Social Activism and Extended Education

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Abstract: Partnerships between schools and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) are common in extended education providing students broader choices in after-school programing. This article explores how collaboration between educators teaching in after-school clubs and an international human rights NGO, Invisible Children, mobilized student activism across the United States in middle schools, high schools and on junior college campuses. This study suggests that collaboration between teachers in and out-of-school time (OST) with one or more NGOs produced insights in three categories: 1) teachers' perceptions about student sociopolitical consciousness (SPC), 2) teacher pedagogy and praxis, and 3) student leadership and activism. The results pose opportunities to conduct further research on: 1) the impact of a mutually reinforcing process of teacher and student activism, 2) benefits and constraints of NGO collaboration within schools, and 3) emergence of global citizenship education for sustainable social change.

Keywords: After-school, student activism, global citizenship, youth development

Introduction

From a socio-historical context, youth activists have made their mark as key actors in social transformation that challenged the *status quo*. Addressing multifarious social justice issues from environmental degradation to modern slavery, these movements are embedded in their distinct cultural realities yet adopted similar strategies that built on each other (McAdam, 2000). Youth[1] have demonstrated their power of perception, collective problem solving, and effective implementation of a new reality they envision (Kirshner, 2007). Broad youth and student activism will be considered to set the stage for a more specific analysis of lessons learned from this study involving after-school student activism in partnership with a human rights NGO.

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1   For the purpose of this overview, the United Nations definition of youth as ages 15 to 24 will be used. The examples below illustrating the political agency of 'youth activist' refers to mostly university student activists while the data for this empirical study involves 'student activists' mostly in middle and high school with some college students.

Youth Activism

Recent history demonstrates how youth activism is relevant to the social, political and economic landscape of many nations. On the political front, the following examples offer a window to seeing the agency of youth as a catalyst for challenging authoritarian governments. In Georgia, youth built on earlier organizing against a corrupt education system and protested against rigged elections that led to the resignation of President Shevardnadze in 2003. In 2007, students and Buddhist monks and nuns in Burma/Myanmar organized for non-violent change of military rule that resulted in the ruling general to become a civilian president in 2011. In Egypt that same year, the revolution in Tahrir Square resulted in President Mubarak's resignation only 18 days later (Kimball, 2014). Hugo-Lopez posits, "Youth movements are especially threatening to adult authorities, often creating societal turmoil and sometimes toppling governments" (2006). While the results of changed governments may not be what youth activist set out to achieve, the willingness to strive for change is undeniable.

These instances of significant impact on social change can be tempered with myriad untold accounts of youth led organizing or activism that failed to accomplish intended goals. Nevertheless, youth and student activism is a social force that has unleashed its potential with the use of social media and participatory democratic organizing to impact social, economic, and political landscapes worldwide. The Millennial Generation lives in a new age reflected in studies such as a Viacom survey of 15,000 young people in 24 countries which "reported that most (84%) believe that their age group has the potential to change the world for the better. At no time in history have more youth lived under some form of democracy and has the proportion of youth been so great…" (Kimball, 2014).

Student Activism

Today, student activists are demonstrating their agency as influential actors in social movements and encouraging other young people to challenge local and global social norms. Various groups of student activists cannot simply wear clothes without seeing the realities of sweatshops, eat chocolate without tasting child labor, watch intelligent creatures such as *orcas* held captive without finding more humane sources of entertainment, and witness documentaries depicting atrocities of child soldiers in war torn countries without organizing for social justice as global citizens.

Along with diverse sectors in society with specific agendas, NGOs realize the potential of youth/student activism and collaborate with student activists at educational institutions. Through teachers' perspectives, this exploratory study examines the collaboration between Invisible Children (IC), a human rights NGO, and student activism during *out-of-school time* (OST) in the U.S. for its unique set of characteristics including: 1) mobilization of tens of thousands of student activists and establishment of after-school clubs formed to address the issue of child soldiers in Uganda, 2) teachers' perception of the impact of activism on students including inspiration for students to create their own NGOs, and lastly, 3) success advocating for legisla-

tion by the U.S. government such as the Lord's Resistance Army Disarmament and Northern Uganda Recovery Act of 2010. This act solidified American policy to capture Joseph Kony and to abolish his Lord's Resistance Army responsible for forcibly kidnapping boys to use as soldiers and girls as sex slaves.

While some believe that "education cannot be neutral on the critical issues of our time" (Zinn, 2002), school culture in U.S. education is characterized by respect for neutrality in teacher positionality during school and out-of-school time in order to avoid divisiveness. Thus, social activism in after-school programs, in the form of a club, necessitates that teachers have a certain level of professionalism to tread the waters of neutrality in politics and controversial issues while trying to teach students about social change through action. When schools allow clubs to be formed around social activism, what are teachers' perceptions of the impact on their students? Did the collaboration with Invisible Children affect teacher praxis and student sociopolitical consciousness (SPC), student leadership/activism, and global citizenship? The following exploratory research questions were raised:

1) How did teachers become inspired to collaborate with Invisible Children?

2) How did Invisible Children's outreach and professional development impact teachers' pedagogy and praxis?

3) What were teachers' perceptions about the effects of student activism in after-school clubs on students?

Although usually after-school programs are facilitated by OST staff/practitioners, for the purposes of this study teachers and practitioners are used interchangeably since teachers during school become practitioners out-of-school. The following section will review three themes: a) theoretical underpinnings of critical pedagogy employed by teachers in the study, b) limitations and opportunities of NGO and student collaboration, and c) Global Citizenship Education.

Literature Review

Theoretical Underpinnings for Liberatory Pedagogy

Under the deficit-thinking model, Western youth of today are characterized as self-absorbed, materialistic, and apathetic. Alternatively, through the lens of critical theory and pedagogy, youth, can, and have, demonstrated leadership in reading their reality and transforming oppression into liberation in various movements. Recent activism can be categorized into three arenas including human rights, environmentalism, and animal welfare (Weil, 2016). "Issues that have captured the activist attention of young people during the past decade are child labor, environmental protection, animal rights, sweatshops" (Sherrod, 2006, p. 2) and issues surrounding violence, institutionalized racism, immigration and war. The key question is whether youth are given the theoretical and practical tools to be agents of positive social change.

Born out of Critical Theory, Critical Pedagogy offers educators an alternative philosophy of education that is not top down "vertical" education but dialogical, "horizontal" and problem-posing education[2] that empowers students to not only "read the word", but to "name the world and change it" (Freire, 1993, p.69). A central figure in critical pedagogy, Paulo Freire, clearly distinguished between traditional educational structures and liberatory education. Known globally for his conceptualization of critical pedagogy, Freire, was concerned with the development of *conscientização* (critical consciousness).

Impact of Student Activism

With many schools bound by state standards and pressured to perform on standardize tests, critical pedagogy sometimes becomes nothing more than a glorified philosophy occasionally referred to when searching for alternative approaches during school hours. Where do teachers and students find space to engage in critical pedagogy, praxis, and social action? (Gilgoff & Ginwright, 2015). Out-of-school time presents a unique venue where teachers, after-school practitioners, and students can have greater freedom to experience sociopolitical consciousness (SPC). Built on Ladson-Billings conceptualization of culturally relevant pedagogy (2009), sociopolitical consciousness has four key elements: critical reflection, political efficacy, critical/sociopolitical action, and collective identity development (Murray & Milner, 2015).

The development of SPC, referred to as sociopolitical development (SPD), is defined as the process that people, especially during adolescence, "acquire the knowledge, analytical skills, emotional faculties, and the capacity for action in political and social systems necessary to interpret and resist oppression" (Watts, Williams, & Jagers, 2003, p. 185). Research suggests that SPC has significant implications for youth development. A quantitative study by Christens and Peterson (2012), found that "as students felt more empowered to influence sociopolitical conditions in their lives and communities, their overall development outcomes improved" (Murray & Milner, 2015).

For educators, finding "in and out-of-school" time to create a learning environment that produces the kind of youth development described above is no easy task. As teachers and students increase their critical consciousness and engage in social activism there are many pitfalls to be avoided. For example, if teachers themselves are "not 'critically literate' to engage with assumptions and limitations of their approaches, they run the risk of (indirectly and unintentionally) reproducing the systems of belief and practices that harm those they want to support" (Andreotti, 2006).

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2   Problem-posing education is the antidote to conventional "banking education" characterized by depositing information from teacher to student because it emphasizes critical thinking through questions that pave the way for dialogical learning.

Towards Global Citizenship Education

Educators with a critical orientation unpack old paternalistic patterns of global citizenship such as unexamined assumptions of 'haves' saving the 'have-nots', limited analysis of the root cause of social issues, and "false charity" that results in creating dependency between the provider and recipient thereby stifling self-efficacy. "True generosity," Freire elucidates, "consists precisely in fighting to destroy the causes which nourish false charity. False charity constrains the fearful and subdued, the 'rejects of life,' to extend their trembling hands. True generosity lies in striving so that these hands – whether of individuals or entire peoples – need be extended less and less in supplication, so that more and more they become human hands which work and, working, transform the world" (Freire, 1993, p. 27).

Table 1. Distinction between soft and critical global citizenship.

	Soft global citizenship education	**Critical global citizenship education**
Problem	Poverty, helplessness	Inequality, injustice
Nature of the problem	Lack of 'development', education, resources, skills, culture, technology, etc.	Complex structures, systems, assumptions, power relations and attitudes that create and maintain exploitation and enforced disempowerment and tend to eliminate difference.
Understanding of interdependence	We are all equally interconnected, we all want the same thing, we can all do the same thing.	Asymmetrical globalization, unequal power relations, Northern and Southern elites imposing own assumptions as universal.
What individuals can do	Support campaigns to change structures, donate time, expertise and resources.	Analyze own position/context and participate in hanging structures, assumptions, identities, attitudes and power relations in their contexts.
Basic principle for change	Universalism (non-negotiable vision of how everyone should live what everyone should want or should be).	Reflexivity, dialogue, contingency and an ethical relation to difference (radical identity).
Goal of global citizenship education	Empower individuals to act (or become active citizens) according to what has been defined for them as a good life or ideal world.	Empower individuals to reflect critically on the legacies and processes of their cultures, to imagine different futures and to take responsibility for decisions and actions.

Source: This table contains abbreviated parts of an original table from Andreotti (2006, p. 46-48).

As critical pedagogues in this study collaborated with a human rights organization to address the issue of child soldiers in Uganda, they grappled with how to facilitate global citizenship education[3] in after-school clubs. Although defining global citizenship is a contested terrain, for the purposes of this study, global citizenship education will simply be defined as pedagogy addressing civic engagement in global issues of a social, political, economic, or environmental nature with the intent to build a more just and peaceful world. Table 1 demonstrates the distinction between soft and critical global citizenship as explicated by Andreotti (2006, p. 46–48).

Central to Andreotti's conceptualization of critical global citizenship education is the ability to use critical literacy to imagine and create new realities. Thus, "critical literacy is not about 'unveiling' the 'truth' for the learners, but about providing the space for them to reflect on their context and their own and others' epistemological and ontological assumptions: how we came to think/be/feel/act the way we do and the implications of our systems of belief in local/global terms in relation to power, social relationships and the distribution of labor and resources" (2006, p. 49). The following case portrays how student activists employed critical global citizenship and worked to embody an ethical North-South relationship yet were unable to attain their long-term goal of Fair Trade labeling with collaborating organizations.

Limitations of Collaboration – The Fair Trade Case

Youth activism has not only made political history on a macro level as discussed in the introduction section but impacts micro level economic choices from conscious consumerism to socially responsible investments.

On an economic front, the following example exemplifies the success of youth activists in creating a thriving market for Fair Trade products to stand in solidarity with poor farmer and labor organizations globally and notes the limitations imposed by corporate forces to take control over the Fair Trade labeling process. For over a decade, United Students for Fair Trade (USFT) activists (comprised of over 150 student Fair Trade groups) collaborated with a non-profit organization, and leading third-party certifier, FairTradeUSA to build the reputation of the Fair Trade Certified (FTC) label, on college campuses across the U.S.

When FairTradeUSA's model promoted corporations such as Coke (with alleged human rights abuse records in Colombia), McDonald's, and Wal-Mart, student activists in USFT withdrew their support claiming that income from FTC label licensing compromised FairTradeUSA's third-party status as independent from corporate retailers which clouded Fair Trade principles with profit-seeking agendas. Students' acute sense of justice for a democratic global economy was captured in this reflection by a USFT member:

> We're not just a consumer movement… just increasing the volume of certified products sold. Our goal is also that of a social justice movement even though we may come at it from a market angle. We are trying to create solidarity and empowerment – Fair Trade is about creating

3   Global Citizenship Education, as defined by UNESCO, "aims to empower learners to assume active roles to face and resolve global challenges and to become proactive contributors to a more peaceful, tolerant, inclusive and secure world." Retrieved from http://en.unesco.org/gced

communities. And there are more ways of making that a reality than just through certification and the market (as quoted in Wilson, 2013).

While students poured years of *affective* labor into promoting Fair Trade labeling, they asked critical questions about whether their collaboration with the "non-profit organization", FairTradeUSA, would help or hurt the promotion of a more equitable economy. They asked who would benefit from their partnership and how to best utilize their energies.

Although the activists in this situation employed a critical global citizenship lens, their partners did not. This highlights the importance of critical analysis for teacher and student activists assessing their partnerships with other entities. The example of student activism in Fair Trade labeling illustrates students' power to influence ethical consumption in the face of corporatization of their efforts through the third party certifier organization. In contrast, the following section will present a case of an effective collaboration between an NGO, students, and teachers. While the two cases are unique and not comparable, there are lessons in each.

Successful Collaboration – The Human Rights Education Case

In the southern state of Tamil Nadu, India, a local non-governmental organization, the Institute of Human Rights Education (IHRE), has worked for over two decades to provide Human Rights Education (HRE) to six, seven, and eight graders in public schools. The results of a study conducted to uncover the effectiveness of the collaboration of the NGO with the schools revealed that where teachers were engaged in implementing HRE, the impact was "transformational" for students and teachers alike.

Students manifested their raised consciousness about human rights in four areas: "(1) personal changes; (2) attempts to intervene in situations of abuse; (3) reporting (or threatening to report) abuse; and (4) spreading awareness about human rights... While many students and teachers became active in confronting abuses in their schools through HRE, some went beyond the school gates to address issues taking place in the larger community, be they related to caste or gender discrimination, child labor, or early marriage" (Bajaj, 2012).

Teachers and students who confronted human rights abuses were often faced with resistance. Students faced stiff punishment for speaking up about injustices they witnessed and did not witness the social change they wished to propel. Nevertheless, successes were profound as captured in this account of a group of HRE students recounting their decision to address female infanticide still prevalent in the region:

> After reading human rights education in 6th, I overheard in my area that a neighbor was planning to kill their newborn girl baby. I formed a group of classmates and we went to their homes. We explained to the lady [that this is wrong], but the father didn't accept. He scolded us and slapped us. We told [him] that the child also has a right to life, you should not kill the child. We said, "If you are going to kill the child, we will complain to the police, we won't move from this area. We will stand here and watch what you are doing with this child." Often we used to go to that home and watch that child. But now that child is older and is even studying in school (Bajaj, 2012, section 5.1.3).

Students were highly encouraged witnessing their agency to challenge the status quo through their own intervention and collective action. Active HRE teachers faced

their own opposition from adults during interventions to stop child labor yet they continued to support student efforts. Thus collaboration between the NGO, IRHE, teachers and students produced a coherent vision for action leading to greater appreciation for human rights in Tamil Nadu.

Filling the Gaps

Youth and student activism has gained increasing attention in social science research as local and global youth organizing shapes community development and stimulates a culture of change (Shah, 2011; Watts et al., 2006; Burgess, 2002). In the first Fair Trade example above, negative outcomes of collaboration were uncovered and the importance of using a critical global citizenship lens was highlighted. The second example of Indian students intervening in social circumstances to operationalize their knowledge of human rights demonstrated the positive impact of HRE in the home, school, and community through collaboration with a local NGO. In both cases, NGOs targeted students for collaboration towards a desired outcome. Determined acts of youth attract organizations in various sectors of society for collaboration. Increasingly, youth organizers are forming their own groups, setting their own agendas, and securing their own funding (Terriquez, 2015).

More research is needed to examine multi-dimensional aspects of student activism with multiple actors such as students, teachers, NGOs, funders and governmental organizations. This study aims to contribute to learning in this arena by investigating the impact of Invisible Children's collaboration with educational institutions where teachers in and out-of-school time (OST) created a unique environment for fostering sociopolitical consciousness (SPC), social activism, and global citizenship. In the following section, the methodology employed to conduct this study will be discussed.

Methods

Background

High schoolers, college students, 1500 activists, researchers, dozens of non-profit organizations and educators from 27 countries traveled to Los Angeles to attend the Fourth Estate Leadership Summit August 2013[4] organized by Invisible Children. Researchers from several institutes in Southern California, including University of California, Irvine (UCI), University of Southern California (USC), and the Paulo Freire Institute (PFI) at the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) met to discuss gaps in literature on the human rights work of Invisible Children. Collective review of qualitative and quantitative studies with all the above-mentioned institutes

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4   Details of the Fourth Estate Summit found at www.invisiblechildren.com (Retrieved from http://invisiblechildren.com/program/fourth-estate-summit/).

presented a need to examine the relationship between teachers' pedagogy, student activism, and Invisible Children.

Research Methods

The exploratory nature of this research called for qualitative methods and the use of phenomenological research design to better understand the "lived experience" of seasoned teachers as main actors in partnership with schools where they taught, their students, and a human rights NGO. According to Lester (1999), focusing on personal perspectives and lived experiences is "powerful for understanding subjective experience, gaining insights into people's motivations and actions." Thus, by investigating and analyzing teachers' experiences, this study hopes to offer insight into the phenomena of student activism, through the eyes of those engaging on the frontlines with these activists.

This study is also supported by the grounded theory approach as a "qualitative research method that uses a systematic set of procedures to develop an inductively derived grounded theory about a phenomenon" (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). Below, more detail is provided on the methods employed for gaining access, data collection, and analysis.

Selection of Participants

Upon receiving Institutional Review Board permission, PFI met with an Invisible Children representative to gain access to the subjects and identify criteria of potential participants. Based on the subjects' itineraries in Los Angeles, teaching experience, involvement with IC such as participating in the Teacher Exchange Program or starting an after-school club, and representation from rural, urban, public, private, magnet, and charter schools, affluent and economic disadvantaged communities, and other diverse demographics, nine teachers from various parts of the U.S. were able to participate in the study. The informants in the study met the following criteria: a) had a minimum of three years teaching experience; b) taught in middle or high school or at the college level; c) had experience in teaching social justice and global citizenship in and out-of-school time. IC's role with gaining access to informants and assisting them to find the PFI interview site on UCLA's campus was necessary for successfully conducting the interviews.

Data Collection

The qualitative research methods employed in this study included one-on-one open-ended interviews in person with nine teachers, follow-up emails with teachers for further clarification about initial interviews, follow-up interviews via phone, emails with three Invisible Children staff, and collection of relevant documents. The various sources of information served to triangulate data for more accuracy. Three research associates of the UCLA Paulo Freire Institute conducted the interviews in

2013 during IC's Fourth Estate Leadership Summit conference at UCLA. Researchers used digital voice recorders to capture the in person interviews and used smart phone recorders for back-up recording.

Data Analysis

The research associates began with the transcription of the nine interviews, thorough review of all relevant materials collected from IC including studies conducted by independent researchers and institutes on IC's impact in the U.S. and Uganda, and conducted follow up interviews via phone and correspondence with interviewed practitioners to better understand teachers' lived experiences with students both in and out-of-school time.

The first step was becoming immersed in the analysis of the nine initial interviews. Units of analysis were identified generally as a few sentences or a short paragraph. The second step of analysis involved open coding; in other words, labeling each unit with a word or phrase that adequately represented the idea being conveyed. Once all codes were identified, they were reduced for redundancy and manageability using constant comparison. The third step involved categorizing the codes into categories using closed coding to group open codes. In the fourth step, Grounded Theory was used to categorize and identify emerging themes. Major and minor themes were examined in the fifth step for quotes that illustrated the categories and themes. Finally, an additional step of seeking relationships between themes was taken.

Limitations of the Study

Due to the fact that the informants were teachers from all over the United States and PFI did not have the necessary budget to send researchers to visit the schools where teachers worked, observations were not included as a part of data collection. Nevertheless, the teacher's descriptive interviews of their practices provided ample data to analyze. In the following findings section, the research questions this study set out to examine (described in the introduction) will be explored in the following categories: 1) The Spark of Collaboration, 2) Professional Development for Critical Pedagogy and Praxis, and 3) Teachers' Perceptions about Student Activism.

Findings

The Spark of Collaboration

This section will describe data revealing conditions of how partnerships between teachers, students, Invisible Children, and a Ugandan NGO emerged. Ways in which teachers discovered and partnered with Invisible Children (IC) were multiple, yet the catalyst that inspired the drive for teachers and students to start after-school clubs and take action was overwhelmingly dependent on viewing footage from the films

produced by IC depicting how Kony and the Lord's Resistant Army (LRA) caused atrocities such as abduction of boys for soldiery and girls for sex-slaves in Uganda.

Informants in this study had a wide spectrum of awareness about the conflict in Uganda and IC's work before teaching. On one end, a teacher had viewed the *Rough Cut* film produced in 2006 as a college student while another informant became aware through her students viewing *Kony 2012* years later. Collaboration between teachers and IC started under various circumstances such as a high school sending students to a community service conference, students receiving a research assignment on social issues they were passionate about, and teacher's existing partnerships with like-minded organizations. Regardless of the entry point for the informants in this study, the role of media to ignite action among teachers and students was paramount.

School culture, orientation, and flexibility are integral to providing teachers with the opportunity to learn about social issues and implement ideas outside of traditional programs both in and out-of-school time. For example, at an all boys parochial school, service to the community was in their mission statement. On the occasion when the school needed a chaperone to take students to a conference about community service, a teacher volunteered for no other reason than to have a change of pace from the classroom. At a community service conference in 2005:

> The boys did not see anything that was really turning them on. There was this movie; I don't know something about Africa. I said, 'I am going to watch this movie; do you guys want to come?' They said. 'Yeah'. That being the Rough Cut film at that time. I had two children at that time… so when they were talking in the Rough Cut about kids being abducted between the ages of five and fourteen years old, I just pictured my daughter in that situation. That really affected me. That also really affected another boy that was there and one of the other students. And so the next day he found me in the school and said we cannot have seen this and do nothing. We need to do something. I said, 'What do you want to do?' And the whole thing started there (Interview 9, 2013).

The students initiated the after-school club and after a year of fundraising they managed to have a group of teachers and students travel to Uganda every year for various projects. After the school club met a Ugandan woman affiliated with IC who had started her own NGO in Uganda, students decided to start their own non-profit organization to directly work with a Ugandan educational NGO. While the after-school club did not want to abandon fundraising for IC, in consultation with IC, all parties involved decided that starting their own NGO was the best thing to do. Shortly thereafter, 19 other high schools became involved with the new student led effort that partnered directly with the Ugandan NGO. The ripple effects of beginning after-school clubs for social activism demonstrated the power of teacher-student relationships, courage of students and teachers to visit an unfamiliar country, collaboration between NGOs, and networking of high school students with friends in other schools to grow their NGO.

During school hours the above-mentioned educator taught a course on non-profit organization in addition to her mainstream classes. The interest generated from in school hours expanded to the after-school club. The enthusiasm from the club spread across the campus and to other high schoolers. Establishing a new student led organization with the mission to assist Ugandan children was challenging but ran with the

dedication of the students to 'do something' about the injustice they had witnessed through IC films.

Another teacher shared how she was introduced to IC though a student in her class. She had challenged her English class to do a "social issues research project" which required students to pick something that truly mattered to them, "not something that they'd thought would be easy but something that they're passionate about and one of my students said, 'I need to tell you about this cause that's an issue I care about; it's Invisible Children.' So I went home and watched one of the videos online and I was bawling and I bought a video… and had a screening at the school which marked the beginning of their after-school club" (Interview 3, 2013). This student led club did many activities to raise awareness, mobilize other students in after-school clubs, and lobby their congressional representatives. In this school, students manifested their sociopolitical consciousness (SPC) by mobilizing campaigns with tools readily available on IC's website to lobby their representatives and demonstrated leadership with organized action.

Throughout the data, the reoccurring theme of how in and out-of-school time mutually reinforce student learning and activism became apparent. The connection between in school and afterschool education created an environment for students to not only advance academically but to exercise their sociopolitical consciousness as emerging global citizens. In high schools especially, the connection between history and social studies courses and/or departments with teachers and students introducing Invisible Children played an important role in getting students to participate in OST social activism.

Professional Development for Critical Pedagogy and Praxis

At the start of the study it was assumed that one of the fruitful components of collaboration between Invisible Children and OST educators was a formal and on-going professional development program. This was not the case for most teachers involved with IC who benefited from a more informal support system for teachers. Data revealed that for the majority of teachers, the use of IC's media, simple curriculum to accompany films, accessible tools and resources, online teacher group discussion facilitated by IC staff, and visits from "Roadies" who visited campuses for special programs were essential to their motivation for social activism with students.

Conversely, a smaller number of educators were a part of a formal and unique professional development, the Teacher Exchange Program (TEX) offered by IC. During 2007 to 2013, 143 U.S. and 216 Ugandan teachers team-taught for six weeks in summer and winter sessions in American and Ugandan schools. Before starting their team teaching all teachers participate in a week long teacher development on critical pedagogy and cultural relevancy. With explicit goals of fostering critical pedagogy, dialogical learning, and cultural engagement, both Ugandan and U.S. teachers reported positive professional development in both qualitative and quantitative studies of the program. One evaluation reported, "84.8% of participants expressed professional growth due to dialogue, partner teaching, readings and resources and

the immersion experience" and over 96% of all participants expressed broadened perspectives as educators. (Hanna, C, 2013).

The impact of the program was life-changing for some of the informants in this study and showed a glimpse of how such programs can have lasting effects as many informants referred to their experience with TEX as motivation for social activism in their U.S. schools. In school clubs supported by teacher activists, students raised over one million dollars annually for several years for the "Schools for Schools"[5] program that built eleven high schools or rehabilitated them in LRA affected areas with over nine thousand Ugandan students benefiting from the program. Additionally, the "Mend" seamstress program trained 24 young ladies directly affected by LRA conflict for sustainable financial independence coupled with rehabilitation and counseling.

Upon arriving home from TEX, one teacher remembered telling her high school students, "You can do whatever you want but do something meaningful. One student took it [Invisible Children] to a middle school, got them on board and they decided to do the Schools for Schools campaign that year." (Interview 4, 2013).

TEX prioritized praxis as weekly dialogue/round table meetings and reflection were central to the summer program while in the winter session round table dialogues were held via Skype. Participants of TEX also "document their discoveries online, which allows the entire partner teaching community to read the reflections of others, further multiplying the conversation. In the reflection document, partners discuss experiences inside and outside the classroom, their perception of student outcome, methods and practices that are successful, challenges they encounter and other ideas and thoughts they encounter in their work together" (Hanna, C, 2013).

In extended education, professional development has different needs and goals. Yet this data suggests that the conceptual framework of critical pedagogy, dialogical education, regular and sustained forums for teacher/practitioner exchanges, praxis, appropriate use of media, technology, and easily accessible tools for educators are essential for sustaining any dynamic learning whether it be in or out-of-school hours.

Teachers' Perceptions about Student Activism

The informants in this study taught a wide range of subjects in middle schools, high schools, and colleges. Courses taught included history, social studies, math, English, theater, social entrepreneurship and non-profit management. Informant's perceptions about student activism was embedded in critical pedagogy and global citizenship. The level of experience a teacher had with social change was reflected in their ability to inspire students to think critically about their efforts and to flourish in the after-school clubs. Teacher's experiences about student activism at their schools demonstrated concrete changes in youth's personal and social development.

Students displayed heightened critical thinking skills, independent quest for researching social justice issues, and long-term commitment to local and global causes through volunteering. They started new social businesses, increased networking

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5   For a description of the Schools to Schools program see: http://invisiblechildren.com/program/schools-for-schools/

among peers and organization, created and sustained new organizations, and lobbied congressional representatives. The educators perceived their role as facilitators of a self-perpetuating process for teaching social change and global citizenship. An informant shared, "The students began to research issues on their own in classes; they go out and say, 'I didn't realize that child slavery was still taking places, or child prostitutions was still going on in some places in California!' So they became more and more aware of things" (Interview 8, 2013).

Between June 2009 and March 2010 when IC mobilized youth activist to support the passage of the LRA Disarmament and Northern Uganda Recovery Act, youth participated in writing letters, calling and having in person lobby meetings. On the occasion when IC asked the president of an after-school club to support the effort, an informant noted, "It's so fantastic to watch such young kids, also, sit there in a meeting, you know, with our US representatives and Congressmen and making changes at 16 and 17 years old" (Interview 3, 2013). Teachers, themselves, shared how they were personally transformed while working with students in after-school clubs. The student activism they witnessed went beyond their expectations especially in middle and high schools.

Teachers' perception of student capacity for sociopolitical consciousness (SPC), social activism, and global citizenship was enhanced while collaborating with various organizations such as Invisible Children and *Enactus*. Nevertheless, collaboration with NGOs can have limitations as discussed in the following section. Participating in OST social activism was new for most students referred to in this study. For this reason, they did not dig deep into the structure of their NGO collaborators. Teachers and students in after-school clubs generally did not question whether their NGO collaborators were aimed toward critical global citizenship or traditional forms of charity that can be unsustainable and result in creating dependency.

Discussion

The Findings section revealed various ways in which NGO collaboration lead to increased SPC, improved pedagogy and praxis and created an environment for student leadership and activism. Nonetheless, limited data posed opportunities to delve deeper through future research into 1) the impact of a mutually reinforcing process of teacher and student activism, 2) benefits and constraints of NGO collaboration within schools, and 3) emergence of global citizenship education for sustainable social change.

A Mutually Reinforcing Process

A classic example from the data is a teacher who practiced problem-posing education in her class raising critical questions about modern slavery, students responding with research and requesting to take action outside of class. Student activism outside of class motivated and reinforced the teacher's commitment to do more praxis –

snowballing into sustained community building and activism. The relevance of this mutually reinforcing process of teacher-student teaching and learning in and out of class offers policy makers, practitioners, educators, administrators, and others in the educational arena creative approaches to addressing student motivation, academic achievement, civic engagement and student leadership.

Benefits and Constraints of NGO Collaboration

Reflections on the findings indicate that on a short-term basis, IC, and social activist NGOs like it, can sustain their collaboration with educators and schools to make a significant contribution while addressing vital human rights issues. On a long-term basis, it is questionable due to the mission and capacity of the collaborating NGO. In this study, participants in the after-school clubs gained a unique perspective on transnational organizing from the United States to Uganda, yet did not seem to grasp the complex socio-political complexities in Uganda that gave rise to conflict and emergence of child soldiery. Similarly, IC was harshly accused of over simplifying the LRA conflict in Central Africa after Kony 2012 went viral with over 100 million views on by the sixth day of its release. Years of student activism across the U.S. with IC resulted in significantly curbing child soldiery in Uganda but did not change systems to address the root of the problem. The Global Centre for the Responsibility to Protect reports, "there have been no reported LRA attacks in Uganda since 2006 or in South Sudan since 2011. After several years of small-scale attacks on remote populations, the group [LRA] has increased its activity since late 2015, particularly in eastern Central African Republic and northeastern Democreatic Republic of Congo" (June 2016).

Towards Critical and Humane Global Citizenship Education

Upon becoming aware of child soldiers in Uganda, student activist and teachers, like other humanitarians in the North, felt compelled to demonstrate global citizenship through collaboration with Invisible Children. Ultimately, IC's own sustainability in the U.S. was in question and IC's main operations were moved to Uganda. While the findings demonstrate that students gained invaluable experience as described in the findings section, lasting development requires initial and sustained involvement of the local population as international aid from the North to South often results in unintended negative consequences.

In the book, "Governing Disasters: Engaging Local Populations in Humanitarian Relief" Ali, examines the connections "between law, governance and collaborative decision making with international, state, private sector and community actors in order to understand the dynamics of a global decentralized yet coordinated process of post-disaster humanitarian assistance" (2016, p.i). The findings of the empirical study of six case studies of various nations and 69 entities of the relief sector showed, for example, "international aid without community input can lead to significant complications. In areas that did not directly and systematically draw on com-

munity input, many rebuilt homes had to be demolished and replaced by a new road" (Ali, 2016, p. 5).

Teachers, youth, and NGOs engaged in social action are gaining a deeper appreciation through reflection on critical questions such as the following: Do mainstream patterns of charity foster dependency or self-efficacy? Do activist and NGO partnerships help support soft global citizenship or critical global citizenship? What systems would need to be transformed to truly change the reality in Central Africa and our interconnected world? This process of consultation, action, and reflection – praxis – will bring questions of sustainable social change into focus.

Human rights abuses, such as child soldiery and slavery, are symptoms of an ethically bankrupt global order. Lobbying existing governments that may be plagued with various levels of corruption and vested interests may lead activists to denounce old strategies and critically analyze how their efforts can produce long lasting results.

In his book, *Eleven*, Paul Hanley posits that large scale sustainable social change requires "various aspects of change on a number of fronts simultaneously, at different speeds, and multiple cycles… Such a process would require spaces to be created to foster ever-wider participation by individuals, institutions and communities." (2014, p. 321). Hanley asserts that "Transformation cannot be achieved using traditional political means that feed on the pursuit of power. In the future, leadership will be synonymous with service, not power." (ibid, p. 312). He demonstrates with multiple examples how an ethical transformation in the consciousness of humanity can bring enduring change.

As theories emerge about effective student activism in OST, the concept of *solutionary* thinking as developed in *Humane Education* can be explored. Humane Education is a lens for solution-based pedagogy that examines the interconnected dimensions of human rights, environmental stewardship, and animal protection toward building a more just and sustainable future for all. The capacities for solutionary thinking include critical, creative, and systems thinking. A "solutionary" as a noun "is a person who identifies inhumane, unsustainable, and exploitive systems and then develops practical, effective and visionary solutions both large and small, to replace them with those that are restorative, healthy, and just for all stakeholders" (Weil, 2016).

In the context of this study, students utilized their critical *thinking* to become aware of child soldiers in Central Africa and advocate for change. Students used their *creative thinking* to raise awareness and even start their own organizations. A missing component was the ability to employ *systems thinking*, emphasized in Humane Education, to better understand the complexities of the human rights issue in Central Africa. Deep rooted issues including international policy, inequitable trade policies that put developing countries at a disadvantage, prolonged violent ethnic conflict between and within African countries, lack of sound governance and inadequate education to raise human capacity toward sustainable development (John Templeton Foundation, 2010).

Expecting students to look at big picture questions that experts and scholars struggle with may be a tall order. Nevertheless, there are already glimmerings of solutionary thinking in schools where teachers, in and out of class, work with students to research pressing local/global issues they are passionate about. Next, they

develop practical solutions and invite local experts to the school to explore possible implementation. These student groups often participate in a "Solutionary Congress" where groups come together to present innovative outcomes (Rakestraw, 2016).

Future research on how student activists develop "solutionary" thinking in OST will be important to advancing a new conceptual framework for humane global citizenship. Building on critical global citizenship, the emergence of a theoretical framework for humane global citizenship will challenge teachers, students, and organizations to move beyond compartmentalized solutions to analyze root systems for comprehensive and sustained social change. The trajectory of student activism is challenged with the legendary words of Buckminster Fuller, "You never change things by fighting the existing reality. To change something, build a new model that makes the existing model obsolete." (As quoted in Hanley, 2014, p. 301).

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