvement with CESESMA and so already knew what to expect, to ensure that ethical standards were adhered to throughout, children and their parents were fully informed, both verbally and in writing, about what they could expect from CESESMA (travel, food, support, training, security, protection), but that there would be no payment, reward or other incentive for their participation, and their informed consent was given on this basis.

About half-way through the research project, the Nicaraguan coffee harvest began, and, as coffee-picking gathered momentum in the local communities, the CESESMA team was worried that there might be a poor attendance at the final workshops in late November and early December as parents sent their sons and daughters off to work. However nobody missed a session due to work (in the entire project only one young researcher missed a session and this was for personal reasons, not work-related), which suggests that the young researchers were able to find more than sufficient intrinsic reward in their work on the project.

Ownership

The decision to invite children to engage as researchers in a project that was also intended to be part of a doctoral research study raised ethical questions. The obvious problem is that a PhD thesis must be the candidate's own unaided work, and it is not acceptable to submit work done by other people. Several points can be made to address this issue. First, the adult PhD candidate was actively involved in and responsible for the work of enabling, supporting and facilitating the young

researchers' investigative process. Thus, while the adult PhD candidate could not claim 'ownership' of the product (that is, he did not claim that the children's research report was his work), the existence of that product was a direct result of work done by him as a skilled process facilitator. Second, the use of existing databases (secondary data) for analysis is a common feature of academic research, and this is not considered an ethical problem, provided the source of the data is acknowledged and agreements about its use are kept to. It is only considered unacceptable if the candidate claims that work done by others is his or her own, or passes it off as if it was. In the case of the present study, the young researchers' ownership of their own work was made clear from the start, and stressed throughout the process. The Young researchers' report is included as an Appendix to this thesis, clearly identified as a separate piece of work and not part of the text. Finally the adult PhD candidate undertook extensive additional research, carrying out a separate, more thorough analysis of the original data and background research with a range of adult informants.

It was necessary for the adult researcher to respectfully ask the young researchers if they would be willing to make their data available, after they had finished with it, for further analysis, and in doing so to be honest with them about his own agenda which involved using their data to help him get a PhD. This was done both at the start of the process and again at the end. That is, even before they had collected their data, the young researchers were aware that when they had completed their research the adult facilitator would be asking their permission to take the data away for further work; but they were asked again afterwards, to confirm that they still had no objection.[36] Although the young researchers gave their wholehearted and unreserved agreement for their data to be taken away and used in this manner, no attempt was made to get this in writing, and this should be considered as a safeguard when using similar methodologies in future.

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[36] There was no "Plan B" for the eventuality that they did object. This was a case of gambling all on a positive outcome.

Accountability and follow-up

A recurring problem with engaging children in research (or participation in general) is raising expectations that this is going to lead to something, which then never happens. How this was addressed in this research was discussed in an earlier sub-section on *Follow-up, dissemination and social action*, which described how CESESMA supported the young researchers in drawing up an action plan to disseminate their findings and advocate for action on their recommendations. Whilst there were notable successes in disseminating the young researchers' work, it is suggested that little was achieved in terms of supporting advocacy for change. Applying Lundy's (2007) four stage model, children were successfully supported in claiming their *space* and finding their *voice,* and even an attentive *audience* for their views, but the additional support they needed to help them achieve real *influence* was lacking. This issue will be addressed further as part of the critical reflection on the research methods in Chapter 7.

9. Summary

This chapter began by introducing *'Transformative Research by Children and Adolescents'* as an approach developed through NGO-supported fieldwork with child and adolescent researchers, which had no direct antecedents in academic research methodology. However, from this starting point, it has located the research in relation to both a guiding paradigm, and a number of existing methodological approaches that it can identify with. It has addressed the problematic issue of translation in cross-language research, and sought to justify the decision to dispense with translation altogether in this project. It has given a full account of the methods used for collection and analysis of data, and has addressed issues of trustworthiness (as an alternative to quantitative validity) and research ethics.

It has been explained above that the main interview data were subject to two separate analyses. The first of these was carried out by the Young Researchers themselves, and forms the basis for their final report (Appendix 3). The second analysis was done by the adult researcher, and this is the topic of the following chapter.

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Chapter 5: The young researchers' interview data

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1. Introduction

The context having been established and the research methodology and methods described and discussed in the preceding chapters, this chapter will set out the main substantive findings from the adult researcher's analysis of the young researchers' interview data regarding their classmates' perceptions of their rights in school. As mentioned in the previous chapter, the research process generated a great deal of additional data. However, the young researchers' interview data was regarded as the core data-set, and this is the main focus of this chapter; though it does on occasion also draw on the young researchers' final report (Niñas y Niños Investigadores, 2014), and the transcripts of conversations with sub-groups of the young researchers' team recorded subsequently during the second field trip. In addition, information provided by adult key informants, taken from transcriptions of their interviews, is used to help explain some of the findings.

As explained in the previous chapter, the raw data consisted of 900 short written answers from 150 respondents, to which a bespoke thematic analysis procedure was applied, generating a number of large matrices with over 200 codes in total, which could be ordered, grouped and sorted by various criteria (gender, age, school attended etc.), and which could be searched for the occurrence of any particular word or phrase.

This chapter aims to maintain a descriptive approach to the data, carrying out a procedural type of analysis rather than in-depth interpretation or argumentation. It is in the following chapter that a more discursive approach will be applied. This approach draws on Wolcott's (1994) thinking regarding the importance of separat-

ing 'description', 'analysis' and 'interpretation' in accounts of qualitative research (although there is a certain amount of explanation and discussion in this chapter, where it is felt that some issues arising are best dealt with 'on the spot', rather than taken to the next chapter as themes for further discussion). Though the following description is mainly qualitative, it makes substantial use of numbers and percentages; a blurring of quantitative-qualitative boundaries that was discussed in the previous chapter.

The discussion that follows includes quotations from the original data, translated from Spanish by the author. As discussed in the previous chapter, the data-set as a whole was not translated for analysis, only the selected quotations. Unless the text says otherwise, these have been selected as typical or representative of groups of similar answers. Where a particular answer is quoted because it is distinctive or of special interest, this is clearly stated. Longer quotes, or those that are distinctive, are referenced to the original interview forms using the following system: (ID: Sex, School, Age), where 'ID' is a unique identification number given to the interview at the time of coding (as interviewees were anonymous), 'Sex' is 'G' for girl or 'B' for boy, and 'School' is 'A', 'B', 'C' or 'D' according to the pseudonyms used for the four communities. For example: (97:GA12) means the words quoted were spoken by interviewee number 97, who is a girl from El Ayote aged 12. Words or phrases that are common to a number of respondents are not referenced in this way, as to do so would be of no great value and an inconvenience for the reader.

2. About the interviewees

As explained in the previous chapter, all the young researchers were students at the primary schools in their respective village communities, and the arrangement was that they would interview fellow students at these same schools. A description of these communities, the way of life of their people, and their schools can be found in the final section of Chapter 3. It was agreed that in selecting interviewees the young researchers should seek a good balance between the sexes and across the school age range, but no specific quotas were set in this regard. In their report, they summarised the details of their interview subjects in a table, shown here as Table 4.

Children interviewed by the Young Researchers			
Community	**Girls**	**Boys**	**Total**
El Ayote	20	12	32
Las Brisas	16	16	32
El Colibrí	13	14	27
Darío	35	24	59
Total	**84**	**66**	**150**

Table 4: Details of children interviewed, taken from the Young Researchers' report (Niñas y Niños Investigadores, 2014, p. 133) (pseudonyms have been substituted for names of schools).

Following the conventional (and legal) distinction in Nicaragua between children (0-12 years of age) and adolescents (13-17); they also reported that 137 of their interviewees (90%) were children aged between 6 and 12, and the remaining 13 were adolescents aged 13 to 15. Since in Nicaragua children are allocated to school grades not by age, but dependent on satisfactory progress through the previous grades, which in rural areas is greatly affected by child labour, it is not unusual to find teenagers still attending primary school (discussed in Chapter 3).

The questionnaires themselves show that the average age of the interviewees was 10.2 years, and the breakdown of grades is shown in Table 5.

School grades of children interviewed	
Preschool (nursery class):	1
1st grade:	22
2nd grade:	37
3rd grade:	34
4th grade:	32
5th grade:	14
5th/6th grades combined:	9
6th grade:	1
Total:	150

Table 5: School grades of children interviewed (from information on original interview forms)

3. Questions 1 and 2: How does your teacher treat you at school? / How do your fellow students treat you at school?

A large majority (93%) in all four schools said that their teacher treated them well. Many went on to give examples of the kind of good treatment they received: 'with kindness', 'with respect', 'lets me go out to play', 'gives me advice', 'helps me with my work', and so on (in one school, particularly amongst the boys, 'she gives me permission to go to the toilet', was cited several times as an example of the teacher's good treatment, which suggests that this issue may have recently been a cause of friction in that particular school). There was some gender difference in the responses, with boys more likely to mention being allowed out to play, or the teacher helping them with their schoolwork, while girls were more likely to focus on being treated with kindness, love or respect. Others described their teacher's good treatment of them in terms of the things she didn't do: 'she doesn't scold me', 'she doesn't shout', 'she doesn't hit me', etc.

These first two questions, though relevant to the issue of rights in school, were not expressed in rights language, and did not anticipate answers in terms of rights (as is also true of question 4 to be discussed later). Only three interviewees gave such answers, saying that their teacher treated them well, 'because she respects my rights'. The right to be heard was barely mentioned, with just one interviewee saying his teacher treated him well because, 'She respects us and takes our opinions into account' (75:BC9).[37]

Almost one third of all interviewees, whilst claiming that their teacher treated them well, qualified this by making it conditional on their own behaviour: 'She treats me well because I'm a good pupil', '…because I'm obedient', '…because I do my work', '…because I'm not rude', etc. There is the unspoken implication that if they did not behave in this way, their teacher might not treat them so well. Two

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[37] The near-invisibility of the right to be heard, or to be taken into account in decisions, is one of the emerging themes that will be discussed in due course.

interviewees said that their teacher treated them well because they were 'very intelligent'.

Only a small minority (10 out of the 150 interviewees, or 7%) said that their teacher did not treat them well. Here, the difference between schools was striking. In one school nobody claimed to have been treated badly by a teacher, and in two others, only one person did so. The other eight claims of bad treatment by a teacher all came from the fourth school. However, all ten claims of bad treatment were partial, qualified or conditional: 'At the start of the year badly, but now a bit better' (95:GA12), 'She sometimes has differences with some pupils' (114:BA9). In several cases they justified their teacher's treatment of them as being in response to their own unacceptable behaviour: 'She gets annoyed with me when she says something and I don't do it' (118:BA9), 'She tells me off for not paying attention' (104:GA10). There was not one response that contained a claim of generalised or persistent bad treatment of a student by a teacher.

Given the unequal power relationships between teachers and students in schools, it is conceivable that some children did consider themselves badly treated by their teachers but did not want to say so. However, the research methodology used here, while it could never completely rule out such a possibility, did much to minimise it. Students were interviewed by their peers, voluntarily and with informed consent, away from the school premises, anonymously and in confidence, with no adult overhearing or eavesdropping, and nothing to identify them written on the interview form. This approach went a long way to create conditions where children who did feel they were being badly treated by their teachers would feel able to say so.[38]

The second question asked children how they were treated by their fellow-students at school. Here again, a majority of interviewees (55%) said they were treated well – though not such a large majority as in the previous question. Again many went on

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[38] There is a fuller discussion of the different factors that contribute to the 'trustworthiness' of the data in the previous chapter on research methods.

to give examples, such as being treated with respect, kindness, being helped, sharing food or school materials. Many talked of mutual respect and friendship, and of playing together. As with the previous question, many discussed being treated well in terms of the bad things their classmates didn't do: fighting, hitting, name-calling, insulting, or other kinds of mistreatment.

However, a sizeable minority (30%) said they were treated badly by their fellow-students, and the remaining 15% gave mixed responses ('Some of them treat me well, others are bad to me'). Examples of bad treatment included fighting, hitting, insulting, name-calling, hair-pulling, ignoring, vulgarity and bad language, and stealing or damaging school items such as pencils or exercise books. There were minor gender differences, with boys more likely to be punched or kicked and girls more likely to be pinched or have their hair pulled. Unlike what was said about bad treatment by teachers, no justifications were offered for bad treatment by fellow-students; that is nobody said their fellow-students treated them badly because of something they themselves had done (although one interviewee said that his classmates fought with him after falsely accusing him of stealing, and another that, 'They treat me badly because I'm poor and don't get good marks' (106:GA10)).

Overall, what stands out here is the difference between the two sets of answers. Consistently across all four schools, the responses show that, for these children, mistreatment by their teachers is the lesser problem and mistreatment by their fellow-students the greater one. Although the questions were not asked or answered in terms of rights, these findings impinge on education rights. Drawing on the UNICEF/UNESCO model (Lansdown el al., 2007), one of the core components of rights in education is the right to respect in the learning environment, and another core component, the right to quality education, requires a child-friendly, safe and healthy learning environment. Both of these are in doubt if children are habitually mistreating one another in school. This, then, is the first main theme to emerge from the data: For these children, their right to an adequate, secure and quality education is threatened less by their relations with their teachers (despite the strong power imbalance), and more by their relations with one another. This theme will be explored in the next chapter.

4. Question 3: How have you been taught about human rights at school?

The answers given to this question were very diverse.[39] Most interviewees interpreted the question as asking *what* they had been taught about rights in school, and only a few attempted to answer the 'how' question as asked. However what emerges from the analysis is a consistent, striking difference in the types of answers given depending on which of the four schools the interviewees attended. The young researchers picked up on this in their own analysis and drew attention to it in their report:

> We discovered that what children and adolescents learn about their rights depends on what school they go to. That is, children and adolescents from different schools gave very different answers. (Niñas y Niños Investigadores, 2014, p. 134)

Nearly all the children from Darío school mentioned one or more specific rights that they had been taught about. In most cases they named, or alluded to, rights found in the CRC and/or the Nicaraguan children's legal code. Table 6 shows the rights mentioned, in order of frequency.

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[39] The full coding of the answers to this question is shown in Appendix 21.

Rights mentioned as having been learnt about in school	Number of times mentioned *
To play / recreation	18
To a house / home (or to an adequate or decent home)	17
To education: to study / go to school / have a school (or an adequate school) / have a teacher	16
To a name (or to a name and nationality)	12
To a family	7
To food / to eat (sometimes healthy food or diet)	7
To health	5
Not to be forced to work / not to be made to carry heavy things	5
To be respected	4
To be treated well / not mistreated / not hit	3
Not to be mistreated in school / to be treated well in school	2
To life	2
To talk	1
* There were 59 completed questionnaires from Darío School	

Table 6: Rights children from Darío school said they had learnt about in school
(from information on original interview forms)

In just a few cases they mentioned rights such as the right not to be scolded *(regañar)* or bothered by others *(molestar)*, which are not usually made explicit in human rights treaties, but which may be consistent with an alternative view of 'living rights' (Hanson and Nieuwenhuys, 2012). Only a few of the Darío interviewees mentioned responsibilities or chores when asked about their rights ('to respect others', 'to do my homework') – in striking contrast to the other schools which will be discussed below. Only one interviewee responded in a way that directly answered the question by saying *how* she had learnt about rights: 'They explained about them as they should' (01:GD9).

The answers from interviewees attending El Ayote school were completely different in content. Only 2 out of 32 interviewees from this school mentioned any specific right by name ('to play' and 'to be respected'). The remaining answers can be divided into three clusters. One group said they had not been taught about their rights or had learnt nothing about them (one child adding '…because I've behaved well' (92:BA12)). Another group attempted to directly answer the question,

mentioning how they had learnt about rights. Some said this was through being instructed by the teacher, others mentioned books and leaflets, and a few said they had received training or been to a workshop. Finally there was a group of eight interviewees who all gave similar, in some cases quite eloquent, answers about claiming their rights and using them to defend themselves, demand respect, overcome bullies and reject violence, as in the following examples:

> They've taught me my rights to defend myself against those who think I'm weak and think I don't know my rights as a girl. (99:GA9)

> I've been taught how to defend myself, because other girls have suffered bullying, but with what I've learnt, they won't be able to do anything to me. (105:GA10)

Closer scrutiny of the original data showed that these interviewees were all girls, and had all been interviewed by the same young researcher, who was 12 years old at the time, but was already known to CESESMA as a sharp, confident equal-rights activist in her community.[40]

This throws up a methodological issue. Did the young researcher put words into the mouths of her interviewees to promote her own views, and if so can these data be considered credible? However, there is another plausible explanation; the researcher may have selected her interview subjects from amongst a group of friends already involved in a girls group who had been working on issues of self-defence, anti-bullying and assertiveness. Thus, while her sample may not have been representative of the school population as a whole, the views expressed would be genuine and there would have been no need to doctor the responses.

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[40] Due in large part to her effective engagement with this research process, this young researcher was chosen by CESESMA to represent the organisation at an international children's rights sympsium organised as part of the St Olav's Festival in Trondheim, Norway, in July 2014 (this event is referred to in the section on follow-up and dissemination in the previous chapter).

The two remaining schools, El Colibrí and Las Brisas, were similar in their replies, but completely different from the first two. In both these schools, almost all the interviewees, when asked how they had been taught about their rights, mentioned things that were not in any sense rights, but either duties, social norms or rules of conduct. It is worth recalling here that the Nicaraguan Children's Legal Code, like the African Charter on the Rights and Wellbeing of the Child, does impose certain defined duties *(deberes)* on children, so that these duties do have a legal status that can be considered to be on an equal footing with children's rights (Sloth-Nielsen and Mezmur, 2008) (although, to keep things in perspective, the Children's Legal Code has 54 articles setting out children's rights and just one that establishes duties). The 'rights' mentioned by the interviewees that corresponded broadly to Nicaraguan children's defined legal duties included: obeying their parents; respecting parents, teachers and older people; doing their schoolwork; and respecting the rights of others in general. Most of the other things they mentioned were neither rights nor duties, but could best be described as 'social norms' or 'rules of conduct'. These included: 'Be polite', 'Don't fight with the other children', 'Arrive at school on time', 'Don't grope the girls' *(manosear)*, 'Ask to speak if someone else is speaking', 'Don't use bad words', 'Don't spit on the floor', and more in this vein.

There were some differences between the two schools: Interviewees from El Colibrí focused strongly on respecting others, particularly teachers; while those from Las Brisas focused more on doing their schoolwork, keeping the rules, behaving well and not fighting. There were no noticeable gender differences. No one from El Colibrí mentioned any real human right, but 6 from Las Brisas did mention the right to play, and one mentioned the right to education, while others mentioned rights to sing, dance, laugh and cry.

This dissimilarity in the answers to the question 'How have you been taught about human rights at school?' across the four schools is one of the most striking of the young researchers' findings. To sum up: In one school children had learnt to list their rights; in another some of them had learnt the importance of actively defending their rights, while others claimed to have learnt nothing at all; and in the two remaining schools almost all had learnt to confuse their rights with duties, norms and rules of conduct. The young researchers themselves saw this as evidence

that many teachers were not teaching about human rights in an acceptable way, as they make clear in their report:

> From this analysis we conclude that not all the teachers are teaching children's rights as they should. Because of this many of us are victims of violence at school, at home, or in the community due to lack of information. (Niñas y Niños Investigadores, 2014, p. 134)

This, then, is the second emerging theme that will need to be discussed further. In schools that have participated in a rights-based education project over a number of years, why are these children not learning about their rights, or learning about them in an inconsistent and inappropriate way? In order for them to learn about their rights in a more effective way, the pedagogy of children's rights may need to be reconsidered, but, given the importance that many educators attach to responsibilities as a corollary of rights (not just in Nicaragua, but throughout the world), how might such a pedagogy be developed and implemented?

5. Question 4: How have you been punished at school?

Pursuing their overall theme of how children's rights are respected or otherwise in school, the young researchers chose to frame their fourth question in terms of *punishment*. In adopting this as the specific focus of their question, they were reflecting their own experiences and understanding of school life, where teachers commonly mete out punishments, some of which may be seen as fair and reasonable, while others are seen as to a greater or lesser extent violatory of children's rights. In the way they chose to word this question, they used this idea of (mis)behaviour and punishment as a framework for gathering information on other children's experiences. However, framing the discussion in these terms supposes a particular paradigm of classroom management (or behaviour management) that tends to preclude a wider, rights-based, exploration of the nature of classroom relations, and how an optimal environment for learning can be established in the classroom. The discussion that follows looks at the young researchers' interview data from within the limits of their own (mis)behaviour-punishment paradigm, but will return to the wider questions at the end so they can be flagged for further discussion.

Just over half the children interviewed replied that they had not been punished at school (78 out of 150 interviews, or 52%), and these were fairly evenly spread across the four schools. Most of these just said they had not been punished and left it at that. However, about a third went on to offer some kind of justification for not having been punished. Only two interviewees explained this in terms of the teacher's approach: 'She hasn't punished us in any way because the teacher respects us' (71:GC11). The rest offered justifications in terms of their own behaviour: 'Because I've been well-behaved', 'because I pay attention to the teacher', 'because I do my work', 'because I'm obedient', and so on. One girl said, 'No, because I'm not like the other kids' (98:GA8).

As for the remaining 72 interviewees – those who said they had been punished in some way – some focused on the types of punishments they had received, and others on what they had been punished for, while a few answers covered both aspects. For those who referred to a specific type of punishment, Table 7 shows which types were mentioned, in order of frequency.

Types of punishment mentioned	Number of times mentioned		
	Girls	Boys	Total
Told off / scolded *(regañar)*	16	11	27
Deprived of playtime *(recreo)* / kept in during playtime	12	15	27
Lowered marks *(bajar puntos)*	6	3	9
Deprived of food (free school snack)	-	4	4
Made to stand at the chalkboard	2	-	2
Given extra work	2	-	2
Sent out of the classroom	1	1	2
Hit on the head with a ruler	-	2	2
Made to do chores	1	-	1
Teachers calls my attention (to the error)	-	1	1
Told to go away and come back with work completed	1	-	1
Suspended from school	1	-	1

Table 7: Types of punishments mentioned by interviewees, in order of frequency
(from information on original interview forms)

As to what they were punished for, the infractions mentioned are shown in Table 8, again in order of frequency.

What children were punished for	Number of times mentioned		
	Girls	Boys	Total
Not doing work / not handing in work set	11	8	19
Being rude (insolente, malcriada)	3	1	4
Being naughty *(andar de necia),* badly behaved	3	-	3
Leaving the class (without permission)	-	3	3
Not paying attention / talking in class	1	1	2
Fighting with other kids	2	-	2
Not turning up at school / irregular attendance	1	1	2
Playing	-	2	2
Disobedience	-	1	1
Due to other kids' false gossip	-	1	1

Table 8: What children were punished for, in order of frequency
(from information on original interview forms)

It is noticeable that there are only two mentions of corporal punishment. These were two boys from the same school, interviewed by the same young researcher, both of whom said that they had been hit on the head with a ruler. Apart from these two mentions, corporal punishment was not raised as an issue by anyone. Nor was there much mention of the kind of expressly humiliating punishments that were formerly common in Nicaraguan schools (two children mentioned being made to stand at the board, but it is not clear from their answers to what extent they considered this to be a 'humiliating punishment'). This is in marked contrast to an earlier national study where use of 'physical and humiliating punishments' in schools was identified as a prevalent form of violence against children, widely accepted as normal in rural communities, and a major cause for concern (Moreno, 2007; and see the following chapter for a fuller discussion on this topic).

This apparent reduction, indeed near elimination, of corporal punishment was one of the issues raised with the young researchers in the follow-up conversations. They confirmed that their own experience corroborated what their interview data were suggesting; that corporal punishment was now very little used in their schools.

They were aware of isolated cases, but considered that those teachers who continued to hit children were out of line, as they knew corporal punishment was officially prohibited in schools. Some of the older ones said that they themselves had seen this change occur in the years since they had started school, and that just a few years earlier corporal punishment was more prevalent. Others, who were too young to have noticed much change themselves, said that older brothers and sisters or their parents had told them how different things used to be when corporal punishment was the norm in the classroom.

But if this is indeed the case, what can be learnt from the interview data about what has replaced corporal punishment; and do the changes that have taken place suggest there is now greater respect for children's rights in Nicaraguan schools?

In the 150 interviews, only four kinds of punishment were mentioned more than twice, so these may be worth looking at more closely. At the top of the list, with an equal number of mentions, were being scolded or told off and being kept in at playtime. Starting with the former, the children obviously viewed the tellings-off they received as punishment (as this is what they were specifically asked about), but it could be argued that there is a distinction to be made between appropriate teacher critique of poor work or unacceptable behaviour, and a reprimand delivered intentionally as a form of punishment for such poor work or behaviour. Though the children felt they were being punished, it is not clear from the data whether their teachers were aiming to punish them, and if so, whether they were doing so in a way that intentionally or unintentionally violated their students' rights.

Joint top of the punishments table with scolding and telling off was the denial of playtime, which generally meant keeping children in the classroom when others went out to play. This use of playtime as a sanction or control mechanism was found equally across all four schools and applied to both boys and girls. Three interviewees went on to state that they viewed this denial of playtime as not just a punishment, but a violation of their rights. In this context it is worth noting that the next question (as will be further discussed below) asked children which of their rights was most violated at school, and the right to play and recreation was, by a wide margin, the right most often mentioned. While it appears that teachers are coming to favour denial of playtime as part of their repertoire of available sanctions

for unsatisfactory work or behaviour, in place of the physical and humiliating punishments that are no longer available, at the same time the students themselves are becoming aware of play and recreation as a human rights issue. This then, is a third emerging theme that needs to be explored further; the growing awareness by children of play and recreation as a rights issue, coinciding with its increasing use by teachers as a punishment and control mechanism.

Third on the list of most-mentioned punishments was the deducting of marks. With one exception, this type of punishment was only mentioned by interviewees from Darío school. It appeared to be quite common in this school, but was used little, if at all, in the other three schools. To understand the nature of this punishment it is necessary to understand how the assessment system works in Nicaraguan schools, and the following account draws on information provided by adult key informants as part of the present study. Teachers are expected to assess each student's progress every term, giving marks for academic achievement, effort, and conduct, using guidelines and criteria set by the Ministry of Education. Report cards are sent home to parents (who themselves may punish children severely for bringing home bad marks), and marks are reviewed at the end of each year to assess whether a child has successfully completed a grade and can progress to the next class. Information provided by the adult informants suggests that the deduction of marks for bad behaviour, or threatening to do so, is a well-established behaviour management tool in Nicaraguan schools. However there is debate among teachers themselves about its legitimacy. It is felt important to draw a line between the fair and unbiased assessment of a child's conduct in school based on the established Ministry of Education criteria, and the unconsidered or vindictive deducting of marks for perceived misdemeanours or failure to comply with unreasonable demands. The informants felt many teachers habitually crossed this line, and the resulting practice of deducting marks as punishment was therefore unacceptable. An example given was a teacher who required all children to contribute materials needed for a craft project; materials that could not be obtained in the local communities but only in a distant town, and who then deducted marks from all those students who failed to bring the required materials. In this study, the students of Darío school clearly believed that teachers were using or threatening deduction of marks as a form of

punishment (since the question they were asked was unequivocal: 'How have you been punished at school?').

The last of the four most-mentioned punishments (mentioned by just four interviewees, three of them from the El Colibrí school) was to be denied food. What the interviewees were referring to here was a free mid-morning snack (commonly a bowl of split-pea porridge) provided by the government to all primary school children in certain deprived areas. Adult informants explained that this was a government policy initiative in response to surveys that had shown many children to be suffering from malnutrition (just one of a number of government initiatives to address the problem of rural poverty). All children attending school in these areas should automatically be given something to eat, usually at mid-morning break-time each day. Four interviewees said they had been denied this food as a punishment, though none said why they had been punished in this way. Although none of them stated that they considered such a punishment a rights violation, when it came to the following question, about the rights most violated in school (see below), several interviewees (different ones) did mention the right to food as one of those rights sometimes violated at school. Though it seems not to be as commonly-used as the denial of playtime, this denial of food can be seen as another form of punishment that is taking the place of the obsolete corporal punishment, but that, like denial of playtime, brings with it new possibilities for violation of children's rights.

Though not referred to in the interview data, it is worth mentioning that in the follow-up focus group discussions, when asked again about the types of punishments most common in their schools, the Young Researchers themselves added two additional types of punishment to this list: being sent to the principal's office, and having a note sent home. Though the young researchers said they would not themselves expect to be beaten if such a note was sent to their parents, they were aware that this could happen. Adult informants also commented that this was a way of keeping the threat of corporal punishment alive by 'outsourcing' it to parents.

As mentioned at the start of this section, the young researchers decided to ask a question specifically about punishments in school, and in doing so, they were merely reflecting ideas about classroom life that were part of their everyday

experience; that is, that a teacher exercises control by punishing (or threatening to punish) behaviour that is considered unacceptable. The question looked at what kinds of punishments were given, and what for, but did not create space for questioning the underlying idea: that certain behaviours attract punishments, determined and enforced by the teacher, and that that is how the school runs. This suggests another theme to explore: What would a rights-based approach to classroom management look-like; particularly if it sought to move beyond the (mis)behaviour-punishment model that the young researchers espoused? A proposal for exploring this topic further is taken up in the concluding chapter.

6. Question 5: Which of your human rights are most violated at school?

In response to the fifth question, 'Which of your human rights are most violated at school?', just over a third of the 150 interviewees answered that their rights were respected at school, or that none of their rights had been violated. Eleven of these (mostly girls) went on say that this was due to the fact that they were well-behaved or obedient. Although they represented only 7% of the total interviewees, their answers suggest that these children believed that rights were offered as a reward for good behaviour. Many of these children attended the El Colibrí school, where answers to previous questions also indicated that the students generally had a poor understanding of their rights.

This question was raised again with the young researchers in the follow-up conversations. All the sub-groups of young researchers, including those from El Colibrí school, were quite clear that everyone has rights, and that this is not affected by their behaviour in school. They maintained that those of their fellow-students who had said that their rights were respected because of their good behaviour had the wrong idea.

As for the remaining two-thirds of the interviewees, these were almost evenly divided between those who named a right or rights that they felt had been violated at school, and those who answered in terms of mistreatment of one kind or another, without linking this to a specific named right.

Starting with those who did mention rights, the rights with more than one mention as most violated at school are shown in Table 9, in order of frequency.

Which human rights are most violated at school?	Number of times mentioned		
	Girls	Boys	Total
To play / recreation	25	17	42
To a name (to be called by one's name)	12	1	13
To food	3	4	7
To a school / education	2	1	3

Table 9: Human rights most violated at school, in order of frequency
(from information on original interview forms)

The high importance attached to the right to play and recreation by these interviewees has already been noted in relation to previous questions, but it is here that the importance of this particular right to the children – and their concern about its violation – really stands out.

Here it is worth considering a number of factors which could have caused a bias towards the prioritising of the right to play. The young researchers themselves had shown a strong interest in the right to play throughout their preparation and planning programme, as can be seen in some of the drawings and other materials produced during this process (see their report in Appendix 3). This culminated in their deciding to ask a specific question about the right to play in their survey. In drawing up their final list of questions, they were advised against including more than six or seven questions, so careful consideration had to be given to every question included, and many of the questions they initially proposed had to be excluded. The facilitator even asked them if they were sure that this particular right deserved a question all to itself. They considered this, and confirmed that they were. This leads to further questions: Was the young researchers' interest in the right to play autochthonous, or had it been brought to the table by their adult facilitators? The lead adult facilitator did indeed have a strong professional interest in the right to play, but, being reflexively aware of this, had been at pains to ensure that this particular right was not favoured or promoted by himself or any of the adult team. Even if the young researchers were not unduly influenced in their choices by adult facilitators, it is still possible that they themselves influenced their own interview subjects, maybe unintentionally. For example, when they came to answer interview question five, about which rights were most violated in school,

interviewees may have already been aware that the next question on the list was specifically about the right to play.

Even after taking account of these potential sources of bias, the predominance of the right to play in this data is a striking finding. On further analysis, a number of the interviewees went further in their answers and explained *how* the right to play is violated in school. Their answers were of two kinds, each of which resonates with issues identified in discussion of the earlier questions. Fourteen interviewees (both girls and boys) said that the violation of their right to play occurred when they were denied playtime, or not permitted to go out to play. This ties into the above discussion about teachers using denial of playtime as one of the favoured forms of punishment, and children's recognition of this as a potential violation of their right to play. Another 11 interviewees (again both girls and boys) said that their right to play was violated when other children would not let them join in a game, or give them a turn. It is questionable whether this situation is covered by the wording of CRC Article 31 but, even so, the grievance these children felt draws attention back to the first theme identified above: Ensuring a school environment where rights are fully respected means looking at ways to improve relations among the children themselves, not just between them and their teachers or the school authorities.

The next most frequently-mentioned right said to be violated at school was the right to a name. To understand the significance of this, it is necessary to look at the context, as it seems the interviewees were merging two different issues under this heading. First, the right to a name, as established in Article 7 of the CRC (and Article 13 of the Nicaraguan Children's Legal Code), has been widely promoted in Nicaragua over the years. In remote rural areas it is difficult for parents to register their children at birth and acquire a birth certificate, and as a birth certificate is required for access to public services such as education, and eventually to acquire formal citizenship and the right to vote, not being registered can be a major disad-vantage as a child grows up. Great efforts have therefore been made to encourage parents to register their children and to facilitate the process of birth registration for them. NGOs such as Save the Children and World Vision have run awareness-raising campaigns, where the message that every child has the right to a name is used to urge parents to make sure their children are registered and have birth

certificates. Children are thus conscious of the right to a name as something important in their society.

The other issue, which also has to do with naming but is otherwise completely different, is the everyday playground practice of name-calling, or giving disparaging nick-names (*'apodo'* in Spanish) to one's school-mates. Many children resent this name-calling and want to be addressed only by their proper names. There was only one example given in the interview data: a nine-year old boy who, in answer to Question 2 about how the other children treated him, replied, "They treat be badly because they hit me in the stomach and Tatia gave me a nick-name 'monkey-face'" *(Tatia me puso un apodo 'cara de simio')* (116:BA9). Many others objected to such name-calling but did not give specific examples.

The notion that these two ideas are linked; that the right to be registered at birth and so have a legal name also implies a right not to be called by anything other than your proper name, and that the use of a nick-name is therefore a rights violation, has become widely accepted in Nicaragua, by educators as well as children. Perhaps this can best be considered as an example of a 'living right', following the school of thought where children's rights are understood as, 'an open-ended endeavour that is responsive to the world that the young construct as part of their everyday life' (Hanson and Nieuwenhuys, 2012, p. 3) – as opposed to entitlements codified in legal instruments.

Whether or not playground name-calling is seen as violation of the child's right to a name, if the end result is to make school life miserable and distressing, it certainly contributes to the violation of education rights, particularly the right to be treated with respect in school and to a child-friendly learning environment (Lansdown et al., 2007, as discussed above). It therefore comes back to the underlying theme identified earlier: Creating a rights-respecting school means finding ways to improve relations among the children.

Next on the list, with seven mentions, was the right to food. Though none of the interviewees who mentioned the violation of this right specified how it occurred, it is plausible to assume they were referring to the denial of the free school snack as a punishment mentioned earlier. If this is the case, it further emphasises the way

children are coming to recognise the punishments being meted out by their teachers as potential rights violations, as others had noted earlier in relation to the denial of playtime.

Last on the list was the right to a school, or to education, which only received three mentions. Two of these did not explain how they felt the right to education was violated, but the third comment, from a ten-year-old boy, was interesting: 'The right they are most violating is that they don't let me go to school because I failed first grade' (117:BA10). As explained earlier, the system in Nicaragua is that children need to achieve sufficient marks to 'pass' each grade in order to start the next grade. If they 'fail' the grade, i.e. do not get good enough marks, their only option for continuing their education is to repeat the failed grade over again. In this case, this boy would have had to start first grade again, and given that most first graders in Nicaragua are 6-8 years old, this may have been a disagreeable prospect. Also, since there is no legal obligation on parents to send their children to school, they often give up on education if they do not see results at school, and send their children to work instead (Shier et al., 2013). Although this is only a single case, it is an example of a bigger problem in Nicaragua: how the grading system militates against children completing their schooling, and thus enjoying fully their right to education.

Given that this entire research project is about children's rights at school, it is interesting that violation of the right to education was so little mentioned in the young researchers' interviews. On further reflection however, perhaps this is not surprising in the circumstances. The young researchers' team, through their preparation and planning process, had had a good opportunity to think about education rights in a wider sense, and they understood that respect for rights *in* school was part of education rights, alongside, and linked to, the right to go to school. However, their interviewees had not had this prior experience, and, as we have seen earlier, their general understanding of rights was limited. It would not be surprising if they identified the right to education with the simple right to go to school and, since they were all active school students (with the one possible exception just mentioned), they would have no reason to question their enjoyment

of the right to education. Although they saw many rights being violated in school, they did not see the right to education itself being violated.

As for the remaining third of the interviewees, their answers to the question, 'Which of your human rights are most violated at school?' were expressed in terms of various kinds of mistreatment, rejection and prohibition (occasionally by teachers, but mostly by fellow-students), without reference to any particular human rights. They talked about being hit, shouted at, fought with, insulted, ignored, made fun of, treated to vulgar abuse, inappropriately touched etc. Some were quite specific: 'They treat me badly because I won't run errands for them' (126:GB11), 'They have mistreated me just because of the way I am or perhaps because I'm a bit more serious than the rest' (104:GA10), 'When I miss class they won't lend me their books to copy the lesson' (131:GB11). Of the few who mentioned mistreatment by teachers in this context, one said, 'I was made to stand in front of the board for an hour because I was talking' (86:BC7), and another, 'When I'm giving her my homework and she's talking on her telephone and pays no attention' (63:GC7).

A final striking aspect of this data (the whole data set, not just the part relating to this question) is the almost total invisibility of participation rights; particularly the right to be heard and taken into account in decisions (CRC Article 12), but also related rights like freedom of expression, access to information, freedom of thought, and freedom of assembly. Going back over the data to look for any mention of participation rights, one lone interviewee was found who said that his teacher, 'respects us and takes our opinions into account' (Question 1) (75:BC9), and one who said it had been explained to him that he had the right to talk (Question 3). There are eight references to children respecting or disrespecting one another's opinions, mainly in relation to shared decision-making *amongst children* as an aspect of the right to play (see next question, below). There are no other references to participation rights anywhere in the data, either as a right that is respected or as one that is violated. Here is yet another important theme that needs further consideration; arising, not from what the data are telling us, but from a glaring silence in the data. How can we explain the children's silence on the question of participation rights?

7. Question 6 and 7: Is your right to play respected in school? In what way is your right to play respected/disrespected in school?

The right to play has already been highlighted more than once in the previous discussion. However it was through their final questions that the young researchers' team addressed the issue directly. As mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, this was the only time they asked a closed or 'yes-no' question. Here it is worth noting that during the preparation and planning process the young researchers had considered the difference between closed and open questions, and had been encouraged to think about using more open questions in their interviews. It was their conclusion that the question they wanted to ask about *how* the right to play was respected or disrespected would work best if it followed on from a question about *whether* it was respected or not, and that is how they ended up with a single yes-no question on their interview form.[41]

Of the 150 interviewees, 135 (90%) said that their right to play was respected in school, and 15 (10%) said that it was not. These proportions were similar for girls and boys. However, 25 interviewees who had answered 'yes' to the yes-no question about whether their right to play was respected, gave verbal answers to the following question where they appeared to contradict their previous answer by describing how this right was *dis*respected (so far, no explanation can be offered for this apparent discrepancy).

Many interviewees went on to give reasons or examples to explain their replies. However, rather than dividing these into positives (how the right to play was respected) and negatives (how it was disrespected), it is more telling to consider first how some interviewees saw the right to play as mainly affected by their

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[41] The question offered only 'Yes' or 'No' as possible responses, and there was no additional 'don't know' or 'decline to answer' option given on the interview form. Six interviewees stated in their verbal answers to the following question that, "Sometimes it is and sometimes it isn't", or words to that effect. Failure to advise the young researchers on this aspect of questionnaire design might be considered an oversight on the part of the adult facilitators.

teachers, and then at how many more of them saw it as affected by their *fellow-students*.

Only five interviewees talked about how the right to play was respected by teachers, and for four of these this was simply because the school provided sufficient play-time in the daily timetable. For the fifth of this group it was simply 'Because she is a very good teacher' (54:BD12). Eighteen interviewees, on the other hand, talked about teachers disrespecting their right to play by not letting them out to play as punishment, thus rehearsing a grievance already highlighted in the answers to questions 4 and 5 previously discussed. For a few, their complaint was more specific: the teacher kept the whole class in when work was not done, or they were kept in without good reason *('por puro gusto')*. One boy had a different complaint: 'When I don't want to play and they force me to play' (113:BA9).

A much greater number (97 in total) talked about how their right to play was either respected (65) or disrespected (32) by their fellow-students. Students were seen as respecting each other's right to play by not fighting or mistreating one another (which included avoiding name-calling, as discussed in the previous section, and avoiding vulgarity), by being kind and respectful, by letting other children join their games or take a turn in a game, and by engaging in shared decision-making and respecting such joint decisions in their games. This last point is interesting as the interviewees are referring to participation in decision-making, a basic participation right; but here the context is in making decisions in their play amongst themselves. As mentioned above, the data are notably silent with regard to being heard by adults, let alone engaging in decision-making with adults at any other level.

The instances of disrespect for the right to play by fellow-students are by and large the opposites of the above: mistreating, name-calling, offending, making fun of, hitting, fighting and vulgarity, and also not letting other children join in a game or take a turn in a game. In this respect, two interviewees said, 'They don't let me play because I'm a girl' (88:GA13, 90:GA10). Neither mentioned what kind of game was involved, but if it was a ball-game like football or baseball, this would exemplify a common sexist attitude, as these games are seen as stereotypically boys' games, where girls are either excluded or, if they insist on playing, stigmatised as

unfeminine. One boy said his right to play was disrespected because, 'If I don't give them whatever I've got to eat, they won't let me play with them' (108:BA8).

Although this final question is the one that asks directly about the right to play, the importance attached to this right has already been highlighted in reviewing the answers to questions 3 (on learning about rights), 4 (on punishment) and 5 (on common rights violations). The young researchers' considered decision to include this question in their interviews, and the wide range of answers given, further reinforce its importance. The answers to question 7 also provide new information in support of a theme identified earlier; namely the development of positive peer relations for a rights-respecting school. Of those interviewees who felt that their right to play was not respected at school, only a few put this down to their teachers' behaviour, and far more of them put it down to the behaviour of their fellow students. To ensure that all children enjoy their right to play at school, then, two parallel approaches may be necessary: Teachers must make sure that playtime is guaranteed for all, but the children themselves also have to respect one another's rights at play.

8. Conclusion

A number of interesting themes have emerged from this second analysis of the young researchers' findings. Issues that the young researchers themselves identified and commented on in their own report have been confirmed: that children were not being taught well about their rights, particularly in certain schools; that most children were satisfied with how they were treated by their teachers, although many saw this as dependent on their being good, obedient students; children were much less satisfied with how they were treated by their fellow students; depriving children of playtime was a commonly-used punishment, and that such punishments were seen by children as violations of their rights; however, the enjoyment of the right to play at school was limited more by the lack of respectful relations amongst the children themselves than by punishments imposed by teachers.

Though the main themes identified will be taken forward to the next chapter for further discussion, a number of additional issues that arose from the findings have been discussed above, including: children's aversion to name-calling and how they link this to the right to a name; the near elimination of physical and humiliating

punishment in schools; the practice of deducting marks as punishment (including teachers' views of its legitimacy); and whether the children interviewed had an understanding of 'education rights' in its true sense beyond the basic right to go to school.

Also, at various points, instancing researcher reflexivity, questions have been asked about the trustworthiness of the data: How much freedom did interviewees have to make critical comments about their teachers? Were the young researchers influenced by adult facilitators to prioritise the right to play? Did the young researchers themselves unduly influence their interviewees' responses? In general, did the young researchers get the right advice from adult facilitators in preparing their interview questions? Reflection on these points will feed back into a wider review and critique of the methodological approach in Chapter 7.

Although many themes emerged, four of these were identified as being in need of more detailed exploration, and it is these that form the basis of the discussion in the next chapter.

1) A rights-respecting school requires the building of positive peer relations among students, and the building of such relations requires a rights-based approach.

2) As physical and humiliating punishments have declined, teachers have looked to alternative kinds of punishment to help them keep order in the classroom. Some of these, such as denial of playtime, are increasingly seen by children as violations of their rights. Instead of a search for new punishments, might the solution lie in a more radical transformation of how learning, and learning environments, are managed in school?

3) Why are these children not learning about their rights, or learning about them in an inconsistent and inappropriate way? Given the importance that many educators attach to responsibilities as a corollary of rights (not just in Nicaragua, but throughout the world), how might a more effective pedagogy be developed and implemented to address this?

4) The near invisibility of participation rights in this data. Where is the right to be heard and taken into account in decision-making? How can its absence here be understood?

Chapter 6: Discussion of the main findings

1. Introduction

As has been clear from the outset, the information gathered for this study, as presented in the previous chapter, concerns a specific microcosm of children's experience of schooling. The perceptions shared are those of students at four primary schools in an isolated, and far from typical, rural district in northern Nicaragua. Though knowledge of this microcosm has its intrinsic worth, the goal of this chapter is to explore how the analysis of the knowledge gleaned from this context can contribute to our understanding of, and insight into, the larger questions it brings to light, and that, whilst the specific findings are not generalisable, the broader understandings derived from them may be applicable to a much wider range of contexts (Maxwell, 1992).

In the account of the findings presented in the previous chapter, four key issues were identified as warranting more detailed discussion, and these will be explored in this chapter: peer relations in school as an important factor in the enjoyment of education rights; the problem of punishment; the problem of inadequate or inconsistent teaching about rights, leading to confusion over the relationship between rights and responsibilities; and finally the near invisibility of participation rights in the child researchers' data (and discourse). The chapter concludes by exploring how concepts of power and empowerment may provide a common theme to link and further extend the discussion of the findings.

2. Peer relations in school are important to the enjoyment of education rights

As the data considered in the previous chapter showed, for the children interviewed, consistently across all four schools, mistreatment by their fellow-students was a more significant problem than mistreatment by their teachers. For these children, their right to an adequate, secure and quality education is threatened less by their relations with their teachers (despite the strong power imbalance), and more by their relations with one another.

This finding was unexpected, because previous work in this area had tended to highlight the mistreatment of students by teachers, identifying the imposition of 'physical and humiliating punishments' as an everyday occurrence in schools, and a prevalent form of violence against children, although widely accepted as normal in rural communities (CESESMA, 2008, 2009; Moreno, 2007). On closer reading, however, these same studies also mention that in local schools, "physical aggression among peers is prevalent" (CESESMA, 2008, p 13). In particular, the 2009 study included a report by a team of child researchers who concluded that:

> At school children live with violence from other children and adolescents; fighting, vulgarity towards girls, mistreatment, lack of respect and verbal aggression, scolding, using nicknames. (CESESMA, 2009, p. 11)

It appears therefore, that similar findings had, in fact, been found in previous studies, but had been given little attention, as the problem of violence by teachers towards students was seen as more important at the time. Without further research, it is only possible to speculate on why this was, but there are plausible explanations. One view is that learning to cope with the tribulations of life on the playground is part of a normal socialisation process, where adult interference is not required. Such ideas form part of James, Jenks and Prout's (1988) concept of the 'tribal child':

> 'Tribal' children do not have to fall under the sway of either romantic or Enlightenment fables. Such children may be nasty; brutish; bullies; wholly self-interested or self-absorbed; selfish; pitiless; racist and sexist. These 'tribal' sub-cultures, not aspiring to stated adult morality, do not have to be 'nice'. (p. 216)

A related view is found in the literature on play, where the possible developmental value of rough and tumble play and play fighting, in both animals and humans, have been extensively researched and debated (Humphreys and Smith, 1987; Boulton, 1996); and in playwork, where intervention by adults to resolve difficulties amongst playing children is seen to cause the 'adulteration' of the play experience, and so needs to be kept to a minimum, with the implication that children can and should resolve many of their own problems among peers (Thompson, 2003, 2014; Wragg, 2013).

On the other side of the scales, however, is the vast literature on school bullying (reviewed by Aluede et al., 2008; Hong and Espelage, 2012; and Smith, 2011), which highlights the real, and sometimes lifelong, harm done when children treat one another badly at school; harm primarily to victims, but also, in other ways, to perpetrators, bystanders, and whole school communities. In contrast to the playwork writers, the bullying literature therefore makes the strongest possible case for adult intervention to reduce harm and suffering, and its debates turn more on what kinds of interventions are likely to be effective.

Although the focus of the present research is not bullying, but respect for children's rights in school, the two are connected, as the persistence of bullying will always militate against the creation of a rights-respecting school. A brief look at the former, then, may also shed light on the latter. In this context it is important to note that the word 'bullying' has no exact equivalent in Spanish. As prevention of bullying has become a global issue in education, the English word is coming to be used and understood in Nicaraguan schools (though in Spain, where there is more resistance to the adoption of English words, the term *'acoso escolar'* – literally 'harassment in school' – is being used; e.g. Orjuela López et al., 2014). However, in the young researchers' interview data, the word 'bullying' occurs just once, and in their final report, though they listed the main forms of child-to-child mistreatment that their research had uncovered, they did not use either 'bullying' or 'acoso' to describe these.

The literature in English devotes many pages to the complex business of defining bullying. A much-cited definition is that given by Olweus (1997) who says that there are three main features that distinguish bullying from the generality of

student-to-student mistreatment in school: it is done with the intention of causing harm or distress; it is done repeatedly; and there exists a power imbalance between perpetrator and victim and thus abuse of power (see Elinoff, Chafouleas and Sassu, 2004; and Greene, 2006, for elaboration of these ideas). Though the young researchers' data do not provide specific information in relation to Olweus' three criteria, the litany of peer-to-peer mistreatment they contain (fighting, hitting, insulting, name-calling, hair-pulling, ignoring, vulgarity and bad language, and stealing or damaging property) includes much that would probably fit the definition and be labelled as bullying in an English-speaking context.

In the literature on bullying and how to respond to it (which is vast, as mentioned above), human rights discourse is rarely drawn on explicitly (Quennersdedt, 2015). A notable exception is Greene (2006) who makes "A plea for a measure of human rights" in tackling bullying, because "Infusing a human rights framework into bullying prevention efforts can remedy much of the commonly encountered practical and theoretical obstacles to the effective management of such efforts" (p. 63). Approaching the problem from the human rights side, however, the literature promoting whole school approaches consistently highlights bullying as a problem that can be tackled by such approaches (e.g. Amnesty International, 2012, p. 4; Covell and Howe, 2011, p. 4; Sebba and Robinson, 2009, p.22; UNICEF Canada, 2012, p. 11).

Whether the problem is classified as bullying or otherwise, children's education rights include a demandable and defendable right not to be mistreated at school. Drawing on the UNICEF/UNESCO model (Lansdown el al., 2007), one of the main components of children's rights in education is the right to respect in the learning environment, and another one, the right to quality education, demands a child-friendly, safe and healthy learning environment. Although these components draw on various articles in the CRC and other treaties, central to both of them is CRC Article 19.1, which makes it the duty of responsible adults to ensure children are protected "from all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, maltreatment or exploitation". States Parties are obliged to ensure this through legislative, administrative, social *and educational* measures. The Committee on the Rights of the Child, in General Comment No. 13, explicitly

specifies both physical and psychological bullying as forms of violence children have a right to be free from (paragraphs 21 and 22), and calls for children to be empowered to combat bullying (paragraph 44), and their active participation in developing prevention strategies (paragraph 63) (Committee on the Rights of the Child, 2011).

The practical implication of this is clear: A rights-respecting school needs a rights-based approach to human relations, in and out of the classroom, which encompasses peer relations among students as well as student-staff relations. It is important to be clear that 'rights-based approach' here means an approach that is based on human rights principles, and not the use of human rights rhetoric to mask a manipulative behaviour modification programme. This idea will be returned to in the final chapter, after discussing some of the other themes emerging from the research findings.

3. Punishment and children's rights

A national study carried out by the Nicaraguan Children's Rights Commissioner in 2007, covering a sample of 69 primary schools throughout the country, found instances of physical punishment in every one of them (Moreno, 2007). The research also found unacceptable levels of what are described as 'humiliating punishments' (*'castigos humillantes'*) in most schools, and mentioned children being made to kneel for long periods in front of the blackboard as an example of this. In this context 'physical and humiliating punishments' were often linked in this way. It can be argued that all punishment is to some extent intrinsically humiliating, since being punished, in itself, humiliates one. However, in this context the label 'humiliating punishments' was used to draw attention to types of punishments that were considered unduly or excessively humiliating, or where the main point of the punishment was to cause a child to feel humiliated. Common examples would be things like calling children stupid or 'burro' (donkey) in front of the class, or making them stand or kneel in the corner for long periods. In her report, the Commissioner called on both teachers and education authorities to respect all children's right to a life free from corporal punishment, as with all other forms of violence (Moreno, 2007, p. 35).

Six years later, the findings of the present study suggest that, in the four schools involved, corporal punishment had almost disappeared, and this applies not only to direct physical punishment (smacking, ear-pulling etc.) but also to the kinds of humiliating punishments referred to above. In seeking to explain this change, it is likely that a Ministerial Decree prohibiting all forms of physical, humiliating or discriminatory punishment in schools, issued in April 2009 by Minister of Education Miguel De Castilla (whose earlier work as an education researcher was cited in Chapter 3), had something to do with it (Ministerio de Educación, 2009a). However, before issuing the decree, no preparatory work was done to prepare teachers for a new era of classroom management without violence, and as a result there was initially some consternation amongst teachers and their representatives over what was seen as the undermining of teachers' authority. Though there does not appear to be any published research on this changeover period in Nicaragua, there has been research on similar changes in other countries, for example South Africa, where it was found that:

> Since the scrapping of corporal punishment, a sense of despair seems to have taken over amongst teachers in South Africa. The findings of this study indicated that more than 65% of teachers ... claimed that discipline at schools had deteriorated, and that their passion for teaching and the joy they had once found in their work had been adversely affected since the decision had come in to effect. (Naong, 2007, p. 283)

As a rapid response tactic to address these concerns, Save the Children Nicaragua collaborated with the Ministry of Education to quickly translate and adapt to the Nicaraguan context an existing teacher's manual from South Africa, '*Alternatives to Corporal Punishment: Growing discipline and respect in our classrooms*' (Porteus et al., 2001). This manual, in its new Nicaraguan format, was immediately distributed to all Nicaraguan Schools, and may have been another factor contributing to the changes taking place in classrooms.

Whatever the process that brought about this decline in the use of physical and humiliating punishments, as a consequence teachers throughout Nicaragua have had to develop alternative approaches to managing their schools and classrooms, and

responding to those children whose behaviour, for whatever reason, they considered unacceptable.

What the young researchers' data suggest, however, is that the former physical and humiliating punishments have simply been substituted by other kinds of punishments deemed more acceptable (or at least not illegal); that is, no such 'transformative' change had taken place. However, the lack of evidence of transformation in teachers' attitudes is not conclusive. As discussed in the previous chapter, the young researchers framed their investigation within the 'crime and punishment' paradigm they were familiar with, so their questions specifically asked for examples of these. They were only exploring children's perceptions, not the value-systems of the teachers that might have given rise to these. From the teachers' point of view, in their focus group discussion opinions were divided, with some saying that harsh punishments still persisted, while others claimed they were a thing of the past, exemplified in the following comments:

> Many teachers are too drastic and punish children to the point that students are afraid. (Teacher focus group participant)

> In present-day schools there are no punishments, and therefore I can't see how they can affect human rights. (Teacher focus group participant)

What is particularly interesting in the young researchers' data, however, is how many children saw these substitute punishments as violations of their human rights. Two punishments in particular were mentioned both in the category of punishments received and as violations of human rights: above all, the right to play, and to a lesser extent, the right to food. Of the 25 interviewees who said that their right to play or recreation had been violated in school, a majority (14) said that this occurred when they were denied playtime, or not permitted to go out to play (see data in previous chapter). The special status given to the right to play, and the children's consequent concern over its apparent violation by teachers warrant further consideration.

It has already been explained in the previous chapter how the adult researcher's personal and professional interest in the right to play was kept hidden as far as possible so as not to influence the young researchers, and that when they them-

selves decided to highlight the right to play in their interview questionnaire they were asked to think carefully before committing to this, which they did.

In global terms, the child's right to play has had a remarkable rise to prominence in a relatively short time. As late as 2009 the Bernard Van Leer Foundation published a paper entitled *"Article 31: A 'forgotten article of the UNCRC'"* (Fronczek, 2009), and the same year Davey and Lundy (2009) pointed out what limited academic analysis Article 31 had received. However, starting in 2008, an international NGO coalition led by the International Play Association amassed sufficient arguments (Lester and Russell, 2010) and evidence (International Play Association, 2010) to convince the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child to launch the process that eventually gave rise to General Comment 17 on the right of the child to rest, leisure, play, recreation, culture and the arts (Committee on the Rights of the Child, 2013).

These global developments were paralleled by events in Nicaragua. In 2008, Nicaraguan children formed action-research teams to investigate play opportunities and threats to the right to play in their communities, and published their findings (CESESMA, 2013; Equipo de Investigación-Acción Niños Niñas y Adolescentes Defendiendo Nuestro Derecho a Jugar, 2009). NGOs like Trócaire and World Vision started to give higher prominence to the right to play in their projects and programmes, and the right to play began to be seen alongside more 'established' children's rights, such as the right to go to school, in publicity materials, banners, leaflets etc. CESESMA and Save the Children did not give the right to play any kind of privileged position in the 'Safe, Quality Schools' programme, but it was recognised alongside children's other rights (CESESMA, 2012b, p. 17). The young researchers and their interviewees would therefore have been aware that they, like all children, had an inalienable and claimable right to play. But, as explained above, they had not been encouraged by adults to give any special priority or importance to this particular right. If they did so, it was because that was how they perceived things.

Together these observations suggest that two changes have occurred simultaneously in recent years: Teachers, finding themselves forbidden to hit or humiliate children, and either unable or unwilling to transform their way of thinking, have sought ways

of punishing children that were deemed to be still acceptable, which included keeping them in at playtime. Meanwhile children have become aware that to play is their human right, and that such rights can be demanded and defended, and so feel increasing indignation when they find that right being denied in the name of punishment at school.

Of course the situation is not that simple. Neither Article 31 itself, nor authoritative analyses of it (Committee on the Rights of the Child, 2013; Davey and Lundy, 2009), suggest that the assurance to the child of a right to play signifies a right to play any time, anywhere, or that there can never be justified restrictions on a child's option to play. Therefore whether the teacher actions challenged by the interviewees in the present study constitute human rights violations in every case remains open to debate.

Be that as it may, what the findings do suggest is that, by and large, teachers are sticking with a traditional 'crime and punishment' approach to classroom management, and there have not been many signs of the kind of classroom transformations that would be expected from a properly managed and implemented whole school approach to children's rights. The questions to be addressed are not about which punishments are to be preferred as compatible with children's rights, but rather: what are the alternatives to punishment that can more readily be integrated with a children's rights approach to human relations in school? Before addressing this question, however, there are other significant findings from the young researchers' data to be considered.

4. Inadequate or inconsistent teaching about rights (and especially responsibilities)

Another theme to emerge from the young researchers' findings was concern about why many of the children interviewed were not learning about their rights, and most of those that were appeared to be learning about them in an inconsistent and inappropriate way. To sum up their findings: Children at Darío school were able to list and discuss their rights as might be expected in the circumstances; some children from El Ayote could speak about the importance of defending their rights; children from Las Brisas and El Colibrí, however, when asked how they had been taught about their rights, mentioned things that were not in any sense rights. A few

of these corresponded to children's legal duties set out in the Nicaraguan Children and Adolescents' legal Code, but most were neither rights nor duties and could best be described as social norms or rules of good conduct. In their own report, the young researchers' concluded that lack of adequate human rights education left many children at risk of violence (Niñas y Niños Investigadores, 2014, p. 134).

This conclusion was reached in spite of several factors that might lead one to expect otherwise. First, as shown in Chapter 3, the Nicaraguan Ministry of Education's rhetoric on the matter, in both public and professional publications, is clear and strong. The Sandinista government guarantees to everyone, "knowledge and understanding of all their rights and how to claim and defend them" (Ministerio de Educación, 2009b, p. 8), with HRE incorporated as a holistic cross-cutting theme in school curricula and teacher training programmes. And if that were not sufficient, all the schools involved had been participating for several years in CESESMA and Save the Children's 'Safe, Quality Schools' project, one of whose objectives was the development of children's rights awareness in schools.

However, evidence from the teachers' focus group suggests they had not been receiving training on children's rights, despite the ministry of Education's pronouncements on the subject. Although the new holistic approach to human rights in school is enshrined in new curriculum materials and the initial teacher training curriculum (see Chapter 3), it is likely that most focus group participants received their initial training under the previous system. Also, although the Ministry of Education is committed to the continuing professional development of teachers, focus group participants did not mention learning about children's rights in these sessions. Some remarked that what they knew about children's rights they had learnt, not from their employer, but through their involvement with CESESMA in the 'Safe, Quality Schools' programme.

In order for human rights education in Nicaraguan schools to be consistent with the government's rhetoric and fulfil children's right to a quality education directed towards, 'The development of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms' (CRC Art. 29), there are two problems to be addressed. One is that, despite the government's rhetoric, teachers are in general ill-prepared to teach *about* rights, let alone *through* rights and *for* rights, having not themselves received adequate

training and education on the subject. The other is that, even if teachers were better prepared to teach about rights, there is no coherent pedagogical approach to the question of relating children's rights and responsibilities, nor a consensus on how this should be done.

Tackling the first of these problems requires teacher education on children's rights to be done in a way that does more than provide information on what to teach and how, but also changes attitudes; ideally through the kind of 'transformative learning' that can change teachers' frame of reference for understanding the role of human rights in their world (see Mezirow, 1997; Tibbitts, 2005, discussed in Chapter 2; and also Diamond, 1991; and Hammerman, 1999, on Transformational Teacher Education). If what little is being taught about human rights is being taught with a strong emphasis on the 'rights and responsibilities' binomial, because teachers firmly believe that 'you can't have rights without responsibilities' (as many focus group participants stated), the challenge posed to teacher educators is to find ways of getting them to change.

The second problem is the need for a pedagogy that can handle the complexity of the relationship between children's rights and responsibilities, and offer a consistent and appropriate way to help children engage with the problem so they are not confused, misled or manipulated. The literature on children's rights and responsibilities was reviewed in Chapter 2, where it was found that there are at least eight ways that a relationship between rights and responsibilities can be conceptualised, summarised here in Box 15.

Eight ways to conceptualise a relationship between children's rights and responsibilities

1. Rights imply responsibilities of a duty-bearer to a rights-holder.

2. Rights imply responsibilities through the principle of simple reciprocity ("If I have rights I must respect your rights").

3. Responsibilities can be derived from rights through the analysis of human rights instruments.

4. Responsibilities can be defined alongside rights in legal human rights instruments, nationally or internationally.

5. Rights can be promoted whilst acknowledging traditional views about children's responsibilities, seeking to resolve difficulties in ways that are respectful of the context of local culture.

6. Responsibilities can be invented as part of a classroom management strategy, and rights granted as a reward for fulfilling them.

7. The concept of 'citizenship' can be conceived (and taught) as a contractual arrangement involving both the rights and responsibilities of the citizen as such

8. Children, as active citizens, can take on responsibilities, including the promotion and defence of their own rights and the rights of others.

Box 15: The relationship between children's rights and responsibilities
(summarising discussion in Chapter 2)

Though this 8-way scheme is itself complicated and, if used as a teaching aid, would confuse more than it clarified, it does indicate what needs to be addressed in developing pedagogy for rights and responsibilities. In a manner appropriate to their educational level, students should be aware that there exist duty-bearers, against whom legitimate claims can be made if they fail in their responsibilities. They should be aware that their responsibility to respect the rights of others places constraints on the exercise of their own rights. If they live in a place where local law places responsibilities on them (like Nicaragua), or where their government is party to an international treaty that does so (like the African Charter), they ought to be aware of the implications of this. They should know that the exercise of their rights is not dependent on the prior fulfilment of responsibilities; and if they engage in an exercise of inventing lists of rights and responsibilities to put on the wall of their classroom, they should be aware that such a list, whatever its merits, is different from a statement of legal rights like the text of the CRC. Finally, if they choose to take on the role of active citizens and engage in campaigns for the

protection, promotion or defence of their own or other people's rights, it will help if they have a sense of what it means to *take on responsibility* voluntarily, and how this differs from being *held responsible* for the wrongdoing of the powerful ('responsibilisation'). To develop a pedagogical approach that can encompass all of this in a way that is appropriate, relevant and not confusing is a pending challenge; one that will be revisited in the concluding chapter as potentially one of the most significant implications of this study.

5. Participation rights

'Participation rights' have a special place in children's rights discourse. The recognition of children as holders of such rights is considered one of the most significant and innovative features of the CRC, distinguishing it from all previous human rights treaties (Lansdown, 2011; McCowan, 2012); 'participation rights' are one of the 'three pillars of the Convention' (Habashi et al., 2010); and Article 12, the right to be heard and taken into account in decision-making, is one of its four underpinning principles (Committee on the Rights of the Child, 2003). In a review published in 2009, Reynaert and colleagues identified three predominant themes in the academic literature on children's rights since the CRC, the first of which was 'Autonomy and participation rights as the new norm in children's rights practice and policy' (Reynaert el al., 2009, p. 518). As well as this 'participation rights' literature, there is an equally substantial literature on 'student voice', which has some overlap with 'participation rights', but also has its own motivations (discussed in Chapter 2). Taking these together, then, children's opportunities to express their views in school, and to have a say in school decision-making, have received extensive and thorough attention from scholars and researchers. When children themselves have had opportunities to express their views on rights in school, they have more often than not focused on participation and 'having a say' as priorities (see discussion of children's reports in Chapter 2).

And yet, a striking aspect of the data collected by the young researchers for the present study is the almost total invisibility of participation rights. As mentioned in the previous chapter, this includes not only the Article 12 right to be heard and taken into account in decisions, but related rights like freedom of expression, access to information, freedom of thought, and freedom of assembly. A search for any

mention of participation rights in the data that might have been missed revealed just one lone interviewee who said that his teacher, "respects us and takes our opinions into account", and one who said it had been explained to him that he had the right to talk. There was no other reference to a participation right anywhere in the data, either as a right that is taught about, respected or violated. Though the young researchers did not ask a question specifically about participation in decision-making or 'voice' at school, at least two of their open questions were framed so as to encourage interviewees to talk openly about the rights they had learnt about (Question 3) and the rights they felt were most often violated (Question 5). Given the methods used when carrying out interviews, there was no reason that children should avoid the mention of participation rights if these had any significance for them. If participation rights are as important as the literature referred to above says they are, how can this gap in the data be explained?

As the issue here is an absence of data, this means there are no data to be interpreted in the search for an explanation. What follows therefore is speculation based on what is known from other sources, which can be considered at best hypotheses for further investigation. There are four of these.

A first possibility is that the children interviewed simply did not understand that expressing their opinions and these being taken into account in decision-making were among their rights. The research shows that in general the way the children were taught about their rights was far from adequate, so it is plausible that many of them were simply ignorant of their own participation rights. However, given that there were 150 interviews carried out, in schools that had participated in a rights-based development programme, it would be expected that at least a few of the children would have thought of mentioning participation during their interviews.

Another possibility is that the children were so habituated to expressing their opinions and accustomed to these being respected by adults, that they simply took it for granted that this is how things were in school, and so did not think of it as a rights issue at all, much less a right that was frequently violated in school. However the same doubt applies here too: Out of the 150 children interviewed, at least a few might have been expected to remark on such an everyday practice of participation.

The third 'hypothesis' is that researchers tend to find what they are looking for. In many previous studies, adult researchers have approached their investigations with an agenda (explicit or hidden) of highlighting and prioritising children's participation rights, and children have understandably responded to this (see examples cited in Chapter 2). When that adult influence is removed, only a minority of children (though perhaps a vocal one) place a high importance on their participation rights, while for the majority, although they may value the existence of such rights in principle, their exercise is of little importance. The child researchers' reports from the Open University Children's Research Centre mentioned in Chapter 2 give support to this view, as only 2 out of over 150 reports deal directly with the topic of children's right to have a say in school (Cole, 2005; Abhyankar, 2008). The Serbian children's report to the Committee on the Rights of the Child referred to in Chapter 2 is another interesting case. These children listed 'participation in social decision-making' as one of the least important of their rights, as they had other concerns that were more important to them (Children's Coalition, 2008, p. 2). Adult political behaviour is also instructive here. In the UK 65% of the electorate turned out to vote in 2010 (66% in 2015) but only 1.2% belong to a political party (Van Biezen et al., 2012); democracy is important as a principle, but a lower priority in practice. Could it be that children are not that different from adults: when asked, they will agree that participation is important in principle, but only a small percentage is self-motivated towards sustained engagement with decision-making processes?

The final hypothesis to explain the invisibility of participation rights in the research data is that the introduction of a party-politicised school-students' union in Nicaragua run by the governing Frente Sandinista (FEP: Federation of Primary Students), and the consequent side-lining of the previous non-political student councils, has led many to see this topic as a *'papa caliente'* (hot potato) and so best avoided (see Chapter 3 for more details on this). Informal conversations with teachers, students and CESESMA staff give this impression, but further research will be needed to find out more.

In the end, the best explanation for the absence of data on participation rights may be some combination of all the above, mutually reinforcing one another.

6. Conclusion

It is not easy to find a connecting thread linking the four preceding sections. The third issue is a question of the pedagogy of children's rights in school, and the last-discussed is a reflection on a strange absence in the data that needs further investigation. However, the first two issues, peer-relations and punishment, do have a link, as both are aspects of how power is wielded in the construction of human relations in the school setting: in the first instance, by children themselves to mistreat others less powerful, and in the second, the use (and perhaps abuse) of power by teachers to assert their position of authority in relation to the children.

The development of schools for children with rights, therefore, must include proposals on how to tackle both kinds of misuse of power, and this can be addressed by strategies that approach the problem from above or from below or, ideally, through concerted action from both directions. A possible strategy 'from above' ironically, would be for those with even greater power (here the Ministry of Education) to use it to influence those below them in the power hierarchy (school heads and teachers). It has been shown in Chapter 3 that the Nicaraguan Ministry of Education already has fully-documented progressive policies and programmes in relation to both integrated human rights education and non-violent respect-based school management. All that is needed, then, is for the Ministry to ensure that its existing policies are followed through in practice; and yet the discussions with teachers reported earlier in the present study suggest that this is not happening. Using Lukes' (1974) classic, and still valuable, model of the three faces of power, it would seem the Ministry has more than enough power, as it can influence what teachers do in all three ways: It has direct decision-making power as it hires and fires all teachers and pays their salaries. It also has indirect power as it sets the agenda and controls the spaces in which education policy can be discussed. Although there is a strong teachers' union, both it and the Ministry of Education are ultimately bound to the political will of the governing party, the Frente Sandinista. Finally, as the Ministry of Education also runs the *Escuelas Normales* (teacher training colleges), it has plenty of opportunity to inculcate its ideology into all aspiring teachers (Lukes' *ideological power*). Why then, does the Ministry of Education not use its overwhelming power to make sure that schools are run in the way its excellent policy documents say they should be?

To answer this question, a different, Foucauldian type of power analysis may be helpful. According to Gaventa (2003):

> It is also important to understand that power is not intentional – individual intentions have little bearing on this [Foucault's] theory of power. Indeed, although institutions/individuals may fail in terms of their own stated intentions, they may still be part of a wider, successful strategy. (p. 4)

Thus the Ministry of Education's strategy fails to achieve the goal of rights-based schooling, but the enactment of power in its relations with other actors may be effective as part of a wider strategy to sustain loyalty to the ruling party. This kind of power analysis could be useful for organisations like CESESMA and Save the Children whose own strategies include seeking partnerships with the Ministry in order to push for changes in policy and practice.

For CESESMA, however, with its focus on the capacity of children and adolescents to become active agents for change, strategies that seek to tackle misuse of power 'from below' may be of greater importance. Here again, ideas from Foucault's conception of power may provide a starting point. Power should not be thought of as a monolithic force that is wielded in top-down hierarchies – by the powerful against the powerless – but something much more fluid that only comes into being when it is enacted within networks of people through their everyday actions upon one another (Gallagher, 2008, p. 400). Although on one hand this points to the hegemonic nature of power through dispersed control of knowledge, ideas and discourses, it also allows for multiple forms of resistance; individual and collective, organised and spontaneous.

When we talk of supporting children and adolescents in *resisting* misuse of power, whether by teachers imposing inappropriate punishments, or in their own classmates' bullying behaviour, we come to the concept of *empowerment*. In the international development field, Cornwall and Brock (2005) describe 'empowerment' as a 'buzzword' that, as such, has been effectively incorporated into orthodox governance discourses, and so has lost much of its original radical significance, forged in earlier feminist discourses. Hennink and colleagues (2012) reviewed dozens of different definitions, and found six main 'mechanisms of

empowerment': knowledge, agency, opportunity-structure, capacity-building, resources and sustainability. What they did not find, however, was explicit links to existing theories of power. Similarly in the literature on children's participation (including that on children as researchers discussed in Chapter 4), empowerment is often mentioned, but rarely defined or adequately theorised.

This led CESESMA in Nicaragua, in partnership with colleagues from the University of the North of Nicaragua, to develop its own model of children and adolescents' empowerment, originally in Spanish (CESESMA/UNN 2010), and summarised in English in Shier (2015). Here CESESMA defines empowerment as follows:

> In order to be 'empowered' a boy or girl must be in conditions where they can influence events *(incidir)*, must have the knowledge and abilities required in order to influence events, and above all, must feel themselves capable of influencing events. (CESESMA/UNN, 2010, p. 44)

The Spanish verb used, *'incidir'* has a subtly different sense from the English verb 'to influence', as it embraces all ways in which people, individually and/or collectively, can have some effect on a course of events, regardless of whether this involves a process of 'influencing' in the English sense. This concept of empowerment, then, requires a more traditional theory of power, where power is seen as a capacity, or set of capacities, which a person can acquire and make use of to a greater or lesser degree (Handgraaf et al., 2008), and different factors can be identified as contributing to these capacities, as in Hennink and colleagues' above-mentioned 'mechanisms of empowerment'. CESESMA's 'conditions' for empowerment map onto Hennink et al's 'opportunity-structure' mechanism, where the opportunity to organise and act collectively with others towards a shared objective is likely to be central, and the availability to children and adolescents of their own autonomous organising spaces is a key factor (Cornwall, 2004; Shier, 2008a).

In this approach to empowerment, children's rights have an important role to play. As has been shown earlier, children's rights discourse can be – and often is – misused as a tool for behaviour control, especially when it is presented as part of a

confused and confusing package alongside responsibilities. However, if this can be avoided, both progressive children's rights education, and the facilitation of rights-based action processes deriving from it, can be truly empowering. This is reflected in UNICEF's recent redefinition of Children's Rights Education as, "teaching and learning about the provisions and principles of the CRC and the child rights approach in order to *empower* both adults and children *to take action* to advocate for and apply these at the family, school, community, national and global levels (Wernham, 2014, p. 142, emphasis added; quoted in Chapter 2, but worth repeating).

Awareness that one has rights, and knowledge of what these rights are[42] (including an inalienable and uncontestable right to *claim* one's rights); awareness of who the relevant duty-bearers are, and that where such duty-bearers deny the realisation of rights they are legally and morally *in the wrong*; solidarity, alliances and strength in numbers in promoting and defending rights claims; and, where needed, support in planning and implementing action in defence of rights (whether one's own or those of others), can all be seen as aspects of the capacities, conditions and attitudes required for the CESESMA empowerment model. The use of rights by children and adolescents in this way in CESESMA's projects is a concrete example of Federle's (1994) claim that "A right, in its fundamental sense, is power held by the powerless" (p. 345).

The implications of this for the development of rights-respecting schools (or schools for children with rights) will be returned to when the implications of this research are discussed in the final chapter.

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[42] I am referring here to legally codified human rights, where the identity of a named duty-bearer, against whom rights claims can be made and defended, is enshrined in statute law and/or international treaty; and not the more innovative 'living rights' or 'rights from below' referred to at the start of this thesis, where no such duty-bearer exists.

Chapter 7: Reflections on method

1. Introduction: Focus on methodological critique

The present study was set in motion with a brief to find out more about the implementation of alternative approaches to human rights in schools, and subsequently developed to focus on an investigation of children's perceptions of their rights in schools in such a context. However, the fact that a distinctive and, in this context, unusual methodology was proposed also drew attention to the methodological issues at the heart of the project, and as the research progressed both the methodological approach and the methods used threw up issues which in themselves warranted reflection and critique, and pointed towards potential new knowledge about methodologies for facilitating research *by* children. This chapter has therefore been added to open a space for this methodological reflection. It has been structured around five main issues: The challenge of taking a 'field-grown' approach into academia; capacity-building for child researchers; the cyclical approach of conventional action research; the importance of continuity for follow-up and research impact; and questions of inclusion and exclusion. It also offers some reflections on the idea of partnerships between child and adult researchers, which are the basis for proposals for future work that will be developed in the final chapter.

2. Transformative Research by Children and Adolescents: Taking a 'field-grown' approach into academia

The methodology used for this project, 'Transformative Research by Children and Adolescents' (TRCA) has been developed over a period of 15 years, first in the UK

and subsequently in Nicaragua, going through a number of phases and modifications in order to arrive at its present configuration (Shier, 2015; see also Appendix 6). It thus has an established record as a way to facilitate and support children doing research in the field, and as a vehicle for children's policy advocacy. However it has no academic antecedents, having never previously been used as a method for university-based academic research.

In the present study the method has been pressed into service as part of an academic project, where the research questions and other parameters such as the form of the final product were set by adult academics. This adjustment has not always been comfortable, and has presented challenges in two main areas: the research agenda, and ownership of the research.

Regarding the research agenda, children had no say in determining the research question, and were invited to engage with the project on the basis of decisions already made without their involvement. This conflicts with the principles of the Transformative Research by Children and Adolescents approach described by Shier, who sees the children's opportunity to decide the topics they wish to research as one of its important features (Shier, 2015, p. 211). Inviting children to become researchers on a project where the topic is pre-determined can thus be seen as a backward step. The issue, however, is more complicated and nuanced. A first point to take on board is that few adult researchers get to choose their own research questions, as research agendas are largely set by research funders, and research projects developed accordingly. Should child researchers have a more privileged position, or might it be beneficial for them sometimes to work within this larger reality? Another factor is impact: Where research has been commissioned and paid for, this means that someone is interested in hearing the results, so an audience can be guaranteed for the presentation of the findings, thus increasing its likely influence (Lundy, 2007). Conversely, if research is motivated by child researchers' own concerns, it may be harder work to get the message across to those who can make a difference (though it is never impossible; see for instance the work by Manasa Patil on getting around as the child of a wheelchair user described by Kellett (2010b, p. 201), and the work of the Young Researchers of Yúcul on

alcohol and violence described in Shier (2015, p. 212)). There is value and validity in both approaches.

The second problem, that of ownership, was discussed in some detail in the section on ethical issues in Chapter 4. In a nutshell, the problem is that another important principle of TRCA is that child researchers own their own research, while an important principle of doctoral research is that it must be the unaided work of the doctoral candidate. The way this was resolved is described in the earlier section, but it is worth highlighting here the significance of the young researchers being able to formally publish their findings under their own names long before the PhD thesis was completed, which cemented their claim to the ownership of their own research. The PhD regulations' strict requirement for a candidate's own work may be a special case, but it draws our attention to the fact that the question of ownership needs to be addressed, including its ethical aspects, in all situations where children and adults work on research in partnership.

Thus a research method which has been shown to work well in its 'natural habitat' (NGO-supported field research by children and adolescents in their own communities) started to throw up new challenges when subjected to the different rules and requirements of the formal academic research process. Adjustments had to be made, so that the approach could remain both valid and viable in this new context. There is an interesting irony here: The literature on working with children as researchers emphasises the need for established adult-orientated methodologies to be reviewed and modified, or even replaced, so as to facilitate child researchers (Michail and Kellett, 2013; Punch, 2002), whereas in this case an already child-focused and child-friendly approach had to be carefully reviewed and adapted to ensure it was consistent with the rules for adult academic research.

3. How much capacity-building do child researchers need?

A noticeable feature of the different approaches to working with child researchers in the literature is the different ideas on training or 'capacity-building' for child researchers that are advocated. The most fully-developed approach is that of Mary Kellett and colleagues at the Open University Centre for Children's Research, which offers its child researchers an initial training course on research principles and methods, and has produced a guide-book on how to do this (Kellett 2005).

Lundy and McEvoy (2012b) also give a central role to capacity-building for young participants, but with a focus on children's understanding of the substantive issues of the research, rather than research methods and data-gathering (which is consistent with the approach they use, where children take on a co-researcher or advisory role rather than that of 'lead researcher'). A more flexible approach is that of Nigel Thomas and colleagues at the University of Central Lancashire:

> What seems to work best for me is to put in the training when it is needed. So when you reach a point in a project where we need to think about ethics, that's when you engage with the young people and think, what's involved in doing research ethically, what kind of rights do research participants have, what would we want if we were on the receiving end of this, so what should we be offering to the people we are working with, what kind of issues are likely to arise?…You need the skills when you need them and you need the knowledge when you need it and you can't go away and get it all and then go off and use it. You build up your repertoire over time. (Interview with Nigel Thomas by Carmel Smith, published in Smith and Greene, 2014, p. 211)

The TRCA approach is somewhere in between. Time is limited, so capacity-building has to be delivered quickly. 'Research principles and methods' are reduced to the utmost simplicity, with key questions discussed in the first workshop including: 'What do researchers do? Why do we do research? How is it possible we can be researchers? What do we already know about this topic?'; and in the second: 'What additional information de we need? Who has this information? How can we get it?'. Further guidance, such as how to frame interview questions, how to select people to interview, how to comply with ethical requirements, and how to compile and analyse the results, is provided as required as the process unfolds.

Though the results obtained suggest that this method is effective, a doubt remains about whether offering the young researchers a more comprehensive capacity-building experience would lead to 'better' research. And this in turn leads to a deeper question, inspired by Punch's (2002) much-cited reflections on whether research with children is the same as or different from research with adults: Is the best children's research that where children have been trained to follow the adult-determined correct procedures as closely as possible (and understood the principles

behind these), or is it something different, and if so, what? The transformative approach, at least in CESESMA's version of it, would argue that children's research should be judged, not by its conformity with methodological correctness, but by the transformations it helps to achieve (Shier 2015, p. 212-215; and see also Lather, 1986, on 'catalytic validity'). However these are not two ideas in opposition. For child researchers to have an impact on policy, they must convince the powerful of the need for action. They can sometimes do this purely through the emotional appeal of their pleas for change (often enhanced by presenting such pleas to politicians in expressive and moving ways), but backing this with methodologically robust research evidence also helps.

4. Learning from action research: The importance of the cyclical model

Though action research is a diverse family of different methods, an important feature of most of these is their iterative or cyclical nature (Lewin, 1946; McTaggart and Kemmis, 1988; Griffiths, 2009). Reflection on initial findings leads to a return to the original participants with new questions, possibly a new inter-vention, and the gathering of new data, and this process may go through a number of cycles in the course of a project. TRCA, though it is described as *'investigación acción'* (action research) by CESESMA, and invokes action research beliefs and principles, has not (so far) followed this cyclical model.

The present study was designed as just a single cycle, with one field trip planned to collect the data required. However, almost as soon as this was completed, the need for a follow-up visit became apparent. An initial view of the data generated new questions, and gaps were seen that needed to be filled. Therefore a second field trip was planned and carried out, with new questions asked and additional data collected. And as soon as the second field trip was completed, the need for a third became evident; however, this was not logistically feasible (which explains why there is no evidence to back up the speculation on the invisibility of participation rights in the original data in Chapter 6).

This research would have benefitted from several cycles of data-gathering, analysis, reflection and re-framing; and the fact that this was not done can be seen as a limitation of the study. Obviously the physical distances involved were a major factor. The adult researcher was based a long way from the research participants

and every visit to them was a complicated and costly undertaking. More significant, however, was the fact that the idea of a cyclical action research approach has not, until now, formed part of the TRCA model. Perhaps further thought should be given to whether the TRCA approach can be extended to accommodate the cyclical approach of classic action research.

5. The importance of continuing support for follow-up and research impact

In Shier's account of the CESESMA's TRCA model (Shier, 2015; also summarised in Appendix 6), much is made of the way the supporting organisation commits itself to continue to support teams of young researchers in the implementation of action plans to disseminate their research and advocate for action on their recommendations, with the overall aim of maximising the impact of the research and the resulting transformations. The young researchers' action plan from the present study can be seen in Appendix 15, and for comparison, four similar action plans made by previous teams of child researchers can be seen in CESESMA (2012a). A lesson learnt from this experience is that, just as child researchers need adult support and facilitation to complete a research project (maybe not always and inevitably, but certainly when using the TRCA approach), they need similar support and facilitation to implement an action plan and get results.

In Chapter 4 it was suggested that, despite some striking successes in the area of dissemination, the young researchers had not continued to organise themselves as a team and there had been no follow-up work that could be described as advocacy for change. The dissemination activities that did take place were at the instigation of adults and coincided with those adults' professional interests, rather than being the result of the children themselves implementing their action plan. Comparing this with the effective advocacy and follow-up work done by some of CESESMA's previous teams of child researchers, notably those from Yúcul whose work is described in CESESMA (2012a, pp 37-46) and Shier (2015, p. 212), raises a number of issues for future projects. One is that, while child researchers using the TRCA approach can and do get enthusiastic about the social and political advocacy work that flows from their research projects, it may be that their commitment to the follow-up is correlative with their commitment to the initial research question; that

is, children who research topics that they themselves have chosen as important may be more motivated to 'see it through' and push for their recommendations to be taken on by adult decision-makers (which ties in with the discussion in Section 2 above on the importance of young researchers 'owning' their research).

Another issue is the need for consistency and continuity of adult support for the follow-up work. At a simple pragmatic level, it may be relevant that Yúcul is only half an hour by bus from the CESESMA office in San Ramón, whereas El Ayote, Las Brisas, El Colibrí and Darío are at least an hour and a half's journey by four-wheel drive pick-up truck. This is a recurring problem in child participation work, where adults support short-term activities up to a certain point, but do not stay around long enough to support the follow-up that is necessary to achieve long-term goals (Cockburn, 2009; Shier, 2010a; Tisdall and Davis, 2004).

However, there are underlying issues that have more to do with the adult supporters' beliefs and goals. Adult supporters of children's collective action, particularly those who believe in the Latin American idea of 'Protagonsimo Infantil', often cherish the hope that children will become sufficiently empowered by their experiences to spontaneously transform into autonomous, self-actualising advocates and campaigners (Shier et al., 2014, p. 12). However, the conditions and processes that enable children and adolescents to achieve such levels of self-reliance and self-organisation are not well-understood; which means that if adults really wish to see them becoming autonomous change-agents who no longer rely on adult facilitation and accompaniment, there is still a long way to go.

6. Who is included and who is excluded? The difference between children as researchers and children as research subjects

The total student population of the four schools involved in this study was about 500, and of these only 17 became members of the young researchers' team. Although clear and relatively objective criteria were agreed for the selection of team members (set out in Chapter 4), the main one was that they should have interest in participating in this project and willingness to give up free time to do so; in other words, they largely self-selected. As it turned out there was a good mix of girls and boys (an odd number, with one extra girl) evenly spread across the four village communities and across the target age-range set for the project. Apart from

this, however, personal information about them, such as ethnic background, socio-economic status or religion, was not collected, so it is not possible to say how representative they were of the communities they intended to research.

What is important to understand here, however, is that this was a *research team*, not a sample of a population to be researched. And the question that arises is: Does it matter whether a research team is a representative sample of the population they plan to research? In most typical academic research it does not, and university researchers are rarely representative of the populations they research (though such thinking is also contested, particularly by feminist standpoint theory: Donnelly, 2002; McCorkel and Myers, 2003; Weiner-Levy and Queder, 2012). This high-lights an important aspect of research by children where there is often confusion, namely the distinction that has to be made between children who engage with the process as *researchers* (or research advisers) and children who engage as participants who will be *providers of data* (e.g. interviewees, focus group members, survey respondents) (Lundy and McEvoy, 2009); a confusion exacerbated by the fact that both are often referred to as 'participants', which loses sight of the distinction. Crucially, the criteria for selection of the two groups are completely different. Whilst it may be acceptable, and indeed beneficial, if the selection process for young researchers privileges children who are attracted to the idea of giving up free time to do a research project after school (which may be a small and atypical minority), it would be an unacceptable source of bias if the process for selecting a sample of children to be interviewed tended to favour the same children. This distinction is also important in the ethical treatment of the two groups: It is normal for the privacy of *research subjects* to be protected and their data to be confidential, whereas it is usual – at least in academic research – for *researchers* to take both credit and responsibility for their work by putting their name to it (see discussion of ethical issues in Chapter 4).

Whilst the above argument shows that it is not necessary, and may not even be desirable, for a team of researchers to be *representative* of the population they intend to research, it is absolutely necessary, as a simple matter of human rights, that potential child researchers are not subject to discrimination in the selection process. This means it is incumbent on those who plan, organise and facilitate

children's research projects to identify and strive to eliminate sources of discrimination, both direct and indirect, from all stages of the selection process. The avoidance of indirect discrimination might include ensuring that the selection criteria are entirely relevant and necessary, and above all seeking to identify those children, or groups of children, who might want to join the team but face obstacles to putting themselves forward, who might need additional support to play a full and equal role in the team once selected, or who might never hear about the project unless special efforts are made to reach them. In the present study, this was done to some extent by offering literacy or other special support to any potential team member who might need it, and, where children were already juggling school and work commitments, talking to parents and encouraging them to support their sons and daughters in this undertaking.

Though support was offered to meet participants' individual needs, the question of whether enough was done to reach disabled children in the four communities and encourage them to put themselves forward in the first place was raised in the section on ethical issues in Chapter 4. With the benefit of hindsight, the answer has to be probably not. Medical models of disability are still dominant in Nicaragua, and the disability rights agenda has advanced hardly at all (Cordua Cruz and Sánchez Gutiérrez, 2011), and nor has inclusive education (Castillo Vado, 2008). This means there are no support systems available for disabled children to attend school (and no special schools either, outside the main towns and cities). It is therefore commonplace (though not inevitable) for disabled children to stay at home and for their right to education to be simply ignored. Therefore the simple fact of recruiting the team of child researchers from amongst those already attending the four local schools created an initial barrier that excluded most of the disabled children in the district. To address this level of exclusion a much more focused and pro-active recruitment plan would have been required; one that went beyond simply saying, "Help is available for those who need it".

7. Conclusion: Partnership between children and adults in research

Instances of children and adolescents doing research without any adult support or accompaniment are rare. It is impossible to say how rare, as in some cases children (or more likely adolescents) may be doing such research while adults remain

unaware of it. Also, it is difficult to determine the precise borderline between 'doing research' and 'finding out about things we need to know about', which children do all the time, with or without adult help. In general, however, it seems fair to say that almost all research *by children* involves some level of adult support, help or accompaniment.

Along with this help and support, however, come degrees of power and influence. Adult facilitators can strive to maintain a non-directive, laissez faire style, and where they provide capacity-building they can strive to put aside personal beliefs and values. However, as Foucault (2000) pointed out, power is always in the air, pervading all such relationships in both obvious and subtle ways. This problem was mentioned in Chapter 4 in relation to the use of the label 'child-led' for certain kinds of research, where it was suggested that the true extent of the influence that adult facilitators have over children's research can be obscured by describing it as 'child-led'.

An alternative way of thinking about these relationships is to consider the related roles of children and adults in such research initiatives as *partnerships*. This highlights the fact that, whilst the relationship between children and adults in research projects can take many different forms, both have a part to play, and the parts that each play are related to and interdependent on each other. Furthermore, it means that this relationship can be *talked about*; both parties can have a say about what kind of partnership they want it to be, can discuss the constraints and limitations that must be taken on board, and can keep it under review as a project progresses. The workings of power in the partnership can thus be made visible and discussed.

Discussion of children and adults working in partnership calls to mind a debate some years ago about which should be the topmost rung of Roger Hart's 'Ladder of Children's Participation' (Hart, 1992; Barber, 2007, p. 26). Though some argued that children's organisation and decision-making *without adult involvement* was a more meaningful form of participation (e.g. Melton, 1993, p. 265), Hart himself defended his original decision to place *joint decision-making* by children and adults as the top rung of the ladder.

One of the most surprising critiques of the model for me has been the desire of some to transform the top rung of the ladder to be 'children in charge' or children's decision-making without adults. ... The top rung of the ladder as it was drawn in the original essay was called 'Child initiated, shared decisions with adults'. My purpose in creating this scheme had not been to argue naïvely that we should think of children as repressed individuals who needed to be liberated through a series of steps whereby all adult engagement was removed. My concern was rather to argue that children's potential as citizens needs to be recognised to the fullest and, to that end, children ought to be able to participate at times at their highest possible level. The highest possible degree of citizenship in my view is when we, children or adults, not only feel that we can initiate some change ourselves but when we also recognise that it is *sometimes* appropriate to also invite others to join us because of their own rights and because it affects them too, as fellow-citizens. (Hart, 2008, p. 24).

There is no one correct way for adult and child researchers to enter a partnership. In Chapter 4, many different approaches to engaging with children in research were discussed, including children as advisers or consultants to adult researchers, children as co-researchers, and children as lead researchers with adult support and facilitation as in the TRCA approach used in the present study. All of these can involve subtle and complex dynamics of power, particularly as it passes between adults and children. However, as long as children's rights are respected, and relations of mutual respect maintained between the children and adults involved, decisions about how to find answers to a research question, and the kind of partnership between adult and child researchers most likely to achieve this, can be based on all the relevant factors, and not tied to a narrow idea of the 'correct' way for researchers to engage with children. In some cases, a desire to showcase the capability of child researchers may be a legitimate objective of a project, and this may be taken into account in deciding how the partnership will function, but it need not always be the case, or may be just one of a number of factors taken into account. The common factor is that the relationship is seen as a partnership, and shared decisions are made – taking account of everyone's interests – about what kind of partnership it should be. The following chapter offers a simple practical tool that can help in the framing of such decisions.

Chapter 8: Conclusions and implications

1. Introduction

In this final chapter, following this introduction, Section 2 reviews the research findings to confirm that the original research questions have been addressed satisfactorily, and that the findings, together with the discussion of the key themes arising from them, constitute a significant original contribution to knowledge of the topic. Section 3 then goes on to explore some of the implications of these findings, first by way of three practical proposals: a framework for developing a comprehensive children's rights-based approach to human relations in school, a framework for moving towards a new pedagogy of rights and responsibilities, and an analytical tool to help researchers decide how to engage in partnership with children and adolescents in research projects; and then through a wider reflection on the potential application of the study for policy and practice. Section 4 lists a number of areas where a need for further research has been identified, and Section 5 is a final summing up.

In a break with tradition, this final chapter does not contain a section on the limitations of the research. This is because the most important limitations were set out in advance in the discussion of the scope of the research in the opening chapter, in order that the reader could be aware from the outset of what the thesis can and cannot expect to deliver: there are no generalisable findings; there is no attempt to evaluate a specific approach to human rights in school; and there is limited engagement with the views of adults. In addition, Chapter 7 contains a detailed reflexive critique of the methodology and methods used, which need not be repeated here.

2. Final review of findings in relation to research questions

This thesis sought to explore how children and adolescents living and working in Nicaragua's coffee sector perceive the exercise of, respect for and violation of their rights in school, and by so doing provide insights that can contribute to the development of effective human-rights-based approaches to schooling, particularly in poor countries where the basic right to go to school must also be claimed and defended. This was expressed as two linked research questions:

1. How do children and adolescents living and working in Nicaragua's coffee sector perceive the exercise of, respect for and violation of their rights in school?

2. What insights can these children's perceptions of rights in school offer to those concerned to develop effective human-rights-based approaches to schooling?

A team of 17 young researchers, aged 9-15, was formed, and this team developed and carried out a research project where they interviewed 150 other children to find out how those children understood and experienced their rights at school. In this they were supported by adult facilitators using an approach known as 'Transformative Research by Children and Adolescents' (TRCA). The young researchers analysed their data, and compiled their own report with their findings and recommendations, which was publicly presented to an international professional audience and subsequently published in an international children's rights journal. In addition to supporting the young researchers in their work, the adult researcher carried out background research, using interviews, focus groups and local documentation to gather additional information from parents, teachers and key adult informants. Finally, with the young researchers' permission and approval, the adult researcher undertook a more detailed thematic analysis of their original child-to-child interview data. In the analysis of the findings, it was thus possible for the adult-led thematic analysis to be compared with and informed by the results of the earlier analysis of the same data by the young researchers themselves.

From this analysis four themes emerged which have been further elaborated in the preceding chapters:

(1) For the children interviewed, mistreatment by their fellow-students was a more significant problem than mistreatment by their teachers. These children felt that their right to an adequate, secure and quality education was threatened less by their relations with their teachers (despite the strong power imbalance), and more by their relations with one another. This finding draws attention to the importance of developing positive human relations (student-student and well as teacher-student) as one of the fundamentals for developing a rights-respecting school.

(2) Some forms of behaviour management are seen by students as rights violations; for example depriving them of playtime as punishment for poor work. This suggests the need to look for rights-respecting alternatives in dealing with behaviour issues while maintaining an optimal learning environment for all students.

(3) Much of what children were being taught about their rights was inappropriate and misleading, leaving them confused about the nature of rights and the relationship between rights and responsibilities. This study was not the first to present such a finding, though it does suggest the problem is widespread. Yet the literature on the subject suggests there has been little serious analysis of the complex relationship(s) between children's rights and responsibilities and how to incorporate this into human rights education in schools. In the course of this thesis, a framework is developed to address this challenge.

(4) The right to be heard (student voice) was not an important issue for children involved in this research – indeed it was almost invisible in the research data. If this finding is contrasted with other studies that show children to be preoccupied with their right to have a say and to have their views taken seriously in school, questions are raised about children's attitudes to and understandings of participation rights, and their relation to adult discourses on this subject.

A common thread in the findings was the fundamental importance of human relations within schools and schooling, suggesting the need to tackle the improvement of human relations in schools from a children's rights perspective; a theme which will be developed further in the next section.

Given trustworthy initial data, and a systematic scholarly analysis, these findings thus provide reliable answers to the two initial research questions. Though the

findings themselves are not transferable to other groups or settings, the insights arising from the analysis constitute a significant original contribution to knowledge of the topic, addressing both the understanding and practical application of children's rights in schools. The importance of this knowledge, and its wider significance were established in the opening chapter. The implications for policy and practice are discussed below.

3. Application to policy and practice

In the course of this research project, taking the analysis and discussion of the findings in the previous chapters as a starting point, a number of implications for policy and practice have been identified. This has given rise to a number of practical proposals for development, and has also stimulated more general reflection on the wider implications of the study. This section will therefore present three specific proposals which can potentially lead to improvements in policy and practice in relation to the implementation of children's rights in schools, and will follow these with a brief discussion of the wider potential applicationof the study.

A children's rights-based approach to human relations in school

The discussion of research findings in chapter 6 shows how the children who participated in this study valued positive human relations in school, which included both relations between teachers and students (which most of them said they already enjoyed) and relations among students (which many more of them felt they did not currently enjoy). But is it a child's right to attend a school where positive human relations prevail, and what would be a human-rights-based approach to achieving this? It is not easy to find a simple answer to these questions, but the UNICEF/ UNESCO 'Human Rights-Based Approach to Education for All' discussed above (Lansdown el al., 2007; introduced in Chapter 2) provides a framework to guide the search.

Each of the three key rights in this framework: access to education, quality education, and respect in education, offers a route to positive human relations in school. Although the detailed work of constructing such an approach is beyond the remit of this thesis, the following shows how a suitable framework might be constructed by looking at each of the three routes in turn (in reverse order).

Route 1: The right to respect in school

This right includes respect for a child's identity (particularly important for those belonging to religious or ethnic minority groups or who otherwise stand out as different from the majority), respect for participation rights, and respect for integrity. This last implies freedom from all forms of violence, abuse and humiliation, psychological/emotional as well as physical. If these rights were fully realised, it would mean that every child would be assured that their school would be a place where: (a) they will not be discriminated against, laughed at or belittled for who they are or where they come from; (b) they will not be hit, insulted, abused, humiliated or subject to any kind of violence, by anybody (i.e. neither by teachers nor fellow-students, nor anybody else); (c) they will be asked for their opinions, and encouraged to express them, and when they do so they will be listened to and taken account of; and (d) if a girl, she will not be treated any worse or denied any opportunities that boys have (and vice versa for that matter).

This respecting of rights in school is a cornerstone of the whole-school approaches to rights that were discussed in Chapter 2, particularly the 'Rights-Respecting School Award' in the UK, and similar programmes in Canada and New Zealand. For example, the 2010 evaluation report on the UNICEF UK programme claimed that:

> All 31 schools were characterised by *very positive relationships* between pupils, between staff, and between pupils and staff. Listening, respect and empathy were evident and there was little or no bullying or shouting. Staff and pupils reported experiencing a strong sense of belonging. Relationships and behaviour were considered to have improved due to better understanding by pupils and staff of how to be rights respecting, using the CRC as a guide. There was little or no shouting, and pupils and staff both considered incidents of bullying to be minimal. Where conflicts did arise, pupils were more likely than previously to resolve these for themselves. (Sebba and Robinson, 2010, p. 4; emphasis added)

Though subsequent research, seeking to dig a little deeper, has highlighted some weaknesses in this approach, these are issues of unsatisfactory implementation, and do not, so far, challenge the validity of the approach in itself (discussed in Chapter 2: see Howe and Covell, 2010; Mejias and Starkey, 2012; Trivers and Starkey,

2012, and also the findings of the present study). The creation of a rights-respecting school, as long as it is implemented effectively and consistently across the school, has the potential to deliver on respectful, non-violent student-student and student-staff relations.

Route 2: Child-friendly schools as a component of the right to quality education

The features of a 'child-friendly school', according to UNICEF's flagship Child-Friendly Schools initiative, were presented in Chapter 2, where such schools are described as being inclusive, child-centred and democratic/participative (Osher et al., 2009). Drawing on the work of Porteus and colleagues (2001), three linked approaches were identified that can contribute to the creation of such schools: the eco-systems approach (Bronfenbrenner, 1979; Croninger and Finkelstein, 2002; Espelage, 2014; CESESMA, 2014); community-building (Furman, 2002; Bower et al, 2015; Beckett et al, 2012; McCaleb, 1994); and democratic decision-making (Apple and Beane, 2007; Mannion et al., 2015; Fielding and Moss, 2011).

Thus we have three different but related approaches to building positive human relations in schools: concern for the ecology of development, concern for building relationships of solidarity (strengthening and extending the sense of 'community'), and concern for democratic decision-making; all three of which can help deliver to children their right to quality education in a child-friendly setting; and all three of which, as suggested in Chapter 2, sit comfortably with, extend and complement the human-rights-based approach, which can be seen as both underpinning and over-arching.

Route 3: The right of access to education throughout all stages of childhood

The third route from education rights to positive human relations in school (and back again) is the route that starts with the right of access to education through all stages of childhood. For this right to be realised, children must not only start school, but must stay in school, and do so for long enough to complete their schooling (how long this may be is a separate issue that need not be addressed here). Governments, as duty-bearers, can approach this by coercion (often with sanctions for non-attendance), by support for and encouragement of continued attendance, or both. The first option is more viable – and less unjust – in wealthier

countries where governments can guarantee at least a minimally acceptable and affordable educational offer to all children. In poorer countries like Nicaragua, however, it is not feasible for the government to seek to force children into school by sanctioning parents of non-attenders. The approach must therefore be one of support and encouragement. Making sure that schools are available and accessible to all is a big part of this, but is not sufficient. For children in Nicaragua, going to school is not the only option; leaving school and going to work instead is a perfectly viable alternative for many, and may indeed be the preferred option of many parents, increasingly so as their sons and daughters get older. As Shier et al. (2013) explain:

> The right *to* education requires education to be available and accessible to all. However, in the case of poor working children like those in northern Nicaragua, if school is not safe, if the curriculum is not relevant, if the students are not treated with respect… – in other words, if children's rights *in* education are not fulfilled – then the decision will be made either by parents or by young people themselves to stay away, and so the right *to* education is also violated. (p. 200)

As Pigozzi (2006) says, "A high-quality education, therefore, implies an environment that actively seeks out learners" (p. 43). Therefore, as duty-bearer, the state is obliged to do as much as possible to make sure that school is, and remains, the preferred option for as many children as possible. Governments can do many things to support and encourage continued school attendance, including propaganda and publicity campaigns, direct help such as providing free uniforms and school equipment, even cash transfers, free school meals, and of course, making the school experience relevant to the interests and needs of the children. And then there is the option of making schools into friendlier, more welcoming, safer and more satisfying places to spend time; not by reducing the amount of school-work (though many children might welcome this), but by changing the atmosphere and ethos of schools on the lines suggested above: making them (a) rights-respecting; (b) democratic; (c) concerned for the whole child in his or her environment, particularly when there are problems to be resolved; and (d) built on a strong sense of community. Thus the obligation to realise the child's right of continued access to education merges with the right to respect in school and the right to a safe, child-

friendly school environment to provide the final consolidation of the rights-based route to improved human relations in school.

A framework for moving towards a new pedagogy of rights and responsibilities

One of the young researchers' most important findings was that many children not only did not understand the difference between rights and responsibilities, but could not distinguish either of these from everyday norms of social conduct ('don't spit on the floor', 'don't fight with other children', etc.). Prompted by this, the literature on children's rights and responsibilities was reviewed in Chapter 2, and the resulting ideas further developed as a proposal for a conceptual framework in Chapter 6. This need not be repeated here, but basically the framework suggests that there are at least eight ways that a relationship between children's rights and their responsibilities can be conceptualised. The findings suggest that when children are taught about their rights and responsibilities in school, most of these relationships are ignored, misrepresented or confused (thus adding weight to similar findings from the UK). Sorting out this confusion could be an important first step in enhancing the effectiveness of whole-school approaches to children's rights, as it will provide an effective response to some of the main critiques of existing models, where appropriate pedagogy for 'rights and responsibilities' is found to be lacking. As was stated in Chapter 6, the eight-way framework as it stands is too complicated to be taught in schools. What it can do, however, is kick-start the collective reflection and experimentation that will be necessary if an appropriate and effective pedagogy of rights and responsibilities is eventually to emerge.

An analytical tool to help researchers develop partnerships with children and adolescents

For some academic researchers, children are little more than statistical data, while for others they are co-researchers or, in a few cases, lead researchers. However, all researchers whose research involves children and adolescents have decisions to make about how and when to engage with those involved in and/or affected by their research. These decisions will depend on factors related to the purpose of the research, efficiency, validity, and resources available; but there are also factors that relate to the preferred methodological approach of the researcher and its under-

pinning values, not to mention the culture and traditions of research establishments. These might include a commitment to (or alternatively a resistance to) community engagement, to the emancipation or empowerment of those involved, and to a children's-rights-based approach.

In the case of the present study, a plan to hand over the bulk of the field research to children and adolescents was the kernel of the initial research proposal; taken for granted as an effective way to go about it. As the research progressed, however, the complications arising from the use of this particular method came into sharper focus (see previous chapter). This is not to suggest that the complications outweighed the many benefits of the approach; but rather that the benefits had been foreseen and articulated, while the headaches had not.

Reflecting on how such decisions were made in the course of the present study led to a more general reflection on how researchers make decisions about involving children and adolescents in their work. As suggested above, a researcher has to decide *when* to engage with children and also *how* to engage with them. These can be seen as two dimensions of a single problem.

First, every piece of research involves a number of steps or phases. There are many ways to label these (Cohen et al., 2011; Kumar, 2014), but the following is a convenient, simple framework: (1) Deciding on the research question; (2) Designing the research and choosing methods; (3) Preparing research instruments; (4) Identifying and recruiting participants; (5) Collecting data; (6) Analysing the data, drawing conclusions; (7) Producing a report; (8) Dissemination of the report and its findings; (9) Advocacy and mobilisation to achieve policy impact. Children and adolescents can be engaged at any of these moments, or indeed at each and every one of them.

As for the other dimension, *how* to involve children, the wide range of different ways in which children can engage with research was reviewed in Chapter 4, neatly summarised by Kellett's (2010a) conception of research *on*, *about*, *with* and *by* children, or Christensen and Prout's (2002) classification of children as objects, subjects, social actors, participants or researchers. Along this dimension, the key variable is the amount of control or decision-making power that children have in

relation to adult researchers: from next to none at one end to 'all of it' at the other (the power to walk away is a minimum ethical requirement at the lower end, but even that may not always be a given).

The idea of assembling these two dimensions as a matrix to produce an analytical tool for researchers was inspired by a similar matrix in Save the Children's *'Toolkit for Monitoring and Evaluating Children's Participation'* (Lansdown and O'Kane, 2014: shown in Appendix 22). The new matrix was created by using Lansdown's three 'levels of engagement' (plus a level of non-engagement) as column headings (the same as the original matrix in the Toolkit); while for the vertical axis, replacing the five phases of the development project cycle with the nine phases of the research process listed above. The result is shown in Table 10 below:

Phases of the research process ↓	← Dimension of decision-making power or control →			
	Children are not involved	**Children are consulted**	**Children collaborate with adult researchers**	**Children direct and decide for themselves**
Deciding on the research question		Children asked about problems that concern them.	Children and adults jointly define research question.	Children choose their own research question.
Designing the research and choosing methods		Children consulted on what research methodology to use.	Children and adults deliberate and jointly decide on the methodology to use.	Children decide what methodology they want to use.
Preparing research instruments		Children consulted on (and perhaps test) research instruments before use.	Children and adults work together on design of research instruments.	Children create their own research instruments.
Identifying and recruiting participants		Children asked to advise on recruiting participants.	Children and adults jointly identify and recruit participants.	Children identify and recruit research participants.
Collecting data		Research involves adults interviewing children or surveying their opinions.	Children and adults collaborate on data-gathering activity.	Children organise and carry out data collection activities.
Analysing the data and drawing conclusions		Adults show preliminary findings to children and ask for feedback.	Children and adults work together to analyse data and determine conclusions.	Children analyse data and draw their own conclusions.
Producing a report		Adults consult children on aspects of the final report.	Children and adults work together to produce a report.	Children produce their own report in their own words.
Dissemination of the report and its findings		Adults consult children on how to disseminate findings.	Children and adults collaborate on dissemination and awareness-raising activities.	Children undertake activities to disseminate their findings.
Advocacy and mobilisation to achieve policy impact		Adults consult children about possible advocacy actions.	Children and adults work together on plans for advocacy and mobilisation.	Children develop and implement an action plan for advocacy and mobilisation.

Table 10: Matrix for analysing children's engagement in research processes, drawing on Save the Children's matrix for monitoring participation in development projects (Lansdown and O'Kane, 2014)

It needs to be said that this matrix is being offered for testing as a practical tool, not as a model intended to represent reality. For example, Lansdown's three levels of participation are an oversimplification of the complexities encountered in practice, amply discussed in the participation literature (Karsten, 2012, offers probably the most comprehensive compilation of all the other models available). In particular the invisibility of the adult supporter/facilitator in the final column is problematic. Nevertheless, for practical purposes, particularly for those concerned to involve children directly in their deliberations, this simplified scheme has proved effective.[43]

Researchers planning projects can use this matrix to help them decide what is the most appropriate way to engage with children and adolescents at each stage in the process. It is possible that at some stages not involving children at all may in fact be the right choice. However, using the matrix means that, where this occurs, non-engagement with children will be the result of a thought-through and justified decision, rather than, as is often the case, a mere oversight.

However, the matrix, as it stands, requires a third dimension; that is, its use must be underpinned by a third set of equally important questions; namely *whom* to involve and, more tellingly, whom to exclude from engagement with the research process (see discussion in the previous chapter).

Finally, the development and use of this matrix, or one like it, could be seen as part of a wider initiative to explore, in theory and practice, the idea of research partnerships involving adult and child/adolescent researchers.[44]

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[43] The present author worked on the international piloting of the Save the Children Toolkit (2011-2013), where this simplified conceptual scheme was assessed and approved in practice.

[44] Though not yet field-tested, this has been presented twice at national seminars with positive feedback.

Wider application

Beyond the three specific proposals discussed above, the findings of this study, if effectively published and disseminated, can potentially have a wider influence on policy and practice in relation to both adults' engagement with children as researchers, and, through this, the continuing movement towards schools for children with rights.

First of all, the successful adaptation and integration of the *Transformative Research by Children and Adolescents* (TRCA) approach to an academic research study has demonstrated its potential as a useful and valid methodology for future social research with children and adolescents. It has the flexibility to adapt to different demands made of it (and specifically, in this case, to the rigorous requirements of a doctoral project); it has been shown to produce *trustworthy data* (using the concept from Guba, 1981); it builds on concepts of *empowerment* and *transformation* which are used in a defined and meaningful way and not as mere buzzwords; it has demonstrated the capacity for ethical compliance, and within this a degree of ethical sophistication; it has demonstrated a strong link to advocacy and the potential to influence decision-makers at different levels; and with every application, it provides confirmatory evidence of Kellett's (2010b) four main benefits of engaging with children as researchers: new and different *insider* knowledge, different analytic perspectives, strengthening children's voices in society, and empowerment of its participants (discussed in Chapter 4).

This suggests that *Transformative Research by Children and Adolescents* can be recommended as a model for repetition, reproduction and further development, and that it will continue to offer findings that include genuinely new valid knowledge to inform proposals for change, whether these come directly as recommendations from child researchers, or are developed by adults, convinced by the validity and relevance of child researchers' findings. Though TRCA can be applied to any research area, a number of the issues arising from the present study might lend themselves to this approach, and to comparisons by child and adolescent researchers in different contexts; for example: classroom management beyond punishment; understandings of rights versus responsibilities; improving relations in

the playground; and above all, student's perspectives on student voice – to fill the gap the found in the data from the present study.

As for the realisation of children's rights in schools, this study lends support to both the continuing development of whole-school approaches to children's rights, and to the growing critique of certain limitations in the application of these approaches in practice – confusion over the relationship between rights and responsibilities being the most obvious example (Chapter 2). It seems entirely fitting that the way forward for rights-respecting schools is to engage with children directly in researching, critiquing and thus improving current practice. A school for children with rights is still a relatively new idea, and in bringing it to fruition, the role of duty-bearer falls squarely on the adults involved. However, rather than thinking of it as something to be *provided by adults* for children to enjoy, perhaps it can be re-envisaged as a concept – and a practice – to be further developed through collaborations involving all the actors involved, where the contribution of children themselves, as researchers, but primarily as rights-holders, is central to its development.

4. Implications for future research

If any of the above potential applications are to be taken forward, further research will be needed to test and refine them. In particular, the framework for rights and responsibilities exists at present purely as an intellectual framework, and will require a lot of dialogue and development if it is to serve as the starting point for a pedagogical programme in schools.

Throughout the thesis, however, other issues have come to light where, though no specific proposals have been made, further research may lead to the construction and dissemination of useful new knowledge. These include:

(1) The impact of a students' union model for student voice in schools (such as that backed by the governing Frente Sandinista in Nicaragua), and how this compares to, and may interact with, student council models (advocated by previous governments).

(2) The function of 'solidaridad' (the Latin American understanding of 'solidarity') in schools in Latin America, and the possibility that learning from this could

contribute to community-building in schools in other parts of the world (Carrión López, 2012; Gaztambide-Fernández, 2012; Prado Hernández, 2014).

(3) The link between how children are treated in school (rights *in* education) and their likelihood of (a) remaining in school and (b) while there, having a complete educational experience that is of real benefit to themselves and their families (the right *to* education). The link has been shown to exist and there is plenty of anecdotal evidence to support it, but not much is known about the mechanisms behind it: What is the relative importance of, and interaction between, different factors such as (for example): relevant curriculum, reduced bullying, and decent toilets, in countering the pressures on poor children to abandon school?

(4) In exploring the relationship between child labour and schooling, very little research could be found on the educational function of children's farm work as apprenticeship for eventually taking on a family farm and developing a career as a food producer (Riley, 2009, being one of the few that touch on this topic). How common is it, and how widespread throughout the world? How effective is it, and what factors make it so? Can it be clearly distinguished from exploitative child labour? How does it impinge on the right to formal schooling?

(5) The role of children and adolescents in the setting of social research agendas, and the possibility of, and potential outcomes from, a research agenda set by children and adolescents.

(6) The distortion of understanding and analysis in the research literature brought about by ill-defined and inconsistent use of words like 'child' and 'young person', and possible ways to avoid this.

(7) On the methodological side: although applying CESESMA's 'Transformative Research by Children and Adolescents' (TRCA) approach in an academic research context was a challenge (discussed in the previous chapter), both the experience and the outcomes were generally encouraging, and suggest this approach merits replication and further study and development. One aspect is to investigate more closely CESESMA's idea of the four transformations, and how to record and assess these, particularly the effect of empowerment on the children and adolescents

involved, and the mechanisms needed to effect the linkage from research to advocacy to action for change.

(8) Another area for methodological research is how adults support child and adolescent researchers; in particular to explore the grey area between 'facilitation' and 'manipulation'. What would help adult supporters ensure the former and avoid the latter?

(9) Also concerning methodology; although doing cross-language research without translation is a practical possibility for the bilingual researcher, the implications of this approach, and any advantages and disadvantages it may have compared to research using translation, appear not to have been researched, leaving a gap in the literature that could usefully be addressed.

(10) Finally; critical researcher reflexivity has been an essential resource throughout this research. Often, however, it has been veiled and has struggled to break through the impersonal academic writing style. Existing guidance presents academic writers with a stark choice between this style and a subjective first-person style. However, in the case of the present study, this was an impossible choice, and an alternative solution was improvised. Further research, or at least further debate, could open up a wider range of options for new researchers; perhaps finding valid alternatives that can side-step the first person/third person dilemma.

5. There can be no 'conclusion'; there is more to do

I have yet to see any problem, however complicated, which, when you looked at it in the right way, did not become still more complicated. (Paul Alderson, quoted by Thorpe, 1969)

The idea that this work should have a conclusion seems ironic, if not an impossibility. The young researchers have indeed uncovered significant findings, and have used these to develop a number of important insights into the reality of rights in school, both through their own analysis, and by handing their data on to an adult researcher for a different, but in the end complementary, analysis.

And yet, the study has raised more questions than it could ever have hoped to answer; questions which, rather than being resolved through the research process, become ever more complex and their answers more elusive. One thing this research

shows clearly is that much of our existing knowledge on these issues is piecemeal, subjective and contestable. It lends itself not to the determination of conclusions, but rather to new proposals and new explorations.

This notion that the issues we are dealing with, rather than being resolved, tend to multiply in complexity, can be seen in the way concepts and categories have multiplied throughout this research. On the methods side: when we assess the 'transformative' nature of research, we are not dealing with a single category, but with at least four distinct transformations; when we ask questions about engaging with, or forming partnerships with children and adolescents as researchers, we are looking at not one simple choice to be made, but at least nine linked stages in each of which children can engage or disengage in various different ways. As for the findings on children's perceptions of rights at school: when we ask how children should be taught about 'rights and responsibilities', this turns out to be not one simple relationship, but a combination of eight or more concepts that have to be taken on board and somehow integrated; and when we seek to create 'a school for children with rights' (Hammarberg, 1998), we need more than the existing concept of a rights-respecting school; we also need it to be child-friendly, democratic, and built on relations of solidarity. Only by embracing and harmonising all these ideas – especially for working children in poor countries – will schooling be able to establish itself as every child's preferred option.

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Appendices

List of appendices

Appendix 1: Map showing location of area of study

Appendix 2: Photographs of the research area

Dario village

Coffee grows on the hillsides in the shade of the forest

El Colibrí school

Las Brisas school

El Ayote school (centre of the local nucleus – includes the only secondary school in the area)

CESESMA's Community Learning Centre in Casas Blancas, where the young researchers' held their workshops

Appendix 3: Young researchers' report (original Powerpoint with English translation)

This report was created collectively by the team of 17 young researchers, using a technique specific to the TRCA approach. Working together as a team, they availed of a computer running Powerpoint linked to a projector operated for them by an adult facilitator. Although the adult facilitator did the actual typing, the team was able to instruct him on what to write, what pictures to add, and the overall appearance of the report as it progressed, viewing everything in real time, accepting or rejecting one another's ideas and establishing consensus as they went along. As well as enabling genuine collective report-writing, this technique has the advantage of generating as its product a report that is already in a suitable format to be presented publicly, as the final report and the Powerpoint presentation that goes with it are one and the same.

The following pages show images of the original Powerpoint slides form the report with an English translation alongside. The published version of the report (Niñas y Niños Investigadores. 2014. 'Aprendiendo de niñas, niños y adolescentes investigadoras/es: Hacia una nueva pedagogía de derechos y deberes'. *Rayuela* 10, 131-142) follows as Appendix 4.

Niños, niñas y adolescentes investigadores e investigadoras transformadores/as investigan la realidad de los derechos humanos en la educación.

Human Rights in School

Picture caption:
This girl is happy because her teacher is fulfilling all her rights and also her classmates.

Children and adolescents (girls and boys), transformative researchers researching the reality of human rights in education.

Parte 1: ¿Quiénes somos y cómo hicimos nuestra investigación?

Somos 17 niñas, niños y adolescentes de cuatro comunidades rurales del municipio de El Tuma La Dalia, Matagalpa: El Carmen #1, El Carmen #2, El CAS Luis Hernández y San Francisco de Peñas Blancas. Tenemos entre 10 y 15 años de edad. Todos y todas estudiamos en las escuelas de nuestras comunidades entre 2° y 6° grado. También ayudamos a nuestros madres y padres en trabajo doméstico y en el campo.

Part 1: Who are we and how did we do our research?

We are 17 girls and boys from four rural communities in the district of El Tuma-La Dalia, Matagalpa: El Carmen 1, El Carmen 2, El CAS Luis Hernandez and San Francisco de Peñas Blancas. We are from 10 to 15 years old. We all go to school in our villages, from 2nd to 6th grade. We also help our parents with housework and farm work.

Formamos un equipo de investigadores e investigadoras para investigar cómo las niñas, niños y adolescentes ven el respeto a los derechos humanos en las escuelas.

We have formed a team of researchers to investigate how children and adolescents see respect for human rights at school.

En nuestro primer encuentro hablamos de qué significa "investigación" y el rol del investigador.

Aprendimos sobre los derechos educativos, e hicimos dibujos para compartir nuestras experiencias sobre el tema de los derechos humanos en la escuela. De esta manera profundizamos nuestro conocimiento sobre el tema que íbamos a investigar.

In our first meeting we talked about what 'research' means and the role of the researcher.

We learnt about education rights and did drawings to share our experiences on the topic of human rights in school. This way we deepened our knowledge about the topic we were going to research. ['*profundizar*': to go into a topic more deeply]

3

En nuestro segundo encuentro planificamos la investigación. Decidimos sobre las preguntas que íbamos a hacer en las entrevistas.

In our second meeting we planned the research. We decided on the questions we were going to ask in the interviews.

Luego pusimos fechas y planificamos cómo íbamos a organizarnos para realizar las entrevistas.

Nos pusimos de acuerdo sobre las normas para protegernos mientras estábamos realizando la investigación en las comunidades.

Then we set dates and planned how we were going to organise ourselves to carry out the interviews.

We agreed on the rules to protect ourselves while we were carrying out research in the communities.

4
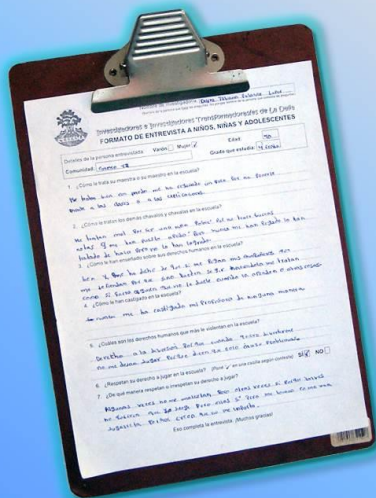
CESESMA nos facilitó preparar formatos para realizar las entrevistas.

Nos dispusimos para realizar las entrevistas con las niñas, niños y adolescentes de nuestras comunidades. Nos organizamos para trabajar en parejas acompañados por una educador/a de CESESMA.

CESESMA helped us in preparing the forms to do the interviews.

We organised ourselves to carry out the interviews with the children and adolescents in our communities. We arranged to work in pairs, accompanied by a CESESMA education worker.

5

Hicimos las entrevistas en las casas y en la comunidad: Aquí estamos en el Carmen #1…

We did interviews in people's houses, and around the village: Here we are in El Carmen 1.

…y aquí en San Francisco de Peñas Blancas.

And here in San Francisco de Peñas Blancas.

Entrevistamos a 150 niñas, niños y adolescentes.

137 niñas y niños entre 6 y 12 años de edad (90%)
13 adolescentes entre 13 y 15 años de edad (10%)

Comunidad	Mujeres	Varones	Total
El Carmen #1	20	12	32
El Carmen #2	16	16	32
El CAS Luis Hernández	13	14	27
San Francisco de Peñas Blancas	35	24	59
Total	84	66	150

We interviewed 150 children and adolescents.

137 children from 6 to 12 years old (90%)

13 adolescents from 13 to 15 years old (10%)

[Community | Female | Male | Total]

Nos reunimos en un tercer encuentro para compartir y analizar toda la información, y formular nuestras conclusiones.

We met for a third session to share and analyse all the information and draw up our conclusions.

En nuestro cuarto encuentro elaboramos un informe sobre los resultados de nuestra investigación.

In our fourth meeting we put together a report on the findings of our research.

We added some recommendations to complete the report.

Agregamos nuestras recomendaciones para completar el informe.

Nos reunimos en un quinto encuentro para formular nuestro Plan de Acción y evaluar nuestro proyecto de investigación.

We met for a fifth session to draw up our Action Plan and evaluate our research project.

Parte 2: Los resultados de nuestra investigación

Part 2: Our research findings

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1. Percepciones de niñas, niños y adolescentes sobre cómo su maestra o su maestro les trata en la escuela

98% de las niñas, niños y adolescentes entrevistadas/os dijeron que su maestra o maestro le trataba bien. Algunos dijeron que esto es porque se portan bien, hacen las tareas, hacen caso a la maestra o porque son "buenos alumnos".

Solo 2 personas dicen que la maestra les grita, y 2 dicen que le trata a veces bien y a veces mal.

1. Children and adolescents' perceptions of how their teachers treat them at school

98% of the children and adolescents we interviewed said their teacher treated them well. Some said this was because they behaved well, did their homework, paid attention to the teacher or were 'good pupils'.

Only 2 people said the teacher shouted at them, and 2 said she sometimes treats them well and sometimes badly.

---

2. Percepciones de niñas, niños y adolescentes sobre cómo los demás chavalos y chavalas les tratan en la escuela

La mayoría de las niñas, niños y adolescentes entrevistadas (77%) dijeron que los demás chavalos y chavalas les tratan bien. Dicen que son buenos amigos y amigas, juegan juntos y se tratan con respeto.

2. Children and adolescents' perceptions of how other kids* treat them in school

The majority of the children and adolescents interviewed (77%) said that the other kids treat them well. They said they are good friends, play together and treat one another with respect.

[* *'Chavalos y chavalas'* is a Nicaraguan expression similar to saying 'kids' instead of 'children' in English]

El otro 23% dicen que les tratan mal, o que algunos les tratan bien y otros no. Las formas de irrespetarles que mencionan incluyen:

- Escondiendo lápices y cuadernos;
- Jalándoles el pelo a las niñas, pellizcando y aruñándolas;
- No les dejan jugar;
- Poner apodos;
- Buscar pleitos, pegarles;
- Vulgarear;
- Gritar y regañarles.

The other 23% said they treated them badly, or that some treated them well and others didn't. The ways they were disrespected that they mentioned included:

- Hiding pencils and exercise books;
- Pulling the girls' hair, pinching and scratching them;
- Not letting them play;
- Name-calling;
- Causing fights, hitting them;
- Using rude language;
- Shouting at them and scolding them.

3. **Percepciones de niñas, niños y adolescentes sobre cómo les han enseñado sobre sus derechos humanos en las escuelas**

Descubrimos que lo que las niñas, niños y adolescentes aprenden sobre sus derechos humanos depende de la escuela a que asisten. Es decir, niñas, niños y adolescentes de diferentes escuelas dieron muy diferentes respuestas.

En una escuela, casi todos habían aprendido sobre sus derechos humanos y podían mencionar muchos de ellos. Los derechos más mencionados fueron:

- Derecho a educación,
- Derecho a atención a la salud,
- Derecho a un nombre y una familia,
- Derecho a ser tratado bien o con respeto,
- Derecho a jugar,
- Derecho a no ser mandado a trabajar antes de cumplir la edad para trabajar.

3. Children and adolescents' perceptions on how they have been taught about their human rights in school.

We discovered that what children and adolescents learn about their rights depends on what school they go to. That is, children and adolescents from different schools gave very different answers.

In one school, almost everyone had learnt about their human rights and they could name many of them. The rights most mentioned were:

- Right to education,
- Right to health-care,
- Right to a name and a family,
- Right to be treated well, or with respect,
- Right to play,
- Right not to be sent to work before they reach working age.

En otra escuela, las niñas, niños y adolescentes dijeron que sabían que los derechos humanos son importantes y que uno puede defender sus derechos cuando son violentados. Sin embargo no mencionaron los derechos humanos que conocían, y algunos dijeron que no les habían enseñado nada sobre sus derechos.

In another school the children and adolescents said they knew that human rights were important and that one can defend one's rights when they are violated. However, they didn't mention the human rights they knew, and some said they hadn't been taught anything about their rights.

En dos escuelas, cuando preguntamos a las niñas, niños y adolescentes sobre qué les habían enseñado sobre sus derechos, casi todas y todos respondieron hablando de sus <u>deberes</u> y las normas de conducta, y no de sus derechos; por ejemplo:

- Respetar a los docentes,
- Portarse bien,
- Pedir la palabra antes de hablar,
- No manosear a las niñas,
- Poner atención a las clases,
- No escupir en el piso,
- Respetar a sus padres y a los mayores de edad,
- Ser puntual con las tareas,
- No salir del aula.

Desde este análisis concluimos que no todas las maestras y los maestros cumplen con enseñar los derechos de las niñas, niños y adolescentes. Por eso muchos somos víctimas de violencia en la escuela, familia y comunidad por falta de información.

In two schools, when we asked the children and adolescents what they had been taught about their rights, almost all of them replied by talking about their <u>duties</u> and the rules of conduct, and not about their rights , for example:

- Respect the teachers,
- Behave well,
- Ask permission before you speak,
- Don't grope the girls,
- Pay attention in class,
- Don't spit on the floor,
- Respect your parents and elders,
- Do your homework on time,
- Don't leave the classroom [without asking].

Picture caption:
A boy pulling up a plant that's growing, and the teacher scolds him and slaps his hand with a stick.

From this analysis we conclude that not all the teachers are teaching children's rights as they should. Because of this many of us are victims of violence at school, at home, or in the community due to lack of information.

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4. **Percepciones de niñas, niños y adolescentes sobre cómo les han castigado en la escuela**

La mitad de las niñas, niños y adolescentes entrevistadas (51%) dijeron que no les habían castigado en la escuela.

Otros mencionaron los diferentes castigos que habían recibido. Estos incluyen:

- No dejarles ir a receso;
- Regañar u ofenderlas (por ejemplo "Me dicen que soy una basura");
- Bajarles puntos;
- Quitarles el alimento escolar;
- Pegarles;
- Dejarles parados al frente de la clase.

4. Children and adolescents' perceptions on how they have been punished at school

Half the children and adolescents we interviewed (51%) said they had not been punished at school.

Others mentioned the different punishments they had received. These included:

- Not being allowed to go out at playtime;
- Being scolded or offended (for example, "They say I'm rubbish");
- Taking away marks;
- Denying school meals;
- Hitting them;
- Making them stand in front of the class.

Concluimos que la mayoría de las maestras y los maestros han violentado los derechos de las y los estudiantes a través de estos castigos; por ejemplo los derechos a la recreación y la alimentación. Muchas veces las niñas, niños y adolescentes sienten baja su autoestima como resultado de estos castigos.

We conclude that most teachers have violated students' rights with these punishments; for example, the rights to recreation and food. Often the children and adolescents feel low in self-esteem as a result of these punishments.

Picture caption:
The teacher hit her because the girl was annoying her classmates who were studying; that's why she hit her.

5. Percepciones de niñas, niños y adolescentes sobre los derechos humanos más violentados en las escuelas

Una parte de las niñas, niños y adolescentes entrevistadas (33%) dijeron que no les ha violentado ningún derecho en la escuela.

Para los demás, las violaciones de sus derechos en las escuelas más mencionadas fueron:

- Derecho al juego y a la recreación;
- Derecho a ser tratado bien o con respeto (no refieren solamente a las maestras y maestros; los chavalos y chavalas también violentan este derecho a sus compañeros/as);
- Derecho a alimentación;
- Derecho a un nombre (porque les ponen apodos).

5. Children and adolescents' perceptions on the human rights most violated in school

Some of the children and adolescents we interviewed (33%) said none of their human rights had been violated at school.

For the rest, the violations of their rights they mentioned most were:

- Right to play and recreation;
- Right to be treated well or with respect (not referring only to the teachers; the kids also violate this right of their classmates);
- Right to food;
- Right to a name (because they give them nick-names).

Picture caption:
We have the right to a school to study and learn and get on in life.

Unos pocos mencionaron que hay una violación de su derecho a la educación, porque no reciben una educación de buena calidad.

A few mentioned the right to education, because they don't receive an education of good quality.

Un resultado de estas violaciones de sus derechos es que muchas niñas, niños y adolescentes quedan con la autoestima baja, salen de clases y no quieren seguir estudiando.

A result of these rights violations is that a lot of children and adolescents are left with low self-esteem, leave their classes and don't want to continue going to school.

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6. Percepciones de niñas, niños y adolescentes sobre el respeto al derecho a jugar en las escuelas

79% de las niñas, niños y adolescentes entrevistadas dijeron que sí, respetan el derecho a jugar en la escuela.

15% dijeron que no respetan su derecho a jugar, y los demás 6% no contestaron.

5. Children and adolescents' perceptions on respect for the right to play at school

79% of the children and adolescents interviewed said that yes, their right to play was respected at school.

15% said their right to play wasn't respected, and the remaining 6% didn't answer.
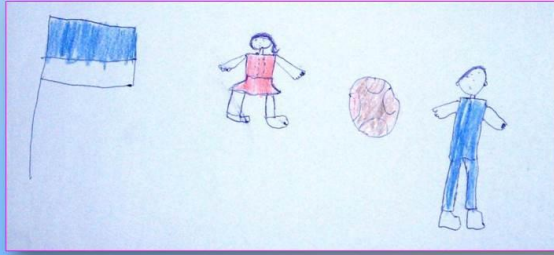
El incumplimiento del derecho a jugar toma varias formas, que incluyen:

- No dar la jugada a algún niño o niña;
- Pelear;
- No darles tiempo para jugar;
- Irrespetar a las personas con bromas o apodos;
- No tomar en cuenta las opiniones de los demás compañeros y compañeras.

Las niñas tienen el mismo derecho a jugar como los varones, pero en las escuelas no respetan los derechos iguales de las niñas. Las maltratan y no les dejan jugar, que es discriminación.

The denial of the right to play ['*incumplimiento*': non-fulfilment, non-compliance] takes various forms, which include:

- Not giving a girl or boy a turn [in a game];
- Fighting;
- Not allowing time to play;
- Being disrespectful with mocking or nick-names;
- Not taking account of other classmates' opinions.

Girls have the same right to play as boys, but in school girls' equal rights are not respected. They are treated badly and not let play, which is discrimination.

Parte 3: Nuestras recomendaciones para promover y respetar los derechos de las niñas, niños y adolescentes en las escuelas

Part 3: Our recommendations to promote and respect the rights of children and adolescents in school

Picture caption:

This drawing shows teachers who do not mistreat students like others do.

"A decent school and my rights with dignity". ['*digno/a*': worthy, decent, having dignity]

Para promover y respetar los derechos de las niñas, niños y adolescentes en las escuelas, las maestras y maestros deberían:

1. Dar el ejemplo de respetar a las y los estudiantes.
2. Ayudar a las y los estudiantes a entender clases difíciles.
3. Poner atención a las opiniones de las y los estudiantes.
4. Planificar y preparar bien las clases.
5. Hacer las clases más dinámicas y creativas.
6. Aconsejar a las y los estudiantes y corregirles con maneras en vez de regañarles.
7. Reunirse para hablar con las madres y los padres sobre los derechos de niñas, niños y adolescentes.
8. No distraerse con celulares cuando están dando la clase.
9. Cumplir con la clase completa y no salir a media clase.
10. No ser violentos con las y los estudiantes.

To promote and respect children and adolescents' rights in school, teachers should:

1. Be an example of respect to the students.
2. Help students understand difficult topics.
3. Pay attention to students' opinions.
4. Plan and prepare well for their classes.
5. Make classes more dynamic and creative.
6. Give advice and correct students politely instead of scolding them.
7. Meet with the parents and talk to them about children's rights.
8. Don't be distracted with their mobile phones when they are teaching.
9. Teach the whole class and don't leave half-way through.
10. Don't be violent to students.

Para promover y respetar los derechos de las niñas, niños y adolescentes en las escuelas, los directores y el Ministerio de Educación deberían:

1. Poner en práctica lo que aprenden sobre los derechos de la niñez en los diferentes procesos en que participan.
2. Hacer reuniones con las maestras y maestros para orientarles sobre los derechos de las niñas, niños y adolescentes.
3. Garantizar que enseñan equitativamente en todas las escuelas.
4. No portarse mal con las maestras y maestros.
5. Ser más responsables con lo que se comprometen.
6. Que los directores estén presentes en las actividades que se desarrollan en las escuelas.

To promote and respect children and adolescents' rights in school, school heads and the Ministry of Education should:

1. Put into practice what they learn about children's rights in the various activities they're involved in.
2. Meet with the teachers and instruct them about children and adolescents' rights.
3. Guarantee fair teaching in all schools.
4. Don't behave badly with the teachers.
5. Be more responsible about keeping their promises.
6. Heads should be present at school activities.

Para promover y respetar los derechos de las niñas, niños y adolescentes en las escuelas, las madres y los padres deberían:

1. Conocer sobre los derechos humanos para darles ejemplo a sus hijas e hijos.
2. Participar en las capacitaciones que se dan sobre los derechos de niñas, niños y adolescentes.
3. Promover, cumplir y no violentar los derechos humanos dentro de la familia.
4. Hablar con las niñas y los niños menores y mayores de edad, para que se respeten de igual manera.
5. Educar a sus hijas e hijos desde pequeñas/os.
6. Apoyar a sus hijas e hijos para conocer, promover y defender sus derechos humanos.

To promote and respect children and adolescents' rights in school, parents should:

1. Know about human rights to give an example to their sons and daughters.
2. Participate in training events on children and adolescents' rights.
3. Promote, respect and do not violate human rights in the family.
4. Talk with older and younger children so they are respected equally.
5. Teach their children from when they are little.
6. Support their children in knowing, promoting and defending their human rights.

Para promover y respetar los derechos de las niñas, niños y adolescentes en las escuelas, las organizaciones como CESESMA deberían:

1. Dar más capacitaciones a niñas, niños y adolescentes para que conozcan sus derechos.
2. Darle más seguimiento a las capacitaciones con niñas, niños y adolescentes.
3. Organizarse con las maestras y maestros para enseñar más sobre los derechos de las niñas, niños y adolescentes.
4. Hacer reuniones para concientizar a las madres y padres para que cada uno conozca los derechos de las niñas, niños y adolescentes.

To promote and respect children and adolescents' rights in school, NGOs like CESESMA should:

1. Do more training for children and adolescents so they know about their rights.
2. Give more follow-up to the training with children and adolescents.
3. Organise activities with the teachers to teach them more about children and adolescents' rights.
4. Hold meetings to raise awareness with parents so that everyone knows about children and adolescents' rights.

Para promover y respetar los derechos de las niñas, niños y adolescentes en las escuelas, nosotras y nosotros las niñas, niños y adolescentes, ejerciendo nuestra ciudadanía, podemos:

1. Respetarnos entre nosotras y nosotros mismos: Ayudarnos, tratarnos bien, no violentar los derechos, no decir malas palabras o sobrenombres.
2. Tener confianza para enseñar a otras niñas, niños y adolescentes para que conozcan sus derechos y cómo los están violentando.
3. Ayudar a las niñas, niños y adolescentes que tienen problemas con otros a resolverlos con respeto a sus derechos.
4. Compartir conocimientos a través de los cuentos que leemos en la escuela.
5. Tener confianza para contar a nuestras compañeras y compañeros cuando nos violentan nuestros derechos.
6. Dar el ejemplo a las niñas y niños del preescolar.
7. Decirles a las maestras y los maestros que nos enseñen sobre nuestros derechos.
8. Decirles a las maestras y maestros que organicen reuniones con las madres y padres para conocer sobre los derechos de niñas, niños y adolescentes.
9. Denunciar a las personas que causan violencia.

30

To promote and respect children and adolescents' rights in school, we the children and adolescents, exercising our citizenship, can:

1. Respect one another: Help each other, treat each other well, don't violate people's rights, don't use bad words or nick-names.
2. Have confidence to teach other children and adolescents so that they know their rights and how they are being violated.
3. Help children and adolescents who have problems with others to resolve them with respect for their rights.
4. Share our knowledge through the stories we read at school.
5. Have confidence to tell our class-mates when our own rights are violated.
6. Be an example to the pre-school children.
7. Tell the teachers to teach us about our rights.
8. Tell the teachers they should organise meetings with our parents to learn about children and adolescents' rights.
9. Report people who cause violence.

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El equipo de Investigadores e Investigadoras Transformadores del municipio de El Tuma La Dalia

FIN

Elyin Yulissa Valeska Neyvin Yoxan Martha Daniel Nehemías Heylin Angel Yuri Jenifer Carlos Norlan Tatiana Sayda Martin

The team of transformative researchers (boys and girls) from El Tuma-La Dalia

THE END

Elyin, Yulissa, Valeska, Neyvin, Yoxan, Martha, Daniel, Nehemías, Heylin Angel, Yuri, Jenifer, Carlos, Norlan, Tatiana, Sayda, Martin

Appendix 4: Young researchers' report (published version in Spanish)

Niñas y Niños Investigadores. 2014. 'Aprendiendo de niñas, niños y adolescentes investigadoras/es: Hacia una nueva pedagogía de derechos y deberes'. *Rayuela* 10, 131-142.

APRENDIENDO DE NIÑAS, NIÑOS Y ADOLESCENTES INVESTIGADORAS/ES:

hacia una nueva pedagogía de derechos y deberes

Niñas y niños investigadores

Resumen: La primera parte de este artículo (sección A) presenta el informe de una investigación realizada por niñas, niños y adolescentes investigadoras/es sobre la realidad de los derechos humanos en escuelas rurales en Nicaragua. Ellas y ellos describen, con sus propias palabras, la metodología, hallazgos y recomendaciones para mejorar el cumplimiento de sus derechos en estos espacios educativos. En la segunda parte (sección B) agregamos unas reflexiones inspiradas por las niñas, niños y adolescentes investigadoras/es, iniciando con un recorrido por la evolución histórica del rol de la niñez en la investigación. Con el objetivo de demostrar el valor de la investigación hecha por niñas, niños y adolescentes; nos enfocamos en uno de sus hallazgos: la falta de coherencia en la enseñanza sobre derechos humanos en las escuelas, debido a la confusión en la relación entre derechos y deberes. De esta manera sentamos una base conceptual para construir una nueva pedagogía de "derechos y deberes", todo gracias a la indagación que niñas, niños y adolescentes investigadores/as realizaron.

Palabras clave: niñas y niños investigadoras/es, derechos-deberes, derechos educativos, participación, escuelas rurales.

131

Presentación

El equipo del *Centro de Servicios Educativos en Salud y Medio Ambiente* (CESESMA) tiene el gusto de presentar el siguiente artículo en dos partes. La primera, es el informe de una investigación llevada a cabo por un equipo de niñas, niños y

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Rayuela

adolescentes investigadoras e investigadores del municipio de La Dalia, Nicaragua –la zona cafetalera del norte del país–. Su meta fue conocer la realidad cotidiana de los derechos humanos en las escuelas rurales de su municipio, a través de un proceso de recoger y analizar las percepciones de niñas, niños y adolescentes de cuatro escuelas. El informe se presenta desde la propia visión de las niñas, niños y adolescentes investigadores/as. Ellas y ellos describen su metodología de investigación y el proceso que realizaron para implementarla. Luego presentan los hallazgos de su investigación con algunas conclusiones desde su propio análisis de los datos. En la parte final, comparten sus recomendaciones a los diferentes actores claves para mejorar el respeto y el cumplimiento de los derechos de las niñas, niños y adolescentes en las escuelas.

En la segunda parte del artículo, las personas adultas del equipo educativo de CESESMA, agregamos unas reflexiones inspiradas en el trabajo de las niñas, niños y adolescentes investigadoras/es. Primero hacemos un recorrido por la evolución histórica del pensamiento académico sobre el rol de las niñas, niños y adolescentes en la investigación –enfatizando en los avances–, desde su papel tradicional como "objetos de estudio" hasta su situación actual, donde se reconoce la posibilidad de que ellas y ellos puedan asumir el rol de investigadores/as. Aun así, se percibe una resistencia por parte de la ortodoxia académica, quien todavía asegura que la investigación realizada por niñas, niños y adolescentes no cumple con los estándares académicos del rigor científico.

Luego, para demostrar el valor y la importancia de la investigación hecha por niñas, niños y adolescentes, nos enfocamos en uno de los hallazgos de la investigación presentada aquí: la falta de coherencia en la enseñanza sobre los derechos humanos que se da en las escuelas, sobre todo la confusión e información incorrecta sobre la relación entre derechos y deberes. Concluimos que, si las niñas, niños y adolescentes investigadores/as no nos hubieran alertado sobre este problema, es probable que siguiéramos en este estado de confusión por largo tiempo.

132

Sección A: Los derechos humanos en la escuela.
¿Quiénes somos y cómo hicimos nuestra investigación?

Somos 17 niñas, niños y adolescentes de cuatro comunidades rurales del municipio de El Tuma La Dalia, Matagalpa: El Carmen #1, El Carmen #2, El CAS Luis Hernández y San Francisco de Peñas Blancas. Tenemos entre 10 y 15 años de edad. Todos y todas estudiamos en las escuelas de nuestras comunidades entre 2° y 6° grado. También ayudamos a nuestras madres y padres en trabajo doméstico y en el campo.

Formamos un equipo de investigadores e investigadoras para indagar cómo las niñas, niños y adolescentes ven el respeto de los derechos humanos en las escuelas. En nuestro primer encuentro hablamos de qué significa "investigación" y el rol del investigador. Aprendimos sobre los derechos educativos e hicimos dibujos para compartir nuestras experiencias sobre el tema de los derechos humanos en la escuela. De esta manera profundizamos nuestro conocimiento sobre el tema que íbamos a investigar.

En nuestro segundo encuentro planificamos la investigación. Decidimos las preguntas que íbamos a retomar en las entrevistas. Luego pusimos fechas y planificamos cómo íbamos a organizarnos para realizarlas. Nos pusimos de acuerdo sobre las normas para protegernos mientras estábamos realizando la investigación en las comunidades. CESESMA nos facilitó preparar los formatos para las entrevistas y nos dispusimos a realizarlas con las niñas, niños y adolescentes de nuestras comunidades. Nos organizamos para trabajar en parejas acompañados por una educador/a de CESESMA.

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Hicimos las entrevistas en las casas y en la comunidad. Entrevistamos a 150 niñas, niños y adolescentes: 137 niñas y niños entre 6 y 12 años de edad (90%) y 13 adolescentes entre 13 y 15 años de edad (10%).

Comunidad	Mujeres	Varones	Total
El Carmen #1	20	12	32
El Carmen #2	16	16	32
El CAS Luis Hernández	13	14	27
San Francisco de Peñas Blancas	35	24	59
Total	**84**	**66**	**150**

Nos reunimos, en un tercer encuentro, para compartir y analizar toda la información y formular nuestras conclusiones. En nuestro cuarto encuentro elaboramos un informe sobre los resultados de nuestra investigación, agregamos nuestras recomendaciones para completar el informe. En un quinto encuentro formulamos nuestro Plan de Acción y evaluamos nuestro proyecto de investigación.

Los resultados de nuestra investigación

Percepciones de niñas, niños y adolescentes sobre cómo su maestra o maestro les trata en la escuela   133

98% de las niñas, niños y adolescentes entrevistadas/os dijeron que su maestra o maestro le trataba bien. Algunos comentaron que esto es porque se portan bien, hacen las tareas, hacen caso a la maestra o porque son "buenos alumnos". Sólo 2 personas dicen que la maestra les grita y 2 comentaron que a veces les tratan bien y a veces mal.

Percepciones de niñas, niños y adolescentes
sobre cómo los demás compañeros y compañeras les tratan en la escuela

La mayoría de las niñas, niños y adolescentes entrevistadas (77%) dijeron que los demás compañeros y compañeras les tratan bien. Dicen que son buenos amigos y amigas, juegan juntos y se tratan con respeto. El otro 23% dicen que les tratan mal, o que algunos les tratan bien y otros no.

Las formas de irrespetarles que mencionan incluyen:

- Escondiendo lápices y cuadernos.
- Jalándoles el pelo a las niñas, pellizcando y arrullándolas.
- No les dejan jugar.
- Poner apodos.
- Buscar pleitos y pegarles.

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• Vulgarear.
• Gritar y regañarles.

*Percepciones de niñas, niños y adolescentes
sobre cómo les han enseñado sus derechos humanos en las escuelas*

Descubrimos que lo que las niñas, niños y adolescentes aprenden sobre sus derechos humanos depende de la escuela a la que asisten. Es decir, niñas, niños y adolescentes de diferentes escuelas dieron diferentes respuestas.

En una escuela casi todos habían aprendido sobre sus derechos humanos y podían mencionar muchos de ellos. Los más citados fueron:

• Derecho a la educación.
• Derecho a atención a la salud.
• Derecho a un nombre y una familia.
• Derecho a ser tratado bien o con respeto.
• Derecho a jugar.
• Derecho a no ser mandado a trabajar antes de cumplir la edad para trabajar.

En otra escuela, las niñas, niños y adolescentes dijeron que sabían que los derechos humanos son importantes y que uno puede defender sus derechos cuando son violentados. Sin embargo, no mencionaron los derechos humanos que conocían y algunos dijeron que no les habían enseñado nada sobre éstos.

En dos escuelas, cuando preguntamos a las niñas, niños y adolescentes sobre qué les habían enseñado sobre sus derechos, casi todas y todos respondieron hablando de sus deberes y las normas de conducta, pero no de sus derechos, por ejemplo:

• Respetar a los docentes.
• Portarse bien.
• Pedir la palabra antes de hablar.
• No manosear a las niñas.
• Poner atención a las clases.
• No escupir en el piso.
• Respetar a sus padres y a los mayores de edad.
• Ser puntual con las tareas.
• No salir del aula.

Desde este análisis concluimos que no todas las maestras y los maestros cumplen con enseñar los derechos de las niñas, niños y adolescentes; por falta de información muchos somos víctimas de violencia en la escuela, en la familia y en la comunidad.

Percepciones de niñas, niños y adolescentes sobre cómo les han castigado en la escuela

La mitad de las niñas, niños y adolescentes entrevistados (51%) dijeron que no les habían castigado en la escuela. Otros mencionaron los diferentes castigos que habían recibido. Éstos incluyen:

134

Rayuela

- No dejarles ir a receso.
- Regañar u ofenderlas (por ejemplo: "Me dicen que soy una basura").
- Bajarles puntos.
- Quitarles el alimento escolar.
- Pegarles.
- Dejarles parados al frente de la clase.

Concluimos que la mayoría de las maestras y los maestros han violentado los derechos de las y los estudiantes a través de estos castigos, por ejemplo los derechos a la recreación y a la alimentación. Muchas veces las niñas, niños y adolescentes sienten baja su autoestima como resultado de estas sanciones.

Percepciones de niñas, niños y adolescentes sobre los derechos humanos más violentados en las escuelas

Una parte de las niñas, niños y adolescentes entrevistados (33%) dijeron que no les han violentado ningún derecho en la escuela. Los demás, mencionaron que las violaciones más frecuentes de sus derechos son:

- Derecho al juego y a la recreación.
- Derecho a ser tratado bien y/o con respeto (no refieren solamente a las maestras y maestros, también a sus compañeros/as).
- Derecho a la alimentación.
- Derecho a un nombre (porque les ponen apodos).

135

Unos pocos mencionaron que hay una violación de su derecho a la educación, ya que no reciben una educación de buena calidad. Un resultado de estas violaciones de sus derechos es que muchas niñas, niños y adolescentes quedan con la autoestima baja, salen de clases y no quieren seguir estudiando.

Percepciones de niñas, niños y adolescentes sobre el respeto al derecho a jugar en las escuelas

79% de las niñas, niños y adolescentes entrevistados dijeron que sí respetan el derecho a jugar en la escuela, 15% mencionaron que no respetan su derecho a jugar y los demás (6%) no contestaron. El incumplimiento del derecho a jugar se manifiesta de diferentes maneras, las cuales incluyen:

- No dejar jugar a algún niño o niña.
- Pelear.
- No darles tiempo para jugar.
- Irrespetar a las personas con bromas o apodos.
- No tomar en cuenta las opiniones de los demás compañeros y compañeras.

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Las niñas tienen el mismo derecho a jugar que los varones, pero en las escuelas no respetan igualmente los derechos de las niñas, las maltratan y no les dejan jugar, esto es discriminación.

Nuestras recomendaciones para promover y respetar los derechos de las niñas, niños y adolescentes en las escuelas

Para promover y respetar los derechos de las niñas, niños y adolescentes en las escuelas, las maestras y maestros deberían:

1. Dar el ejemplo de respetar a las y los estudiantes.
2. Ayudar a las y los estudiantes a entender clases difíciles.
3. Poner atención a las opiniones de las y los estudiantes.
4. Planificar y preparar bien las clases.
5. Hacer las clases más dinámicas y creativas.
6. Aconsejar a las y los estudiantes y corregirles con buenas maneras en vez de regañarles.
7. Reunirse para hablar con las madres y los padres sobre los derechos de las niñas, niños y adolescentes.
8. No distraerse con celulares cuando están dando la clase.
9. Cumplir con la clase completa y no salir a media clase.
10. No ser violentos con las y los estudiantes.

Para promover y respetar los derechos de las niñas, niños y adolescentes en las escuelas, los directores y el Ministerio de Educación deberían:

1. Poner en práctica lo que aprenden sobre los derechos de la niñez en los diferentes procesos en que participan.
2. Hacer reuniones con las maestras y maestros para orientarles sobre los derechos de las niñas, niños y adolescentes.
3. Garantizar que la enseñanza sea equitativa en todas las escuelas.
4. No portarse mal con las maestras y maestros.
5. Ser más responsables con lo que se comprometen.
6. Que los directores estén presentes en las actividades que se desarrollan en las escuelas.

Para promover y respetar los derechos de las niñas, niños y adolescentes en las escuelas, las madres y los padres deberían:

1. Conocer los derechos humanos para darles ejemplo a sus hijas e hijos.
2. Participar en las capacitaciones que se dan sobre los derechos de las niñas, niños y adolescentes.
3. Promover, cumplir y no violentar los derechos humanos dentro de la familia.
4. Hablar con las niñas y los niños menores y mayores de edad, para que se respeten de igual manera.
5. Educar a sus hijas e hijos desde pequeñas/os.
6. Apoyar a sus hijas e hijos para conocer, promover y defender sus derechos humanos.

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Para promover y respetar los derechos de las niñas, niños y adolescentes en las escuelas, las organizaciones como CESESMA deberían:

1. Dar más capacitaciones a niñas, niños y adolescentes para que conozcan sus derechos.
2. Darle más seguimiento a las capacitaciones con niñas, niños y adolescentes.
3. Organizarse con las maestras y maestros para enseñar más sobre los derechos de las niñas, niños y adolescentes.
4. Hacer reuniones para concientizar a las madres y padres para que cada uno conozca los derechos de las niñas, niños y adolescentes.

Para promover y respetar los derechos de las niñas, niños y adolescentes en las escuelas, nosotras y nosotros (las niñas, niños y adolescentes), ejerciendo nuestra ciudadanía, podemos:

1. Respetarnos entre nosotras y nosotros mismos, ayudarnos, tratarnos bien, no violentar los derechos, no decir malas palabras o sobrenombres.
2. Tener confianza para enseñar a otras niñas, niños y adolescentes para que conozcan sus derechos y cómo los están violentando.
3. Ayudar a las niñas, niños y adolescentes que tienen problemas con otros para resolverlos con respeto a sus derechos.
4. Compartir conocimientos a través de los cuentos que leemos en la escuela.
5. Tener confianza para contar a nuestras compañeras y compañeros cuando violentan nuestros derechos.
6. Dar el ejemplo a las niñas y niños del preescolar.
7. Decirles a las maestras y maestros que nos enseñen sobre nuestros derechos.
8. Decirles a las maestras y maestros que organicen reuniones con las madres y padres para que conozcan sobre los derechos de las niñas, niños y adolescentes.
9. Denunciar a las personas que causan violencia.

137

Después de completar este informe, las niñas, niños y adolescentes investigadoras/es elaboraron un Plan de Acción para la divulgación de su investigación, sensibilización sobre la temática e incidencia hacia una mejor práctica en las escuelas (por razón de falta de espacio, no podemos incluir el Plan aquí).

[1] Facilitadores: Harry Shier, estudiante doctoral en el *Centro de Derechos de la Niñez de la Queen's University Belfast*; Karen Ortiz, educadora; Agner José Dávila, educador; Manuel Antonio Medrano Calero, educador; Martha Lidia Padilla, educadora.

Rayuela

Part 2 of the published article, a reflection piece written by the CESESMA adult team highlighting the problem the children had discovered regarding the inadequate teaching of 'rights and responsibilities', is not included in this appendix. However the full article, including Part 2, can be downloaded from: http://www.harryshier.net/docs/NNA_Investigadores-Aprendiendo_de_NNA_investigadores.pdf

Appendix 5: Table comparing seven whole-school approaches to children's rights

Initiative	Host agency	Date	Coverage/ take-up	System	Evaluation	Notes
UNICEF UK Rights Respecting School Award (RRSA)	UNICEF UK (NGO)	From 2004	National (UK) Over 1600 schools	Award scheme: external assessment of evidence against indicators at 3 levels.	2010 report (Sebba and Robinson). 2013 survey on website (300 school heads, 99% positive)	Only scheme to offer an award to schools.
UNICEF Canada Rights-Respecting Schools	UNICEF Canada (NGO)	From 2008. Pilot completed 2013. Redesigned programme to launch in 2014.	National (Canada). No information on take-up	Staff training, toolkit. Schools agree Action Plan, with a certificate for schools that send updates to UNICEF.	No formal publication, but 'anecdotal evidence' of positive effects.	Website cites UNICEF UK and Covell & Howe reports as evidence of effectiveness.
Rights, Respect and Responsibility (RRR)	Hampshire Co. Council (UK Local Education Authority)	Since 2004	County of Hampshire, England. 360 primary and 45 secondary (2009)	Provides guidance and training. Encourages schools to go for RRSA.	Covell and Howe report, 2008 'RRR and resilience' report, 2011.	Only scheme promoted and supported by a duty-bearer. Widely cited, due to long-term involvement of Covell & Howe.
Human-Rights-Friendly Schools (HRFS)	Amnesty International (NGO)	Pilot 2009-2011, Guide published 2012	Global: Pilot phase, 15 schools in 14 countries. Re-launch 2012: 21 countries in 4 continents and expanding.	Very flexible. School works in partnership with local AI staff. 10 global principles. Start-up phase and action plan phase.	Guidebook refers to 'evidence from the pilot phase'.	Mejias and Starkey (2012) offer critique based on experience in one UK school.
A Whole School Approach to HRE	Amnesty International Ireland (NGO)	Guide published 2012	National (Republic of Ireland). No information on take-up.	Based on framework and principles from HRFS: Consult whole school; baseline measures; action plan.	Not mentioned. Guide does not mention any benefits, with or without evidence (taken for granted?)	
'Human Rights in Education' initiative, New Zealand	NGO Consortium (with management trust employing staff)	Since 2008	National (NZ). Website names 8 'lead schools' but not the total number.	'An open collaborative venture'. Website with resources, but no defined procedure. Schools invited to register and 'join the initiative'.	Cites evidence of impact from Canada and UK, particularly Covell and Howe.	
Safe, Quality Schools	Save the Children Nicaragua (NGO)	Phase 1: 2008-2011 Phase 2: 2011-2014	Local (34 schools in Department of Matagalpa and 21 in Jinotega).	Funded development project with multiple activity lines.	Unpublished external evaluation in Spanish by Castillo Zamora (2013). Shier et al (2013) is an account in English.	Schools involved in the present study participated in this programme.

(See next page for sources.)

Sources of information for comparative table of whole-school approaches

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Appendix 6: The origins and principles of 'Transformative Research by Children and Adolescents'

A condensed version of this account was included in Shier (2015) 'Children as researchers in Nicaragua: Children's consultancy to transformative research'. Global Studies of Childhood 5 (2), 206-219.

The approach now known as 'Transformative Research by Children and Adolescents' has its roots in the *Article 31 Children's Consultancy Scheme* developed in the UK in the late 1990s, where the basic idea was to support children aged around 8-12 in taking on the role of expert consultants to advise the senior management of arts, culture and recreational institutions. Although not written up in the academic literature at the time, some of these early experiences have been described in the practitioner literature (Shier 1998, 1999a, 1999b). Shier (2001) has stated that it was this experience that sparked the subsequent development of the well-known 'Pathways to Participation' model.

The Children's Consultancy model was developed as a human rights-based approach, linking Article 31 of the UNCRC (the right to play and to participate freely in cultural life and the arts) with the underpinning principle in Article 12 that children have the right to express their opinions on all matters that affect them and adult decision-makers must give due weight to the opinions expressed. At that time, the managements of many arts and cultural organisations, taking on board new ideas about children as service-users with rights, were seeking expert advice on how to make their programmes and facilities more child-friendly. The promoters of the *Article 31 Children's Consultancy Scheme* claimed that children themselves are the best-informed experts on what is child-friendly and what isn't: They know from first-hand experience what works for children and what doesn't, what's fun and what's boring, what makes them feel included and what makes them feel excluded (Shier 1999a).

Starting with a pilot project at the Victoria and Albert Museum in London in 1997, this method-ology was tried and tested over thirty times throughout the UK, with child consultants offering expert advice to the management of some of the most prestigious cultural institutions in the land. For example: in 1998 child consultants were commissioned by the British Waterways Board to research the educational and recreational potential of the English canal network; in 1999 child consultants from the New-Age Traveller community in the South-West of England were comm-issioned by The Children's Society to advise on play and recreation opportunities for Traveller children; and in 2000 child consultants advised senior management at the Tower of London on how to make it less boring for younger visitors. Subsequent examples of the application of this approach in the UK found in the literature include young consultants in Birmingham advising on early years services (Clarke et al. 2003: p23), young consultants advising on improving play spaces in Southwark (Sachdev 2003: pp. 26, 31) and young consultants advising on the redevelopment of Manchester City Art Gallery (Stevenson, 2005: p72).

Starting in 2007, Nicaraguan NGO CESESMA adapted the approach to the local context and began to apply it in its work with the region's young coffee plantation workers. The following are three examples of projects completed between 2007 and 2009.

Children and adolescents from Santa Martha coffee plantation researching the problem of violence: The first team of child consultants in Nicaragua was commissioned in 2007 as part of the national response to the 2006 UN Special Report on violence against children. The consult-ancy team was made up of twelve girls and boys aged 10-16 living and working on Santa Martha Coffee Plantation in Yasica Sur. They researched the problem of violence as experienced by children on the plantation and produced a report with extensive recommendations for change. In the course of their research they interviewed 59 children and adolescents living and working on the plantation and analysed the data collected. The team presented their report to a national

conference on prevention of violence against children in the capital city Managua in August 2007, where they were able to present their recommendations to the government minister responsible for children and families, and challenge her to tell the conference what she and her department intended to do about the issue. We do not know for sure to what extent the young researchers' report influenced government policy, but we do know that the Children and Families Department introduced new programmes to protect vulnerable children shortly afterwards (Jacobs 2008). The following year the children retold their experience in words and pictures in '*A Handbook of Children and Young People's Participation, perspectives from theory and practice*' (Percy Smith and Thomas, eds, 2009), where they offer the reader their answer to the question, '*What would we say to those adults who say that children can't be Consultants because they don't know anything and will be manipulated by adults?':*

> We would tell them they are very much mistaken, because we can too. They should stop abusing their power and give us the space. Put us to the test and they'll see if we can or not. (Young Consultants of Santa Martha 2009, p229).

'*Children and Adolescents defending our Right to Play' campaign:* In 2009, children and adolescents formed three action-research teams to carry out an appraisal of play opportunities in their communities and the factors that prevented them from exercising their right to play. The children's research was published in the Mexican journal *Rayuela* (CESESMA, 2013), and also cited as evidence in the report 'Children's Right to Play' (Lester and Russell, 2010), which was influential in persuading the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child to produce a General Comment on Article 31.

Young Consultants' of Santa Martha coffee plantation reunite to research the relationship between business and human rights on the plantation: The same year, 2009, the team of young consultants from Santa Martha coffee plantation accepted a commission from Trócaire, the Irish Catholic Development Agency, to research the relationship between business and human rights on the plantation. Their report, '*Rights and Wrongs*', was published by CESESMA in both Spanish and English (Young Consultants of Santa Martha, 2011) and picked up by other NGOs both inside and outside Nicaragua. In 2011, when the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child began work on General Comment No 16 on children's rights and the business sector, the Young Consultants sent their report to the Committee as a contribution to the debate. Of the dozens of contributions the Committee shared on its website, theirs was the only one researched and written by children themselves.

Recognising the potential of the Children's Consultancy approach to contribute to the empowerment of children and adolescents, while also aware of its limitations, in 2011 CESESMA tested a modified model called 'Transformative Research by Children and Adolescents' (CESESMA, 2012b). Two aspects of the previous approach were seen as limiting the young consultants' empowerment. First, an adult always told them what topic they were going to research instead of supporting them in deciding this for themselves; and second, once they handed in their report, there was no commitment to follow-up or further action to support the young people in getting their recommendations implemented.

To overcome these limitations, two changes were made to the original model. At the beginning of a project, the teams of young researchers (no longer 'young consultants') decided for themselves on the topics they wanted to research. They were encouraged to reflect on the problems that affected their communities and identify areas where they felt there were possibilities for change driven by research evidence. Through this process of reflection they were able to make a consensual decision on what topic they wanted to research.

The other new element was that, after completing their research reports, each team of young researchers was supported in developing an action plan to disseminate their findings and follow up their recommendations. These included actions that the young researchers could undertake without adult help, such as discussing the topic with other people in their village; and also actions that required adult support, such as requesting a hearing before the Municipal Children and Youth Committee, or contacting the media to undertake interviews. The supporting organisation made a commitment to accompany and facilitate the young researchers in implementing their action plan.

It is in this second phase that the children and adolescents can start to contribute to the transformation of their lives and their communities. They do not do research for its own sake but rather 'transformative research'.

To test this new approach, in both concept and implementation, four new teams of child researchers were formed and supported in planning and carrying out their own research projects. As well as producing research findings and recommendations, CESESMA facilitated the four teams in drawing up action plans to publicise the results of their research and push for the implementation of their recommendations from local community up to national level. The four teams presented their reports first in their own local communities and subsequently in municipal, and in some cases national, forums. The four research reports were compiled and published in book form by CESESMA in Nicaragua in March 2012 (CESESMA, 2012a), and an English translation, '*Learn to live without violence*', was published in the UK in September the same year (CESESMA, 2012b).

Based on the experience of supporting and facilitating these research projects, and informed by earlier experiences with the Children's Consultancy model, CESESMA sets out the guiding principles that characterise the Transformative Research approach, which are summarised in the box below.

Guiding principles of Transformative Research by Children and Adolescents

1. It is founded on a human-rights-based approach;

2. It recognises that the foremost experts on children's everyday lives are children themselves, but also that as researchers they can learn more about a topic, expanding and deepening their existing knowledge;

3. CESESMA's experience suggests that children readily take on board and identify with the idea of themselves as researchers and understand what this role implies. The role of the adult is therefore seen as facilitating and accompanying the research process;

4. Children and adolescents are supported in planning, organising and carrying out their own research, and provided with technical support and resources similar to what adult researchers might expect (though it is understood that the way in which this support is provided must be appropriate to the age and experience of the children and adolescents involved).

5. Children and adolescents produce their own research report in their own words, and also control how it will be designed and presented (e.g. selecting drawings and photographs to illustrate their findings). If a formal report prepared by adults is required as part of a project, this is prepared and presented separately and the two are not confused.

6. The organisation that supports the young researchers must make a commitment to continue to accompany and support them in drawing up and carrying out an action plan to disseminate their findings, and promote the implementation of their recommendations.

Summarised from CESESMA (2012b, p 52)

CESESMA believes that this approach to working with children as researchers can contribute to four kinds of transformations: empowerment of the young researchers; transformation of adult attitudes in the community; reciprocal learning that transforms adult facilitators; and transformation of society through community action (CESESMA 2012b, p52).

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Appendix 7: The young researchers' research process, step by step

First meeting (24 October 2013): Forming a team and preparing to become researchers

- Games to get to know one another and build an atmosphere of security and confidence.

- Establishing an identity as young researchers. Questions asked and answered such as: What is 'research'? What does a researcher do? Are we really going to be researchers?

- Introduction to the idea of children's rights in – as well as to – education. UNCRC identified as the principal statement of what these rights are.

- Sharing existing knowledge and experiences on the topic of rights in education by making and then talking about drawings. Each young researcher did a drawing of a real-life situation from their own experience related to rights in school (including both positive and negative experiences – see report for examples). They then shared and discussed their drawings.

- After this they reflected on what they could learn from this, thus reaffirming how much they already knew about the topic of rights in school.

- They went over the calendar and plans for the rest of the process, dealing with doubts and queries. Individual photos were taken for their young researcher identity cards.

Second meeting (30 October 2013): Planning the research

- Games to reconnect the team (this recurred at the start of every session)

- Quiz game to reinforce and provoke further discussion about what was learnt in the previous session about rights in school.

- General discussion about the issues that we need information on, and how to find out other people's experiences and opinions; interviewing people as a basic research method (***Note***: Child researchers using this method often decide they need to interview adults, which is perfectly possible providing relevant protection issues are addressed. However, in this case, as the aim was to learn about children's perceptions of rights in school, the team focused only on other children as interview subjects).

- Deciding on interview questions and preparing an interview format. This was a two-stage process. In the first stage, the young researchers decided what questions they would like to ask. Then they worked with an adult facilitator to try and improve on these and synthesise them into a final set of no more than 6 or 7 questions.

- The team agreed on how they were going to organise themselves to carry out the interviews. This included rules relating to safety and protection of the young researchers, and the adult facilitators took responsibility for ensuring that everyone understood these rules and agreed to abide by them.

- The young researchers made personal commitments, taking into account the time, opportunities and resources they had available. They decided to work in pairs, with each pair undertaking to carry out ten or more interviews in the afternoons after school, to be completed before the date of the next meeting.

- The adult facilitators took responsibility for getting interview forms typed up, photocopied and distributed, using the interview questions already drawn up by the young researchers (the interview form used by the young researchers is attached as appendices 13 and 14 in both original Spanish and English translation).

Fieldwork: Interviewing in home communities

This took place over a two-week period between the second and third meetings, 31 October – 12 November 2013.

- The young researchers carried out their interviews according to their agreed plan. They did the interviews in their home villages, mainly in or near their homes and away from their school. An adult facilitator accompanied them at arm's length during this stage to ensure safety. Photographs of the research in progress were taken, with informed consent of the people being photographed.

Third meeting (13 November 2013): Analysing the data

- Working in groups by community, the young researchers summarised all the answers from their interviews on to flip-chart sheets, question by question. They then formed three new, mixed groups, and each group re-read the summarised responses to two of the six questions. On this basis they drafted a one or two-paragraph conclusion summing up the findings in relation to each question. The groups then came together and shared their conclusions with each other.
  Note: Because of the large amount of data the young researchers had collected, this session over-ran by almost an hour. The children decided to postpone lunch till they had finished the work, which was a viable option for them as CESESMA guaranteed their transport home.

Fourth meeting (19 November 2013): Writing the report

- The young researchers were facilitated in preparing their report using Powerpoint technology, as this permits a genuinely participative and authentic shared writing process. At this stage the adult facilitator took on the role of IT technician/typist. The young researchers' report included a brief description of the research methodology, and a summary of their findings and conclusions. They illustrated it with a selection of their drawings (from session 1) and photographs of the process.

- After completing the main body of the report, the young researchers went back over their findings and conclusions and used these to develop recommendations to complete the report.

Fifth meeting (27 November 2013): Developing an action plan and final evaluation

- The young researchers reviewed their report (now complete with the recommendations included) and suggested ways to correct or improve it.

- They established objectives for their action plan, including goals for dissemination, awareness-raising and advocacy. They also identified different levels where they felt they could have an influence: school, community, district, and national level. They put forward their ideas for action and, with the facilitator's help, brought these together in a final plan.

- They did an evaluation of the process by completing an individual written evaluation form and a general group discussion (the evaluation was done at this stage, as it was the last scheduled meeting where the lead researcher was expected to be present to facilitate; the final session and public presentation were planned at short notice afterwards).

Sixth meeting (2 December 2013): Preparing for the public presentation

- Each team member received a printed copy of their report.

- A proposal for a public presentation of their research to the international Save the Children leadership was put to the team, and they agreed, collectively and individually.

- They moved to the Centre's main auditorium and decided how best to arrange the stage, sound system, projection screen etc. Then they practiced presenting their report, with each team member taking a turn, using a microphone and coordinating with the Powerpoint projection. They also discussed how they wanted to deal with questions from the audience after the presentation.

Presentation of report (5 December 2013)

- As part of a five-yearly strategic planning meeting, by coincidence being held in Nicaragua in December 2013, the entire Save the Children regional leadership for Latin America and the Caribbean decided to pay a visit to CESESMA's centre in La Dalia. A programme was prepared to present the work of Save the Children's local partner organisations, including CESESMA. The young researchers' team, as mentioned above, accepted an invitation to take a central role in the day's programme. Their parents were invited to the event but only a few were able to come.

- The young researchers presented their report, as they had previously prepared. They also answered questions from the audience, and some of the Save the Children senior managers thanked them and gave them positive feedback (further feedback was later received from Save the Children officials by email).

- After the visitors had left, lunch was provided for everyone.

Appendix 8: Information sheets/consent forms for young researchers and their parents (original Spanish)

Centro de Servicios Educativos en Salud y Medio Ambiente

En sociedad con el Centro para los Derechos de la Niñez

Queen's University Belfast

San Ramón, Fecha 2013

Investigación Transformadora 2013

A: _____

Comunidad/Escuela: _____

Reciba fraternos saludos del equipo que labora para el Centro de Servicios Educativos en Salud y Medio Ambiente CESESMA.

Por este medio le estamos haciendo formal invitación para integrarse a un equipo de niñas, niños y adolescentes investigadores e investigadoras para llevar a cabo un proceso participativo de investigación acción sobre como las niñas y los niños perciben el efecto de los derechos humanos en su experiencia cotidiana en la escuela.

El compromiso será de participar en un programa de 5 talleres de medio día, así como realizar actividades de investigación en la comunidad, como entrevistas a otras niñas y niños, que puede ocupar otro 3 ó 4 horas de su tiempo libre. Al final se producirá un informe de los resultados de la investigación y las recomendaciones del equipo de investigadores/as para realizar los derechos humanos en las escuelas, y este informe puede ser publicado y divulgado por CESESMA. Esta investigación también brindará datos para facilitar una investigación adicional sobre los derechos humanos en las escuelas realizada por el Ldo. Harry Shier de CESESMA en el marco de un estudio doctoral auspiciado por el Centro para los Derechos de la Niñez de Queen's University Belfast en Irlanda del Norte.

(El próximo año usted tendrá la oportunidad a seguir trabajando con el equipo de niñas, niños y adolescentes investigadoras/es para promover sus resultados y recomendaciones, apoyado por CESESMA, pero puede tomar una decisión sobre esto más luego y no hay que comprometerse ahora).

Calendario de talleres:

(Insertar fechas)

Cada taller a realizarse en (local) desde las 8.30 am hasta la 1.00 pm. El proceso será facilitado por miembros del equipo de CESESMA, en una manera sensible a las habilidades, condiciones e intereses de las y los participantes. El equipo de CESESMA asume responsabilidad para la seguridad de las y los participantes durante su participación en el proceso en el marco de su normativa para la protección de las niñas, niños y adolescentes. A cualquier momento si usted no quiere seguir como integrante de este proceso puede retirarse sin problema y sin tener que dar justificación.

CESESMA garantiza transporte alimentación.

Esta Carta no es válida si no lleva sello original.

Atentamente,

_____   _____
Facilitador/a - CESESMA   Equipo de coordinación CESESMA

Centro de Servicios Educativos en Salud y Medio Ambiente

En sociedad con el Centro para los Derechos de la Niñez

San Ramón, Fecha 2013

Investigación Transformadora 2013

A: _____

Comunidad/Escuela: _____

Reciba fraternos saludos del equipo que labora para el Centro de Servicios Educativos en Salud y Medio Ambiente CESESMA.

Por este medio le estamos haciendo formal invitación para integrarse a un equipo de niñas, niños y adolescentes investigadores e investigadoras para llevar a cabo un proceso participativo de investigación acción sobre como las niñas y los niños perciben el efecto de los derechos humanos en su experiencia cotidiana en la escuela.

El compromiso será de participar en un programa de 5 talleres de medio día, así como realizar actividades de investigación en la comunidad, como entrevistas a otras niñas y niños, que puede ocupar otro 3 ó 4 horas de su tiempo libre. Al final se producirá un informe de los resultados de la investigación y las recomendaciones del equipo de investigadores/as para realizar los derechos humanos en las escuelas, y este informe puede ser publicado y divulgado por CESESMA. Esta investigación también brindará datos para facilitar una investigación adicional sobre los derechos humanos en las escuelas realizada por el Ldo. Harry Shier de CESESMA en el marco de un estudio doctoral auspiciado por el Centro para los Derechos de la Niñez de Queen's University Belfast en Irlanda del Norte.

(El próximo año usted tendrá la oportunidad a seguir trabajando con el equipo de niñas, niños y adolescentes investigadoras/es para promover sus resultados y recomendaciones, apoyado por CESESMA, pero puede tomar una decisión sobre esto más luego y no hay que comprometerse ahora).

Calendario de talleres:

(Insertar fechas)

Cada taller a realizarse en (local) desde las 8.30 am hasta la 1.00 pm. El proceso será facilitado por miembros del equipo de CESESMA, en una manera sensible a las habilidades, condiciones e intereses de las y los participantes. El equipo de CESESMA asume responsabilidad para la seguridad de las y los participantes durante su participación en el proceso en el marco de su normativa para la protección de las niñas, niños y adolescentes. A cualquier momento si usted no quiere seguir como integrante de este proceso puede retirarse sin problema y sin tener que dar justificación.

CESESMA garantiza transporte y alimentación.

Esta Carta no es válida si no lleva sello original.

Atentamente,

_____   _____

Facilitador/a - CESESMA   Equipo de coordinación CESESMA

(Niña o niño investigador/a a firmar en el reverso)

Nombre: _____

Favor indicar en cada cajita que usted está de acuerdo, luego firmar y poner la fecha de hoy al fondo.

- ☐ He leído y entendido la carta más arriba.

- ☐ Confirmo que acepto la invitación de integrarme al equipo de niñas y niños investigadores/as y participar en el proyecto de investigación como planteado en la carta.

- ☐ Entiendo que este incluye participar en un programa de 5 talleres de medio día, así como realizar actividades de investigación en la comunidad, como entrevistas a otras niñas y niños.

- ☐ Entiendo que el próximo año tendré la oportunidad a seguir trabajando con el equipo de niñas, niños y adolescentes investigadoras/es, pero no tengo que tomar una decisión sobre esto ahora.

- ☐ Entiendo que si no quiero seguir puedo retirarme sin problema y sin tener que dar justificación.

- ☐ Entiendo que CESESMA va a tomar fotografías del proceso que pueden ser publicadas o divulgadas en informes, presentaciones, materiales educativos u otros medios, y doy permiso a que me incluyan en dichas fotografías.

Firma de niña/niño investigador/a: _____ Fecha: _____

De la Alcaldía municipal de San Ramón 1 cuadra al Sur ½ cuadra al Oeste Tel: 2772 5660
Apartado 316 Matagalpa Correo Electrónico: coordinacion@cesesma.org Página Web: www.cesesma.org

Shier – July 2023   340

Centro de Servicios Educativos en Salud y Medio Ambiente

En sociedad con el Centro para los Derechos de la Niñez

San Ramón, Fecha 2013

Investigación Transformadora 2013

A: _____

Madre/Padre de: _____

Reciba fraternos saludos del equipo que labora para el Centro de Servicios Educativos en Salud y Medio Ambiente CESESMA.

Por este medio le estamos informando que su hija o hijo ha sido invitado a integrarse a un equipo de niñas, niños y adolescentes investigadores e investigadoras para llevar a cabo un proceso participativo de investigación acción sobre como las niñas y los niños perciben el efecto de los derechos humanos en su experiencia cotidiana en la escuela.

El compromiso será de participar en un programa de 5 talleres de medio día, así como realizar actividades de investigación en la comunidad, como entrevistas a otras niñas y niños, que puede ocupar otro 3 ó 4 horas de su tiempo libre. Al final se producirá un informe de los resultados de la investigación y las recomendaciones del equipo de investigadores/as para realizar los derechos humanos en las escuelas, y este informe puede ser publicado y divulgado por CESESMA. Esta investigación también brindará datos para facilitar una investigación adicional sobre los derechos humanos en las escuelas realizada por el Ldo. Harry Shier de CESESMA en el marco de un estudio doctoral auspiciado por el Centro para los Derechos de la Niñez de Queen's University Belfast en Irlanda del Norte.

(El próximo año su hija o hijo tendrá la oportunidad a seguir trabajando con el equipo de niñas, niños y adolescentes investigadoras/es para promover sus resultados y recomendaciones, apoyado por CESESMA, pero puede tomar una decisión sobre esto más luego y no hay que comprometerse ahora).

Calendario de talleres:

(Insertar fechas)

Cada taller a realizarse en (local) desde las 8.30 am hasta la 1.00 pm. El proceso será facilitado por miembros del equipo de CESESMA, en una manera sensible a las habilidades, condiciones e intereses de las y los participantes. El equipo de CESESMA asume responsabilidad para la seguridad de las y los participantes durante su participación en el proceso en el marco de su normativa institucional para la protección de las niñas, niños y adolescentes. A cualquier momento si su hija/o no quiere seguir como integrante de este proceso, o si usted prefiera que no siga, puede retirarse sin problema y sin tener que dar justificación.

CESESMA garantiza transporte y alimentación.

Esta Carta no es válida si no lleva sello original.

Atentamente,

_____   _____

Facilitador/a - CESESMA   Equipo de coordinación CESESMA

De la Alcaldía municipal de San Ramón 1 cuadra al Sur ½ cuadra al Oeste Tel: 2772 5660
Apartado 316 Matagalpa Correo Electrónico: coordinacion@cesesma.org Página Web: www.cesesma.org

Centro de Servicios Educativos en Salud y Medio Ambiente

En sociedad con el Centro para los Derechos de la Niñez

San Ramón, Fecha 2013

Investigación Transformadora 2013

A: _____

Madre/Padre de: _____

Reciba fraternos saludos del equipo que labora para el Centro de Servicios Educativos en Salud y Medio Ambiente CESESMA.

Por este medio le estamos informando que su hija o hijo ha sido invitado a integrarse a un equipo de niñas, niños y adolescentes investigadores e investigadoras para llevar a cabo un proceso participativo de investigación acción sobre como las niñas y los niños perciben el efecto de los derechos humanos en su experiencia cotidiana en la escuela.

El compromiso será de participar en un programa de 5 talleres de medio día, así como realizar actividades de investigación en la comunidad, como entrevistas a otras niñas y niños, que puede ocupar otro 3 ó 4 horas de su tiempo libre. Al final se producirá un informe de los resultados de la investigación y las recomendaciones del equipo de investigadores/as para realizar los derechos humanos en las escuelas, y este informe puede ser publicado y divulgado por CESESMA. Esta investigación también brindará datos para facilitar una investigación adicional sobre los derechos humanos en las escuelas realizada por el Ldo. Harry Shier de CESESMA en el marco de un estudio doctoral auspiciado por el Centro para los Derechos de la Niñez de Queen's University Belfast en Irlanda del Norte.

(El próximo año su hija o hijo tendrá la oportunidad a seguir trabajando con el equipo de niñas, niños y adolescentes investigadoras/es para promover sus resultados y recomendaciones, apoyado por CESESMA, pero puede tomar una decisión sobre esto más luego y no hay que comprometerse ahora).

Calendario de talleres:

(Insertar fechas)

Cada taller a realizarse en (local) desde las 8.30 am hasta la 1.00 pm. El proceso será facilitado por miembros del equipo de CESESMA, en una manera sensible a las habilidades, condiciones e intereses de las y los participantes. El equipo de CESESMA asume responsabilidad para la seguridad de las y los participantes durante su participación en el proceso en el marco de su normativa institucional para la protección de las niñas, niños y adolescentes. A cualquier momento si su hija/o no quiere seguir como integrante de este proceso, o si usted prefiera que no siga, puede retirarse en cualquier momento sin problema y sin tener que dar justificación.

CESESMA garantiza transporte y alimentación.

Esta Carta no es válida si no lleva sello original.

Atentamente,

_____   _____
Facilitador/a - CESESMA   Equipo de coordinación CESESMA

(Padre o madre a firmar en el reverso)

Nombre de padre o madre: _____

Nombre de hija o hijo: _____

Favor indicar en cada cajita que usted está de acuerdo, luego firmar y poner la fecha de hoy al fondo.

- ☐ He leído y entendido la carta más arriba.

- ☐ Confirmo que doy permiso a que mi hija o hijo se integre al equipo de niñas y niños investigadores/as y participe en el proyecto de investigación como planteado en la carta.

- ☐ Entiendo que este incluye participar en un programa de 5 talleres de medio día, así como realizar actividades de investigación en la comunidad, como entrevistas a otras niñas y niños.

- ☐ Entiendo que el próximo año mi hija/hijo tendrá la oportunidad a seguir trabajando con el equipo de niñas, niños y adolescentes investigadoras/es, pero no tiene que tomar una decisión sobre esto ahora.

- ☐ Entiendo que si no quiero que mi hija/hijo siga en el proceso, puede ser retirado en cualquier momento sin problema y sin tener que dar justificación.

- ☐ Entiendo que CESESMA va a tomar fotografías del proceso que pueden ser publicadas o divulgadas en informes, presentaciones, materiales educativos u otros medios, y doy permiso a que mi hija/o sea incluido en dichas fotografías.

Firma de padre o madre: _____

Fecha: _____

Appendix 9: Information sheets/consent forms for young researchers and their parents (English translation)

English translation of invitation and information for child researchers (page 1) and consent form (page 2), information for parents (page 3) and consent form for parents (page 4). Text size and spacing have been slightly reduced to fit pages. Originals also had full contact details in footer of each page.

Page 1: For child researcher

Centre for Education in Health and Environment

In partnership with the Centre for Children's Rights at Queen's University Belfast

San Ramón (add date) 2013

Transformative Research 2013

To: _____

Community or school: _____

Fraternal greetings from the team at the Centre for Education in Health and Environment CESESMA.

This letter is a formal invitation to join a team of child researchers to carry out a research project on how girls and boys perceive the effect of human rights in their daily experience at school.

Your commitment will be to participate in a program of 5 half-day workshops and also research activities in the community, such as interviews with other children, which may take another 3 or 4 hours of your free time. A report will be produced on the findings of the research and the research team's recommendations on how to improve human rights in schools, and this report will be made public and may be published by CESESMA. This research will also provide information to help with further research on human rights in schools by Mr. Harry Shier of CESESMA as part of a doctoral study sponsored by the Centre for Children's Rights at Queen's University Belfast in Northern Ireland.

(Next year you will have the chance to continue working with the team of child researchers to promote your research findings and recommendations, supported by CESESMA, but you can decide about this later, and you do not have to make a commitment now.)

Workshop Schedule:

(Insert dates of workshops)

Each workshop will take place at (insert venue) from 8.30 am to 1.00 pm. The process will be facilitated by CESESMA team members in a way that is sensitive to the abilities, conditions and interests of the participants. The CESESMA team will take responsibility for the safety of the participants while participating in the process, following its child protection policy and guidelines. At any time if you do not want to continue to participate in this process you can leave without problems and without having to give a reason.

CESESMA will provide transport and food.

This letter is not valid unless it bears an original rubber stamp [of CESESMA].

Yours sincerely,

_____   _____

CESESMA facilitator   CESESMA management team

Appendices

Centre for Education in Health and Environment

In partnership with the Centre for Children's Rights at Queen's University Belfast

San Ramón (add date) 2013

Transformative Research 2013

To: _____

Community or school: _____

Fraternal greetings from the team at the Centre for Education in Health and Environment CESESMA.

This letter is a formal invitation to join a team of child researchers to carry out a research project on how girls and boys perceive the effect of human rights in their daily experience at school.

Your commitment will be to participate in a program of 5 half-day workshops and also research activities in the community, such as interviews with other children, which may take another 3 or 4 hours of your free time. A report will be produced on the findings of the research and the research team's recommendations on how to improve human rights in schools, and this report will be made public and may be published by CESESMA. This research will also provide information to help with further research on human rights in schools by Mr. Harry Shier of CESESMA as part of a doctoral study sponsored by the Centre for Children's Rights at Queen's University Belfast in Northern Ireland.

(Next year you will have the chance to continue working with the team of child researchers to promote your research findings and recommendations, supported by CESESMA, but you can decide about this later, and you do not have to make a commitment now.)

Workshop Schedule:

(Insert dates of workshops)

Each workshop will take place at (insert venue) from 8.30 am to 1.00 pm. The process will be facilitated by CESESMA team members in a way that is sensitive to the abilities, conditions and interests of the participants. The CESESMA team will take responsibility for the safety of the participants while participating in the process, following its child protection policy and guidelines. At any time if you do not want to continue to participate in this process you can leave without problems and without having to give a reason.

CESESMA will provide transport and food.

This letter is not valid unless it bears an original rubber stamp [of CESESMA].

Yours sincerely,

_____   _____
CESESMA facilitator   CESESMA management team

Name: _____

Please tick each box to show that you agree and then sign your name write today's date at the bottom.

- ☐ I have read and understood the above letter.
- ☐ I confirm that I accept the invitation to join the team of child researchers and to participate in the research project described in the letter.
- ☐ I understand that this includes participating in five half-day workshops and also research activities in the community, such as interviews with other children.
- ☐ I understand that next year I will have the chance to continue working with the team of child researchers, but that I do not have to decide about this now.
- ☐ I understand that if I don't want to continue I can leave without problems and without having to give a reason.
- ☐ I understand that CESESMA will take photographs of the process that may be published or included in reports, presentations, or other media, and I give permission for myself to be included in such photographs.

Signature of young researcher: _____ Date: _____

Page 3: For parent of child researcher

Centre for Education in Health and Environment

In partnership with the Centre for Children's Rights at Queen´s University Belfast

San Ramón (add date) 2013

Transformative Research 2013

To: _____

Mother/father of: _____

Fraternal greetings from the team at the Centre for Education in Health and Environment CESESMA.

This letter is to inform you that your daughter or son has been invited to join a team of child researchers to carry out a research project on how girls and boys perceive the effect of human rights in their daily experience at school.

Her or his commitment will be to participate in a program of 5 half-day workshops and also research activities in the community such as interviews with other children which may take another 3 or 4 hours of her/his free time. A report will be produced on the findings of the research and the research team's recommendations on how to improve human rights in schools and this report will be made public and may be published by CESESMA. This research will also provide information to help with further research on human rights in schools by Mr. Harry Shier of CESESMA as part of a doctoral study sponsored by the Centre for Children's Rights at Queen's University Belfast in Northern Ireland.

(Next year your daughter/son will have the chance to continue working with the team of child researchers to promote their research findings and recommendations, supported by CESESMA, but they can decide about this later, and do not have to make a commitment now.)

Workshop Schedule:

(Insert dates of workshops)

Each workshop will take place at (insert venue) from 8.30 am to 1.00 pm. The process will be facilitated by CESESMA team members in a way that is sensitive to the abilities, conditions and interests of the participants. The CESESMA team will take responsibility for the safety of the participants while participating in the process, following its child protection policy and guidelines. At any time if your daughter/son does not want to continue as a participant in this process, or if you would prefer for them not to continue, they can leave without problems and without having to give a reason.

CESESMA will provide transport and food.

This letter is not valid unless it bears an original rubber stamp [of CESESMA].

Yours sincerely,

_____   _____

CESESMA facilitator   CESESMA management team

Page 4: To be signed by parent and returned to CESESMA

Centre for Education in Health and Environment

In partnership with the Centre for Children's Rights at Queen´s University Belfast

San Ramón (add date) 2013

Transformative Research 2013

To: _____

Mother/father of: _____

Fraternal greetings from the team at the Centre for Education in Health and Environment CESESMA.

This letter is to inform you that your daughter or son has been invited to join a team of child researchers to carry out a research project on how girls and boys perceive the effect of human rights in their daily experience at school.

Her or his commitment will be to participate in a program of 5 half-day workshops and also research activities in the community such as interviews with other children which may take another 3 or 4 hours of her/his free time. A report will be produced on the findings of the research and the research team's recommendations on how to improve human rights in schools and this report will be made public and may be published by CESESMA. This research will also provide information to help with further research on human rights in schools by Mr. Harry Shier of CESESMA as part of a doctoral study sponsored by the Centre for Children's Rights at Queen's University Belfast in Northern Ireland.

(Next year your daughter/son will have the chance to continue working with the team of child researchers to promote their research findings and recommendations, supported by CESESMA, but they can decide about this later, and do not have to make a commitment now.)

Workshop Schedule:

(Insert dates of workshops)

Each workshop will take place at (insert venue) from 8.30 am to 1.00 pm. The process will be facilitated by CESESMA team members in a way that is sensitive to the abilities, conditions and interests of the participants. The CESESMA team will take responsibility for the safety of the participants while participating in the process, following its child protection policy and guidelines. At any time if your daughter/son does not want to continue as a participant in this process, or if you would prefer for them not to continue, they can leave without problems and without having to give a reason.

CESESMA will provide transport and food.

This letter is not valid unless it bears an original rubber stamp [of CESESMA].

Yours sincerely,

_____   _____

CESESMA facilitator   CESESMA management team

Name of father or mother: _____

Name of daughter or son: _____

Please tick each box to show that you agree and then sign your name write today's date at the bottom.

- ☐ I have read and understood the above letter.
- ☐ I confirm that I give permission for my daughter or son to join the team of young researchers and to participate in the research project described in the letter.
- ☐ I understand that this includes participating in five half-day workshops and also research activities in the community, such as interviews with other children.
- ☐ I understand that next year my daughter/son will have the chance to continue working with the team of child researchers, but that they do not have to decide about this now.
- ☐ I understand that if I don't want my daughter/son to continue, they can leave without problems and without having to give a reason.
- ☐ I understand that CESESMA will take photographs of the process that may be published or included in reports, presentations, or other media, and I give permission for my daughter/son to be included in such photographs.

Signature of father or mother: _____   Date: _____

Appendix 10: Information sheet/consent form for adult interviewees (original Spanish)

Centro de Servicios Educativos en Salud y Medio Ambiente

En sociedad con el Centro para los Derechos de la Niñez

Queen's University Belfast

San Ramón, Fecha 2013

Investigación Transformadora 2013

Información para personas adultas a quienes se solicitan entrevistas en el marco de este proyecto de investigación

El Centro de Servicios Educativos en Salud y Medio Ambiente CESESMA está coordinando un proceso de investigación a ser llevado a cabo por un equipo de niñas, niños y adolescentes investigadoras/es entre octubre y diciembre del presente año 2013. Las niñas, niños y adolescentes van a investigar sobre como las niñas y los niños perciben el efecto de los derechos humanos en su experiencia cotidiana en la escuela. Esta investigación también brindará datos para facilitar una investigación adicional sobre el impacto de los derechos humanos en las escuelas realizada por el Ldo. Harry Shier de CESESMA en el marco de un estudio doctoral auspiciado por el Centro para los Derechos de la Niñez de Queen's University Belfast en Irlanda.

En este marco el Ldo. Shier está realizando una serie de entrevistas con personas adultas como informantes claves en cuanto al sistema educativo local y nacional y el programa *"Escuelas Seguras y de Calidad"* que implementa CESESMA. La información recogida a través de las entrevistas con personas adultas servirá para ampliar y enriquecer la comprensión y análisis de los hallazgos obtenidos por los niñas, niños y adolescentes investigadores/as sobre el tema de los derechos humanos en las escuelas. El informe final de la investigación puede ser publicado y divulgado tanto en Nicaragua como en Irlanda y otros países.

Los nombres de las personas entrevistadas no se van a mencionar ni publicar en cualquier informe. Sin embargo, si usted tiene preocupación de ser identificado/a como la fuente de algún dato o comentario, puede indicar esto al entrevistador para que se toman medidas adecuadas para ocultar su identidad. El investigador principal (el Ldo. Harry Shier) es la única persona que tendrá acceso a los datos de las entrevistas.

Se espera que cada entrevista no dure más de una hora. Su participación es opcional y voluntaria. Si usted no quiere contestar alguna pregunta puede declinar a contestar sin problema. Además usted puede terminar la entrevista a cualquier momento si no quisiera continuar, sin tener que dar justificación.

_____   _____

Facilitador/a - CESESMA   Equipo de coordinación CESESMA

Centro de Servicios Educativos en Salud y Medio Ambiente

En sociedad con el Centro para los Derechos de la Niñez

Queen's University Belfast

San Ramón, Fecha 2013

Investigación Transformadora 2013

Información para personas adultas a quienes se solicitan entrevistas en el marco de este proyecto de investigación

El Centro de Servicios Educativos en Salud y Medio Ambiente CESESMA está coordinando un proceso de investigación a ser llevado a cabo por un equipo de niñas, niños y adolescentes investigadoras/es entre octubre y diciembre del presente año 2013. Las niñas, niños y adolescentes van a investigar sobre como las niñas y los niños perciben el efecto de los derechos humanos en su experiencia cotidiana en la escuela. Esta investigación también brindará datos para facilitar una investigación adicional sobre el impacto de los derechos humanos en las escuelas realizada por el Ldo. Harry Shier de CESESMA en el marco de un estudio doctoral auspiciado por el Centro para los Derechos de la Niñez de Queen's University Belfast en Irlanda.

En este marco el Ldo. Shier está realizando una serie de entrevistas con personas adultas como informantes claves en cuanto al sistema educativo local y nacional y el programa *"Escuelas Seguras y de Calidad"* que implementa CESESMA. La información recogida a través de las entrevistas con personas adultas servirá para ampliar y enriquecer la comprensión y análisis de los hallazgos obtenidos por los niñas, niños y adolescentes investigadores/as sobre el tema de los derechos humanos en las escuelas. El informe final de la investigación puede ser publicado y divulgado tanto en Nicaragua como en Irlanda y otros países.

Los nombres de las personas entrevistadas no se van a mencionar ni publicar en cualquier informe. Sin embargo, si usted tiene preocupación de ser identificado/a como la fuente de algún dato o comentario, puede indicar esto al entrevistador para que se tome medidas adecuadas para ocultar su identidad. El investigador principal (el Ldo. Harry Shier) es la única persona que tendrá acceso a los datos de las entrevistas.

Se espera que cada entrevista no dure más de una hora. Su participación es opcional y voluntaria. Si usted no quiere contestar alguna pregunta puede declinar a contestar sin problema. Además usted puede terminar la entrevista en cualquier momento si no quisiera continuar, sin tener que dar justificación.

_____   _____
Facilitador/a - CESESMA   Equipo de coordinación CESESMA

He leído y entendido la información más arriba. Por este medio confirmo que estoy de acuerdo de participar en una entrevista en el marco del proyecto de investigación como planteado en la parte arriba. Entiendo que mi nombre no se va a mencionar ni publicar en cualquier informe, y que si tenga preocupación de ser identificado/a como la fuente de algún dato o comentario, puedo indicarlo al entrevistador para que se tome medidas para ocultar mi identidad. Reconozco que mi participación es opcional y voluntaria; que puedo declinar a contestar cualquier pregunta y puedo terminar la entrevista en cualquier momento sin dar justificación.

Firma: _____   Fecha: _____

Oficio: _____

Appendix 11: Information sheet/consent form for adult interviewees (English translation)

English translation of information sheet (page 1) and consent form (page 2) for adult interviewees. Original in Spanish had full contact details at the bottom of each page.

Page 1: For person to be interviewed

Centre for Education in Health and Environment

In partnership with the Centre for Children's Rights at Queen´s University Belfast

San Ramón (add date) 2013

Transformative Research 2013

Information for adults who are invited to be interviewed as part of this research project

The Centre for Education in Health and Environment, CESESMA, is coordinating a research process to be carried out by a team of child researchers between October and December of this year, 2013. The children and young people will research how girls and boys perceive the effect of human rights in their daily experience at school. This research will also provide data to facilitate further research on the impact of human rights in schools conducted by Mr Harry Shier of CESESMA as part of a doctoral study sponsored by the Centre for the Rights of the Child at Queen's University Belfast in Ireland.

As part of this process, Mr Shier is conducting a series of interviews with adults as key informants about the local and national educational system and the "Safe, Quality Schools" programme implemented by CESESMA. The information gathered through interviews with adults will broaden and enrich the understanding and analysis of the findings obtained by the young researchers on the issue of human rights in schools. The final report of the research may be published and disseminated both in Nicaragua and in Ireland and other countries.

The names of interviewees will not be mentioned or published in any report. However, if you are concerned about being identified as the source of any information or comment, you can indicate this to the interviewer so that adequate measures are taken to conceal your identity. The principal investigator (Mr Harry Shier) is the only person who will have access to the interview data.

Each interview is expected to last no more than an hour. Your participation is optional and voluntary. You can decline to take part and to do so will not affect any relationship you have with CESESMA or anyone involved in the research. If you do not want to answer any question you may decline to answer with no problem. In addition, you can end the interview at any time if you don't wish to continue, without having to give a reason.

(Signature of facilitator and CESESMA Coordinator)

Page 2: To be signed and returned to CESESMA

Centre for Education in Health and Environment

In partnership with the Centre for Children's Rights at Queen´s University Belfast

San Ramón (add date) 2013

Transformative Research 2013

Information for adults who are invited to be interviewed as part of this research project

The Centre for Education in Health and Environment, CESESMA, is coordinating a research process to be carried out by a team of child researchers between October and December of this year, 2013. The children and young people will research how girls and boys perceive the effect of human rights in their daily experience at school. This research will also provide data to facilitate further research on the impact of human rights in schools conducted by Mr Harry Shier of CESESMA as part of a doctoral study sponsored by the Centre for the Rights of the Child at Queen's University Belfast in Ireland.

As part of this process, Mr Shier is conducting a series of interviews with adults as key informants about the local and national educational system and the "Safe, Quality Schools" programme implemented by CESESMA. The information gathered through interviews with adults will broaden and enrich the understanding and analysis of the findings obtained by the young researchers on the issue of human rights in schools. The final report of the research may be published and disseminated both in Nicaragua and in Ireland and other countries.

The names of interviewees will not be mentioned or published in any report. However, if you are concerned about being identified as the source of any information or comment, you can indicate this to the interviewer so that adequate measures are taken to conceal your identity. The principal investigator (Mr Harry Shier) is the only person who will have access to the interview data. He will be responsible for keeping it secure until the research is completed, and then all original data will be destroyed.

Each interview is expected to last no more than an hour. Your participation is optional and voluntary. If you do not want to answer any question you may decline to answer with no problem. In addition, you can end the interview at any time if you don't wish to continue, without having to give a reason.

(Signature of facilitator and CESESMA Coordinator)

Please tick each box to show you agree then sign and date below.

- ☐ I have read and understood the information above.
- ☐ I confirm that I agree to participate in an interview as part of the research project outlined above.
- ☐ I understand that my name will not be mentioned or published in any report, and if I am concerned about being identified as the source of any data or comments I can indicate this to the interviewer so that steps can be taken to hide my identity.
- ☐ I acknowledge that my participation is optional and voluntary and understand that I can decline to take part and to do so will not affect any relationship I have with CESESMA or anyone involved in the research.
- ☐ I understand that I can decline to answer any questions and I can end the interview at any time without giving a reason.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Occupation: _____

Appendix 12: Example of a session plan for one of the young researchers' workshops (English translation)

Below is an English translation of the session plan for the Young Researchers' first workshop. Similar plans were produced for all six workshops, and were shared and discussed with co-facilitators before each session. The right hand column is used to share facilitation responsibility throughout the session.

"Transformative Research to find out about children and adolescents' perceptions of the realisation of their rights in school"

Workshop 1: Forming a team and getting to know the research topic

Objectives

1. Form a team of researchers and clarify their role and the commitment involved.

2. Reflect on what we already know about the topic of children and adolescents' rights, by sharing knowledge and experiences about the fulfilment or violation of our rights in school.

3. Understand concepts of 'the right to education', 'respect for rights in education', 'quality education', and 'human rights education', that can help us in planning a good research project.

4. Review the plans, the work schedule and the commitments to be undertaken to complete the rest of the project.

Topic	Activity	Technique	Time	Resources	Resp
Welcome	Welcome. Go through programme and objectives for today. Attendance list.	Plenary	15 min	Attendance list. Objectives on flip-chart.	
Integration games	*(We facilitate games appropriate for the group stage and context)*	Games	15 min		
What is a researcher?	1. ***Reflection on:*** What do the kids know about 'research', or 'researcher'? ▪ It's a person who investigates a topic; that is they look for and collect new information on the topic. ▪ Then they produce and present a report on the topic. ▪ They can make recommendations on the topic ('recommendation' is like a suggestion on what needs to be done). ▪ They are recognised as an 'expert' on the topic. 2. ***Reflection on:*** How is it possible that we can be researchers? "Who are the experts on the topic of children and adolescents' lives in our communities? You are. Children and adolescents are experts on their own experiences, thoughts and feelings, problems and fears; the communities where they live and the schools where they study". That's why you can be expert researchers and are competent to investigate topics to do with children's experiences in school.	Reflection in plenary	30 min	Flip-chart sheets Felt-tips Masking-tape	

Topic	Activity	Technique	Time	Resources	Resp
	3. ***Reflection on***: 'Action Research': Why do we do research? Is it just to have loads of information? What is the positive use of the information you get from a research project? ▪ Understanding problems to encourage people to take action. ▪ Proposing solution to problems. Identifying what needs to be done. ▪ Convincing people that things can change. Encouraging people to become change-makers. ▪ Persuading decision-makers (Who are these? Examples: District Council, Ministry of Education, Citizens Power Committees, NGOs, development agencies). So we're not proposing pure research (academic research), but a process of action research to transform our reality. That's why we call it 'TRANSFORMATIVE RESEARCH'. ***NB:*** *At this point (for ethical reasons) it will be appropriate to mention that, as well as writing their own report and receiving support from CESESMA so that this can have a transformative influence, Harry is asking that they lend him their findings to form part of his doctoral studies in Ireland. Answer any questions about this request, and confirm that everyone is in agreement.*				
The research topic: Human rights in education	Review what the team already know about human rights, with emphasis on the school setting. We want to highlight the following points: ▪ Everyone has the right to go to school. ▪ All your rights must be respected <u>in</u> school (you must be treated with respect, as rights-holders *(sujeto de derecho)*. ▪ You must receive an education of good quality. ▪ You must be taught about your rights. It is the obligation of the Ministry of Education to guarantee all this.	Reflection in plenary	45 min	Flip-chart sheets Felt-tips Masking-tape	
	Short break and snack				
Animation games:	*(We facilitate games appropriate for the group stage and context)*	Games	15 min		

Topic	Activity	Technique	Time	Resources	Resp
Sharing our experience and know-ledge of the research topic	1. Give out drawing paper; provide coloured felt-tips for drawing. Explain that each person is going to make a drawing based on an experience relating to human rights in education. ▪ It might be an experience were you felt good because your rights were respected in school. ▪ Or it could be the opposite: a situation where you felt bad because your rights were violated at school. ▪ The important thing is that it should be a ral experience; not something invented or imagined. ▪ If you don't want to draw something that happened to you personally, it could be some-thing that happened to a friend or family member, as long as it is an experience from real life. 2. When everyone has finished their drawing, form a circle. Each person in turn describes the experience they have drawn and how it relates to the topic of rights in education. While they are talking about their drawings, the facilitator notes some of the key points on flip-chart sheets. 3. Reflection on what we already know about the problem we are going to research, and the information that we still need to find.	Individual creative activity Sharing the work Reflection	45 min	White paper for drawing. Coloured felt-tips. Flip-chart sheets Felt-tips Masking-tape	
Reviewing plans and agreements	Discuss and agree on plans for the remaining work-shops, including the dates, and seek everyone's commitment to completing the rest of the project. Fix a suitable date for a meeting with parents to discuss the project and also to listen to their reflections on the topic under investigation. At this point we can also take photos for the ID cards, and explain the importance of these to show that from now on we are 'TRANSFORMATIVE RESEARCHERS'.	Reviewing agree-ments in plenary	30 min	Flip-chart sheets Felt-tips Masking-tape Clip-boards with 'Trans-formative Researcher' stickers on Camera	
Evaluation	Ask people how they feel about having become researchers and the work they are going to do together. Ask them to mention any doubts or concerns they have and try to resolve these.	Participat-ory evaluation	15 min		
End of the day's work (lunch served)			Total time for workshop: 4 hrs.		

Appendix 13: Young researchers' interview questionnaire (original Spanish)

Nombre de investigador/a:

(Nombre de la persona que <u>hace</u> las preguntas. No pongas nombre de la persona que contesta las preguntas)

Investigadoras e Investigadores Transformadoras/es de La Dalia
FORMATO DE ENTREVISTA A NIÑOS, NIÑAS Y ADOLESCENTES

Detalles de la persona entrevistada: **Varón** ☐ **Mujer** ☐   **Edad:**

Comunidad: **Grado que estudia:**

1. ¿Cómo le trata su maestra o su maestro en la escuela?

_____

_____

_____

2. ¿Cómo le tratan los demás chavalos y chavalas en la escuela?

_____

_____

_____

3. ¿Cómo le han enseñado sobre sus derechos humanos en la escuela?

_____

_____

_____

4. ¿Cómo le han castigado en la escuela?

_____

_____

_____

5. ¿Cuáles son los derechos humanos que más le violentan en la escuela?

_____

_____

_____

6. ¿Respetan su derecho a jugar en la escuela?   *(Poné '✔' en una casilla según contesta)* **SÍ** ☐   **NO** ☐

7. ¿De qué manera respetan o irrespetan su derecho a jugar?

_____

_____

_____

Eso completa la entrevista. ¡Muchas gracias!

Appendix 14: Young researchers' interview questionnaire (English translation)

Researcher's name: [_____]

(Name of the person who asks the questions. Don't put the name of the person who answers the questions)

Transformative researchers of La Dalia*

INTERVIEW FORM FOR CHILDREN AND ADOLESCENTS

Details of the person interviewed: **Boy** ☐ **Girl** ☐ **Age:** [____]

Community: [_____] **Grade they're in at school:** [____]

1. How does your teacher treat you at school?

_____

_____

_____

2. How do the other kids treat you at school?

_____

_____

3. How have you been taught about human rights at school?

_____

_____

_____

4. How have you been punished at school?

_____

_____

5. Which of your human rights are most violated at school?

_____

_____

6. Is your right to play respected in school? *(Put a '✔' in one box, according to how they answer)* **YES** ☐ **NO** ☐

7. In what way is your right to play respected or disrespected in school?

_____

_____

_____

That completes the interview. ¡Many thanks!

* The original Spanish is gender specific, so could be read as "transformative girl researchers and boy researchers".

Appendix 15: Young researchers' action plan (English translation)

Our proposal for an Action Plan 2013

Objectives

- Organise ourselves as a research team (ORGANISATION).

- Share our research with other children and adolescents (SHARING [*'multiplicación'* in Spanish]).

- Make everyone aware of our report (DISSEMINATION).

- Get our recommendations put into practice to improve the realisation of rights in school (ADVOCACY).

Action in our communities

1. Coordinate with parents, teachers, children and adolescents, and community organisations working on children and adolescents' rights.

2. Talk to the teachers so they give us a space to share our research in the classrooms.

3. Hold a community meeting with parents.

4. Organise talks, workshops and meetings with other children and *promotores/as* in our communities.

5. Make use of local coordinating committees and other community meetings to share and discuss our research.

6. Make up stories and games with other children and adolescents about children's rights and prevention of violence.

7. Make plays and paint murals about the topic.

8. Visit the families of children and adolescents who don't go to school so they attend school and know their rights.

Joint actions in El Tuma-La Dalia district

1. Coordinate with the District Council and CESESMA so they will support us to travel around the district.

2. Do presentations of our report and recommendations.

3. Disseminate our research by means of theatre, reading and dance *[referring here to CESESMA's existing programmes with children in the district]*.

4. Make a radio or television programme to inform people about our research *[CESESMA already runs a children's radio project in La Dalia].*

5. Coordinate with CESESMA and the other NGOs to put on a festival: Invite the Mayor, the district and departmental Ministry of Education delegates, school heads, teachers and community organisations.

6. Make banners for the streets and roadways.

7. Share our work in the teachers' workshops (TEPCEs) *[referring to monthly professional development workshops for teachers run by the Ministry of Education].*

8. Share our work with children and adolescents in other villages in the district.

9. Organise a march for children and adolescents' rights.

10. Continue participating in activities with CESESMA to learn more about children and adolescents' rights.

11. Participate in lobbies *[cabildos]* to put proposals to the District Council about realising children's rights in the district.

National and international advocacy

1. Present our report to the international Save the Children leaders, and ask for their support to make this action plan a reality. *[The young researchers had just been informed about the Save the Children leadership's impending visit to La Dalia].*

2. Disseminate our report on social networks, internet, television, press, banners, billboards, and have messages printed on T-shirts and school items.

3. Write articles for the newspapers.

4. Contribute to the NGOs' newsletters and information bulletins.

5. Do exchange visits with kids in other countries to get to know them and share experiences.

6. Coordinate with theatre groups to produce a play on this topic.

7. Present the play on 'Radio Ya' *[a popular Sandinista radio station]* and other radio stations.

8. Make a video.

9. Write a book, publish and distribute it with help from CESESMA.

Appendix 16: Young researchers' final evaluation questionnaire (English translation)

Transformative Researchers 2013: Final Evaluation Form

Age _____ years.   Sex (boy or girl): _____   Community _____

1. Why did you accept the invitation to join the team of researchers?

   ....

   ....

2. What did you think at the start of the first session when they said you were going to be researchers?

   ....

   ....

3. How was the experience of doing interviews with children and adolescents in your community?
   Choose one box with an **X**:   ☐ Excellent   ☐ Good   ☐ OK   ☐ Bad
   Why?

   ....

   ....

4. What new things have you learnt <u>about the topic of human rights in school</u>?

   ....

   ....

5. What else have you learnt?

   ....

   ....

6. What problems or difficulties did you find during the research process?

   ....

   ....

7. How would you rate the methods used in all five meetings of the research tream?

   ....

   ....

8. How would you rate the way the process was facilitated by the people from CESESMA?

   ....

   ....

9. What suggestions do you have for CESESMA about how this process could be improved?

   ....

   ....

10. Any other contributions or comments you would like to make to this evaluation?

    ....

    ....

Appendix 17: Schedule of questions for follow-up focus group discussion with young researchers (English translation)

1. It's been eight months since we finished the research. What are your memories (good or bad) of the experience last year?

2. What have you done by way of follow-up to your research since the last time we met, last December (either with CESESMA on independently)?

   2a. If you have done something, how did it go? What was the outcome?

3. Overall, the kids[1] you interviewed were satisfied with how their teachers treated them. A lot of them said their teachers treat them very well. But they had problems with how the other kids at school treat them. What is your view on this? Do you agree?

4. A lot of kids said the other kids call them by nick-names. Does this happen in your school?

   4a. The kids said this is a violation of their rights. What do you think? Why is it a violation of their rights?

5. In some schools, the kids didn't understand what a 'right' is and what a 'duty' is. Are you clear about the difference between a right and a duty?

   5a. Can you give me some examples of the difference?

6. The kids had a lot to say about the punishments they are given at school. It seems to me that nowadays the teachers don't hit the kids as much as they used to. Do you think this is true?

   6a. So what are the punishments the teachers mostly give now at your school?

   6b. Some kids think these punishments are a violation of their rights. What do you think?

7. Some kids said that the teacher respects their rights because they are well-behaved, and others say they disrespect their rights when they behave badly. In your school is it only the well-behaved children who have rights?

   7a. Can you explain your answer?

---

[1] The expression used is 'chavalas y chavalos', a colloquial Nicaraguan term similar to using 'kids' instead of 'children' in English.

Appendix 18: Schedule of questions for interviews with adult key informants (English translation)

Note: *The supplementary questions (bulleted) are used conversationally to encourage reflection. They do not have to be put or answered directly.*

Rights

1. How would you describe the place of human rights in Nicaraguan culture today?

   ▪ Is it part of our traditions or something new? (the parents told us when they were at school they heard nothing about human rights).
   ▪ What is their role in the discourse of the present government?
   ▪ How do you see the role of the Human Rights Commissioner *(Procuraduría)* and the other human rights bodies like CENIDH? *(Nicaraguan Centre for Human Rights)*

2. How would you characterise attitudes to *children's rights* in Nicaragua today?

   ▪ Are children and adolescents recognised as rights-holders *(sujetos de derechos)*?
   ▪ Is the traditional belief that children are the property of their parents changing?
   ▪ Is there resistance to these changes? (For example the campaign last year to amend the Children's Legal Code to impose stiffer sentences on young offenders).

3. How do you see the situation regarding children's rights in schools?

4. What do you know about how human rights are currently taught in schools?

   ▪ What do they teach?
   ▪ Do you know how teachers are trained to teach about human rights?
   ▪ What have you heard about the attitudes or opinions of teachers regarding children's rights?

5. Some parents told me that "The children are using 'rights' to put one over on their teachers" *('saltarse a los maestros').* What do you think of this?

Safe, Quality Schools (Save the Children programme)

6. What evidence have you seen of the impact of SQS on the realisation of children's rights in the schools where it is implemented?

   ▪ Have there been changes in attitudes?
   ▪ Has the quality of education improved?
   ▪ Are children better protected against violence and abuse?
   ▪ Children's knowledge about their rights?
   ▪ Children's capacity to promote and defend their rights?
   ▪ Other changes?

7. How important is the rights-based approach in the SQS programme?

8. Is there any difference in the way the topic of human rights is addressed in the SQS programme, and the way it is addressed by classroom teachers outside of SQS?

9. Are there any violations of children's human rights in schools that the SQS programme has so far not been able to deal with successfully?

Research by children and adolescents

If you were present for the young researchers' presentation at Casas Blancas:

10. What most caught your attention when the children and adolescents presented their report?

11. For you, what was the most important finding of the children and adolescents' research?

12. What is your opinion on this methodology of action-research by children and adolescents as part of CESESMA's work (which is centred on promotion and defence of children's rights)?

    ▪ What does research by children and adolescents achieve that could not be achieved through research done by adults (for example in the universities)?

Appendix 19: Individual questionnaire completed by teachers attending focus group (English translation)

Human rights in school

1. What are children and adolescents taught about human rights in primary school?

2. As a teacher, what training have you received in order to teach about human rights?

3. If children know and defend their rights, can this affect the teacher's authority in the classroom? How?

4. Some parents told us "The children and adolescents are using rights to put one over on their teachers". What do you think about this?

5. For you, what is the relationship between children and adolescents' rights and their duties?

'Safe, Quality Schools' (CESESMA / Save the Children programme)

6. What evidence have you seen of the impact of 'Safe, Quality Schools' in realising human rights in the schools where it is implemented?

7. Is there any difference between the approach to human rights used in the 'Safe, Quality Schools' process and the way teachers used to approach the topic in the classroom previously?

8. Some children believe that the punishments they receive at school are a violation of their human rights. What do you think of this?

9. What is your opinion on the use of action research methods by children and adolescents as an educational approach? (If you are not aware of this initiative, no need to answer this question).

Appendix 20: Transcription of children's interview data (sample)

As an example, this is sheet 1 of 21, showing transcripts of interviews 1-7 out of 150.

ID No	Inter-viewer	Comm-unity	M/F	Age	Grd.	Answer 1	Answer 2	Answer 3	Answer 4	Answer 5	A6 S/N	Answer 7
01	Joxan	Darío	f	9	4	Muy bien porque nos ayuda en los problemas y muchas cosas más.	Lo han explicado cómo hay que hacerlos. Los niños tienen derechos y deberes.	A mí no me han hecho regaña, solo cuando tengo una tarea.	1) Violar las personas 2) Darle besos a las personas.	Cuando no hago tarea no me deja salir por misma. Cuando hago tarea me dejan salir a recreo.	s	
02	Joxan	Darío	f	10	3	Me tratan regular y a las maestras muy bien. Los compañeros y compañeras tienen derechos y deberes.	La tratan muy mal (la trande), con exageración pero no la enamoran.	Derecho a una alimentación. Derecho a que no me griten, por eso no la castigan.	A ella nunca le han violado sus derechos sus maestros, solo los chavalos.	Casi no me respetan, no me hablan como de debe.	s	Jugar decente, no andar con los golpes, no andar peleando.
03	Joxan	Darío	f	12	4	No les regaña, no le grita, no les regaña, nunca la han castigado.	Los compañeros de clase la tratan bien porque los respeta.	Derecho a ser respetada. Derecho a alimentarme Derecho a la salud	Nunca la han castigado porque cumple.	No le violan ningún derecho porque se portan bien.	s	Cuando no hago las tareas no me dejan jugar.
04	Joxan	Darío	f	9	3	Le tratan bien porque cumple con sus deberes. La tratan con cariño. No la regaña, no le grita, no las castigan.	No la enamoran, no le gritan, no le ha pegado ninguna vez.	Derecho a jugar, derecho a una alimentación, derecho a una recreación.	A ella ni una vez le han castigado. No le gritan, no la maltratan, no la regañan.	Los derechos a no jugar, derecho al no divertirse.	s	Por sillo no salgo porto do conlo dem una balo so cuando yo lo trato mal. (No sense)
05	Elvin	Darío	f	15	5	Me tratan bien, me da buena educación, porque me porto bien con ella.	Que debemos de respetar entre nosotros mismos y a la maestra.	Me han enseñado el derecho de los demás.	Me han enseñado el de porque no lleva la tarea correcta – "váyase"	Me regañan, me baja puntos.	s	Diciéndome que no hecho la tarea. Diciéndome que casi no vengo a clase.
06	Neyvin	Darío	f	14	5	Bien, que no lo regañan, a uno lo tratan con cariño, con amor y respeto.	Regular algunos amigos algotros son feos los modos.	Me han enseñado un poco bien.	No me castigan porque soy obediente.	Cuando le ponen apodo, nos tratan y nos ofenden.	n	Que algunos profesores los regañan porque uno no hace las tareas.
07	Neyvin	Darío	f	9	2	Bien, con cariño, amorosa, respetuosa.	Bien, con cariño, respeto, con amor.	Derecho a jugar, a una vivienda, a la recreación.		Cuando a uno le pone apodo y no le dice el nombre.	n	Irrespeten cuando le dice el apodo y no le dice el nombre.

Appendix 21: Thematic analysis: Example of coding table

A coding table like the one shown below was created for each of the six open questions on the Young Researchers' interview form. The example shown here is the complete coding of responses to Question 3 on how children were taught about their rights. For a description of the coding process, see Chapter 4, Section 6.

Question 03: ¿Cómo le han enseñado sobre sus derechos humanos en la escuela? (How have you been taught about human rights at school?)

Question 03 ▼ Content of answers	By School/community				By sex	
	Darío (n=59)	**El Colibrí** (n=27)	**El Ayote** (n=32)	**Las Brisas** (n=32)	*Girls* (n=84)	*Boys* (n=66)
What was learnt about						
Everyone has their rights			114			114
I have a lot of rights				145		145
Rights are important			98		98	
Children have rights and responsibilities	01 44				01	44
It's my duty to do my chores / homework			93		93	
Other people's rights	05				05	
Just a little *(un poco bien)*	06				06	
I've been taught about children's rights	59					59
They are a good thing, because they protect / defend us			95 096		95 096	
Protect against wrongdoing by teachers and fellow-students			97		97	
They have taught me my rights to defend myself, to defend / claim my rights.			99 100 101 102 103 105		99 100 101 102 103 105	
They haven't taught me about my rights, but to defend myself			104		104	
I can defend myself against bullying or others who want to hurt me.			105 106		105 106	
I'm treated well at home and at school				147		147
Nothing / I haven't been taught about it / it's not in the books			89 90 109 110 113		89 90	109 110 113
Nothing because I've behaved well			92		92	
How learned						
Teacher explained / instructed about them	01		88 111 115 118		01	111 115 118
Through books, leaflets			87 88 107 112 115 116		87 88	107 112 115 116
Research			87		87	

Question 03	By School/community				By sex	
▼ Content of answers	**Darío** (n=59)	**El Colibrí** (n=27)	**El Ayote** (n=32)	**Las Brisas** (n=32)	*Girls* (n=84)	*Boys* (n=66)
Training / workshops			87 88 91 107		87 88 91	107
Homework			108			108
Specific rights mentioned						
To a name	08 09 10 11 12 13 14 32 54 57				08 09 10 11 12 13 14 32	54 57
... and nationality	09 54				09	54
A house / home	07 09 11 12 14 15 36 38 40 46 48 49 56 57				07 09 11 12 14 15	36 38 40 46 48 49 56 57
A decent (adequate) home *(hogar digno)*	023 031 055				023 031	055
To a family	08 10 11 15 48 49 51				08 10 11 15	48 49 51
Food / to eat	02 03 04 37 39 40 41				02 03 04	37 39 40 41
Healthy food, diet	10				10	
Health	03 08 13 27 46				03 08 13 27	046
Education: To study / go to school / have a school	08 19 20 26 33 36 37 40 45 46 52			130	08 19 20 26 33 130	36 37 40 45 46 52
To have a teacher	26 27				26 27	
To an adequate / decent school *(escuela digna)*	18 31 55				18 31	55
Not to be mistreated / to be treated well in school	29 37				29	37
To play	04 07 14 18 19 20 23 24 38 39 41 43 45 47 52		93	130 132 134 144 146 150	04 07 14 18 19 20 23 24 93 130 132 134	38 39 41 43 45 47 52 144 146 150
Recreation	04 07 38				04 07	38
To be respected	03 28 29 39		117		03 28 29	39 117
To be treated well	17				17	
Not to be mistreated	25				25	
Not to be hit	25				25	
To life	13 32				13 32	
To talk	43					43
Not to be made to work	35 53				35	53
Not to be forced to work, but to work voluntarily (by choice)	34				34	
Not to be made to carry heavy things (it's a lack of respect)	58					58
I mustn't work (it's a lack of respect)	30				30	

Question 03	By School/community					By sex	
▼ Content of answers	Darío (n=59)	El Colibrí (n=27)	El Ayote (n=32)	Las Brisas (n=32)		Girls (n=84)	Boys (n=66)
Other kinds of rights							
To live very well	50						50
Not to be yelled at / scolded	02 17					02 17	
Not to be annoyed/ disturbed (molestar)	02					02	
Right to visit other villages to give talks on human rights etc.				130		130	
Right to laugh / sing / jump / dance / cry				134 149 150		134	149 150
Non-rights mentioned							
To do my chores / homework (tareas)	12 24 47			123 124 125 138 139 140 141 143		12 24 123 124 125	47 138 139 140 141 143
Hand in homework on time (ser puntual)				135 142			135 142
(Right to) respect others	16 21 22 51 59		117	124 148		16 21 22 124	51 59 117 148
To respect each other	42		94	140 141		94	42 140 141
Respect (other) children / classmates / other students		60 62 63 64 67 68 69 70 71 72 61 65 73 74 75 76 77 78 79 83 84 86 82 85				60 61 65 62 63 64 67 68 69 70 71 72	73 74 75 76 77 78 79 82 85 83 84 86
To respect the teacher(s)	21 42	61 63 64 72 73 76 80 85		136		21 61 63 64 72	42 73 76 80 85 136
Respect adults / older people		80		136 138			80 136 138
Respect your parents				131 136 137		131	136 137
Obey your parents				128 137		128	137
Behave well		82		123 125 126 129 142		123 125 126 129	82 142
Be polite / Don't be rude				122 127 128 131 133		122 127 128 131 133	
Don't fight with the other children		66 67		119 121 122 124 126 137 138 140 143		66 67 119 121 122 124 126	137 138 140 143
Don't offend (upset) other children		62				62	
Arrive at school on time				135			135
Don't grope the girls / other kids (manosear)		80 86					80 86
Don't interrupt others (ask to speak when someone else is speaking, don't shout)		81		120 121 122		120 121 122	81
Don't use bad words				120 121		120 121	
Don't spit on the floor				122 137 143		122	137 143
Don't leave the class without permission				140 141			140 141

Appendix 22: Matrix tool for evaluating the scope of children's participation in development projects

Copied with permission from Save the Children's 'Toolkit for Monitoring and Evaluating Children's Participation' (Lansdown and O'Kane, 2014).

WHEN DO CHILDREN BEGIN TO PARTICIPATE AND AT WHAT LEVELS?				
	Children are not involved	**Consultative**	**Collaborative**	**Child-led**
Finding out what the problems are (situation analysis)		Children are asked to give their views.	Children asked to contribute to the process for finding out what problems they face in life.	Children undertake their own research with other children to identify issues of concern.
Deciding what to do (planning)		Planning takes account of the issues raised by children.	Children are involved in deciding what programmes to prioritise and develop.	Children decide for themselves what issues they want to work on.
Taking action (implementation)		Children are invited to take part in the programme.	Children work with adults to design and implement the programme.	Children organise and manage the programme and have full responsibility for its implementation.
Measuring what happened (monitoring and evaluation)		Children are consulted on whether they think the programme achieved what it planned to do.	Children work with adults to decide how to evaluate the programme.	Children determine what should be evaluated and, with adult support, undertake the evaluation of the programme.
Acting on findings (dissemination and feedback)		Children are invited to make suggestions as to how to respond on the basis of the findings.	Adults involve children in a discussion about the implications of the findings and explore how they should influence future programming.	Children reflect on the findings, and come up with proposals for the implications, which are then shared with adults.

From: "A Toolkit for Monitoring and Evaluating Children's Participation" (Lansdown and O'Kane 2014, booklet 3, p. 14).