

**Northern Ireland's Integrated Schools: An Analysis of Academic Literature**

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*We accept this report as part of the co-op portfolio as conforming to  
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### **Abstract**

The Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education (NICIE) celebrates twenty-five years of representing Northern Ireland's Integrated Education efforts to a local and global audience. In addition to supporting parent groups wishing to establish new schools, NICIE has recently collaborated with international donors, practitioners, and academics from other countries to promote an Integrated Education ethos on a global stage. The purpose of this sponsored research project was to catalogue existing academic research on the topic of Integrated Education for use on NICIE's website. The results of this mixed-methods scoping study will allow international donors to easily access academic literature that provides data necessary to drive their decision making in support of Integrated Education in Northern Ireland. Identifying academic gaps will provide direction for future research projects that will further demonstrate need to donors and strengthen public support for integrated schools in Northern Ireland.

Using three search engines accessed from the United States, this researcher found 183 references citing Integrated Education in Northern Ireland. After eliminating articles not found in peer-reviewed publications or whose full text could not be located, data was extracted from fifty-five resources allowing them to be thematically arranged and quantified. In addition to finding a disproportionate amount of literature that does not contribute primary data to the field, gaps exist in describing the day-to-day life of an integrated school and the experiences of its entire student population and staff. Given the inclusive ethos of the Integrated Education movement, not enough quantitative data was found meeting the search criteria to illustrate the academic benefits of attending these schools; however, much data exists to describe the emotional and social benefits of doing so. Finally, the peace-building impact of NICIE, including the documentation of its attempts to fill the gaps created by segregated teacher training programs, is missing from

the academic literature. A series of recommendations for new research projects was proposed to broaden the field of research on Integrated Education in Northern Ireland.

## Chapter 1: Introduction

### Background and Overview of research problem

Since the twelfth century, the island of Ireland has been embroiled in a protracted conflict between Catholic and Protestant ethnic groups, with Catholics historically associated with the desire for a free and united Ireland, and Protestants with the desire to maintain their British heritage and union. Even after the controversial partition of 1921 (a political attempt to end a civil war that divided the island into the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland) decades of continuous political repression, educational segregation, and discrimination against the Catholic population by the Protestants followed and eventually exploded into the conflict best known as “The Troubles.” This period of violence lasted from 1968-1994 and resulted in over 3,500 deaths and 35,000 injuries (Hancock, 1998).

In 1831, Ireland attempted to create a National School system with a non-denominational structure; this was met with staunch opposition from clergy of all denominations and the movement failed (Morgan & Fraser, 1999). Eventually, the school systems became controlled by the dominant denomination in each local area and by default at the end of the 1800’s there was a segregated education system (Morgan & Fraser, 1999). After the partition, the first Minister of Education in Northern Ireland attempted again to construct a national education system with the goal of unifying the region around a national identity; however, this just led to the formation of the Catholic Maintained and Protestant Controlled schools that exist today (Morgan & Fraser, 1999).

The Integrated Education movement in Northern Ireland began in March 1972, when Ms. Cecil Linehan, a Catholic mother, wrote a letter to the *Irish Times*, *Belfast Telegraph*, and *News Letter* in 1972 suggesting that the education system be used to help children through the conflict

(*Celebrating 25 years*, 2006). After publication, a number of parents wrote to Linehan and together they eventually created the first formal group in support of Integrated Education called “All Children Together” (ACT) (*Celebrating 25 years*, 2006). Their goal was to create integrated schools as an alternative to Protestant Controlled schools or Catholic Maintained schools within Northern Ireland, not as a replacement. Even though this parent movement was gaining momentum, during direct rule all British ministers, Department of Education (DENI) officials, and the majority of political and church leaders distanced themselves from this initiative based on two public positions: first, no schools were integrated within a ten year period, indicating disinterest: and second, fear that Integrated Education would exacerbate the violence and take away a place of stability for children (Morgan & Fraser, 1999).

But in 1978, ACT convinced Westminster to pass legislation that enabled schools to become Integrated (“Northern Ireland council,” n.d.), and this eventually led to the creation of the first integrated school in 1981, Lagan College (Morgan & Fraser, 1999). This school’s opening led to an intense amount of international media attention as the Hunger Strikes had just occurred that summer (Morgan & Fraser, 1999). This spotlight put the pressure on government officials whose unwillingness to support Integrated Education began to be seen as uncooperative and bordering on obstructive (Morgan & Fraser, 1999). It also attracted international donors who provided financial support for integrated schools.

After the formation of Lagan College, disagreements arose between members of ACT regarding the pacing and prioritizing of introducing more integrated schools to Northern Ireland (Bardon, 2009). Some wanted to strike while the iron was hot and increase the pace with which integrated schools were established, while others wanted to prioritize their attention on ensuring the success of Lagan College. This led to the formation of a splinter group called the Belfast

Charitable Trust for Integrated Education (BELTIE), which became the driving force behind the creation of the Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education (NICIE), an organization created specifically to represent Integrated Education to the public, politicians, the Department of Education (DENI), the churches, and the media (Bardon, 2009).

### **Problem Statement**

Since its formation in 1987, NICIE has become the leading agency in Northern Ireland for "...coordinat[ing] efforts to develop Integrated Education and...assist[ing] parent groups in opening new integrated schools" ("Who we are," para. 1). Currently, 61 integrated schools (20 secondary and 41 primary) exist in Northern Ireland. Its government can no longer deny that interest exists for these educational settings as 831 student applicants for places in integrated schools had to be turned away in 2008 alone due to lack of space ("Northern Ireland council," n.d.). Today, NICIE celebrates twenty-five years of representing Northern Ireland's Integrated Education efforts to a local and global audience. In addition to supporting parent groups wishing to establish new schools, NICIE has recently collaborated with international donors, practitioners, and academics from other countries to promote an Integrated Education ethos on a global stage.

On March 6-8, 2012, integrated educators from Northern Ireland, Cyprus, Israel, Croatia, Macedonia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Germany, and the United States met to discuss the challenges and benefits of Integrated Education. Hosted by NICIE and the Integrated Education Fund (IEF), this three-day conference began when Ms. Linehan, the Catholic parent who first proposed using Integrated Education as a way to create peace in Northern Ireland, welcomed the group and reflected on the challenges of Northern Ireland's thirty year road to eliminating its segregated education system and achieving lasting peace.



Throughout the conference, participants discussed their own personal attempts at implementing Integrated Education in their countries. Many similarities were discovered including the lack of political support, threats and vandalism against school properties and champions, difficulties in finding staff who truly support an Integrated Education ethos, and general feelings of isolation and personal challenge in continuing to fight for Integrated Education. However, meeting former and current students of Northern Ireland's integrated schools inspired educators in attendance and reminded them of the continued importance of their efforts. Study visits were conducted at Hazelwood Integrated Primary School and Lagan College, two of the first integrated schools in Northern Ireland. These visits allowed educators to see this Peace Education model in practice and discuss controversies that arise within an integrated setting. At the conclusion of this conference, "an international network for practice and research in integrated education [was] established...[to] provide support for the teachers and administrators in societies planning integrated education initiatives" ("Integrated education: Spring newsletter," 2012, p. 4)

In the fall of 2012, NICIE will be re-launching its website. Currently, many publications in support of Integrated Education, including NICIE newsletters and press releases, local newspaper commentaries, and occasional articles from peer-reviewed journals are chronologically listed under three different tabs within the website. Given this format and the vast amount of information, independent research on the NICIE website is a challenge. This co-op involved thematically organizing and summarizing academic literature with the goal of providing easy access to Integrated Education research for use by international donors, academics, and practitioners.

**Purpose of Study/Research**

The purpose of this sponsored research project was to catalogue existing academic research on the topic of Integrated Education for an international organization, the Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education (NICIE). This researcher conducted a mixed-methods scoping study to categorize and quantify available academic literature on the topic of Integrated Education. In addition to providing NICIE with user-friendly, thematically arranged access to available academic content, this study also quantified the literature. This exposed academic gaps and provided data that could drive the decision making of policymakers, donors, researchers, stakeholders, and NICIE board members and staff in a way that supports their ability to advocate for Integrated Education.

**Research Questions**

- To what extent is Integrated Education in Northern Ireland represented in academic literature?
- What is known from the existing literature about the field of Integrated Education?
- What research gaps exist in the available literature?

**Theoretical Framework**

The foundation of Integrated Education, whether in the U.S. in the 1960's, Northern Ireland in the 1970's, or the Balkans in the recent past, has always been based on the struggle for peace and civil rights for all. Its champions have recognized the formal school system's role in cultural reproduction, whether through its organization, administration, or curriculum and pedagogy, and have looked for ways to reduce the hegemony of dominant cultural/ethnic groups. Critical Pedagogy has long been associated with the fight for social justice and the use of grassroots organizations to effect change ("100 years of," 2012).

Critical Pedagogy theory is based on cultural politics, hegemony, counter-resistance, and dialogue and encourages stakeholders "to recognize, engage, and critique (so as to transform) any existing undemocratic social practices and institutional structures that produce and sustain inequality and oppressive social identities and relations..." ("The Freire project," para. 7). John Dewey, Myles Horton, W.E.B. Dubois, Martin Luther King Jr., and Paulo Freire have all contributed and influenced the shaping of this theoretical framework and used its principles to promote social justice. The American Civil Rights Movement was highly influenced by U.S. critical theorist Myles Horton, who co-founded the Highlander Folk School in Tennessee that became the breeding ground for revered civil rights activism like the Montgomery bus boycott, the Citizenship Schools, and the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee. Given the grassroots evolution of Integrated Education in all of the countries represented in the newly formed Integrated Peace Education Global Network for Practice and Research, the political struggles and violence these groups face, and their desires for peace, equality, and social justice, this project will use Critical Pedagogy theory as its theoretical lens.

### **Importance of Co-op Research**

Today, over 21,000 students attend integrated schools in Northern Ireland (Bardon, 2009). However, this only represents 7% of the student population and at this pace, it would take more than 400 years to provide all of Northern Ireland's students with an Integrated Education (Cavanagh, 2012). However, as previously discussed, this is not due to lack of interest. While the establishment of Lagan College in 1981 eventually led to the government publically voicing support for Integrated Education, in 1989, during a period of education reform, legislation was created that stated, "the Department of Education will facilitate and encourage the development of integrated education *where there is parental demand*" (Morgan & Fraser, 1999, p. 371). This

vagueness in wording helped to facilitate a complicated relationship between the government and integrated schools (Morgan & Fraser, 1999).

Since the beginning of the movement, integrated schools have had to heavily rely on funding from international donors such as the IEF, BELTIE, the Ireland Funds, and the British Council given that “new schools are not normally eligible for capital grant from the Department [of Education] until they have been established for a period of at least 2-3 years (“Criteria for the,” 2012). The burden of start up funding for school space, materials, and educators falls heavily on the shoulders of parents pushing for integrated schools in their communities. According to Paul Caskey, the Campaign Director of IEF, international donors request evidence, preferably in the form of academic research, demonstrating the demand for Integrated Education before they will provide financial support (Caskey, 2012). This co-op project will allow international donors to easily access academic literature that provides data necessary to drive their decision making in support of Integrated Education in Northern Ireland.

Thematically categorizing and quantifying available academic literature will also benefit academics and Integrated Education practitioners, in Northern Ireland and abroad. Identifying academic gaps will provide direction for future research projects that will further demonstrate need to donors and strengthen public support for integrated schools in Northern Ireland. Access to academic literature regarding theory and practice of Integrated Education would also benefit practitioners in Northern Ireland and abroad. Dr. Zvi Bekerman of the Hebrew University in Jerusalem states, “...paradoxically there is something nice about knowing that others might have similar problems. If you share your story you realize it is not so unique; gaining knowledge about others facing similar issues gains your perspective and –even more important- knowledge of other people’s problems and solutions” (“Integrated education: Spring newsletter,” 2012, p. 4).

### **Study Limitations**

Three major weaknesses must be acknowledged in this research project. First, only English language academic literature was incorporated into this scoping study; this limitation may prevent the researcher from accessing all potentially relevant academic resources as well as unintentionally introducing Western bias. Second, the researcher had a limited window of time to complete this scoping study, a methodology already inherently time consuming. Last, while a faculty advisor and co-op sponsor were available to provide feedback, only one researcher was responsible for thematically arranging the literature, possibly introducing unchecked biases.

### **Definition of Terms**

*Conflict.* “The struggle between divergent forms of nationalist aspirations, ethnicity, and oppression against a backdrop of widespread social and economic deprivation” (Smith & Neill, 2006, p. 154)

*Contact theory.* The idea that conflicts can be reduced by physically bringing two sides together. It assumes that the conflict arises from the lack of information and opportunity to meet (Horowitz, 2002).

*Contested narratives.* “...Narratives about the past [that] are constructed and maintained” by different ethnic groups. (Bekerman & Zembylas, 2010).

*Controlled schools.* State managed schools primarily attended by Protestants (Duffy, 2000)

*Cultural hegemony.* “The process by which a dominant culture maintains its dominant position” (Felluga, 2011, para. 1)

*Desegregation.* Removal of barriers that join together previously separated populations

*Integrated schools.* Schools that intentionally attempt to balance the religious populations of their students, staff, and governors (“IE movement,” n.d.)

*Maintained schools.* Schools funded by the state but managed by the Catholic Church and primarily attended by Catholics (Duffy, 2000)

*Resegregation.* A return to segregation after experiencing a desegregation phase

*Teacher avoidance* (a.k.a. denial syndrome). “...The effort (by teachers) to ignore the Troubles by trying to preserve the schools as ‘havens of peace’” (Duffy, 2000, p. 25)

*Transformed schools.* Previously controlled schools that have received an integrated status (“Transformation explained,” n.d.)

## **Summary**

Since the end of the Cold War, the biggest threats to peace around the world have been caused by conflicts based on ethnicity, nationalism, linguistics, and social and cultural differences (Smith & Neill, 2006). Education has been viewed as a panacea to resolve conflicts, making advances in inclusive education in conflicted areas internationally appealing (Smith & Neill, 2006). NICIE states, “...children are not the problem but rather the custodians of the solution” (Moffat, 2007, p. 162). Given the quantity and persistence of ethnic and racial conflicts around the world, it is easy to understand the urgency in finding long-term conflict resolution strategies that benefit the next generation of potential peacemakers. This mixed methods scoping study exposed academic gaps and provided data that could drive the decision making of policymakers, donors, researchers, stakeholders, and NICIE board members and staff in a way that supports their ability to advocate for Integrated Education in Northern Ireland and allows children to become peacemakers in their communities.

## Chapter 2 – Literature Review

### Introduction of Problem

Northern Ireland's segregated education system is a remnant of attempts in 1831 to create a national school system (Morgan & Fraser, 1999). Opposition from Catholic and Protestant denominations led to children from different faiths being educated in separate schools for 150 years, until the first integrated school, Lagan College, was independently opened in 1981, after nine years of effort, by concerned parents from both sides of the centuries-old ethnic conflict (Morgan & Fraser, 1999). Integrated schools intentionally create balanced populations of students and staff from these two ethnic groups in an effort to build peace between communities (*Celebrating 25 years*, 2006). The Good Friday Agreement, a peace agreement signed in 1998, includes "a specific pledge...to facilitate and encourage integrated education..." and is often referenced by Integrated Education supporters ("Reconciliation: Integrated education," 2006, para. 2).

NICIE, an organization established in 1987, is considered to be a leading authority on Integrated Education in the world. In addition to its larger functions of garnering support (financial and political) for Northern Ireland's Integrated Education movement, assisting parents in finding and creating Integrated Education opportunities, and molding a community think tank where Protestant and Catholic educators, parents, and policy makers can dialogue with each other, it also provides intense anti-bias teacher training sessions at the request of integrated school principals. These sessions are conducted throughout the school year and focus on teacher self-reflection, an essential component of critical theory.

In addition to supporting parent groups and integrated educators, NICIE has recently collaborated with international donors, practitioners, and academics from other countries to

promote an Integrated Education ethos on a global stage. On March 6-8, 2012, Integrated Educators from Northern Ireland, Cyprus, Israel, Croatia, Macedonia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Germany, and the United States met to discuss the challenges and benefits of Integrated Education. Hosted by NICIE and the Integrated Education Fund (IEF), this three-day conference concluded with the establishment of “an international network for practice and research in integrated education... [to] provide support for the teachers and administrators in societies planning integrated education initiatives” (“Integrated education: Spring newsletter,” 2012, p. 4). In an effort to reduce the tensions of already frustrated integrated educators and the time-consuming demands of organically creating these Peace Education programs, and convince international donors that there is a vast need for Integrated Education in Northern Ireland and throughout the world, this researcher thematically organized and summarized academic literature for publication on the NICIE website.

### **Historical and Current Studies**

Education has been viewed as a panacea to resolving conflicts, as many believe that “...children are not the problem but rather the custodians of the solution” (Moffat, 2007, p. 162), and it became the cornerstone of both the American and Northern Ireland civil rights movements. In the United States, lawyers used the Fourteenth Amendment of 1868, which requires states to provide equal protection to all citizens, to argue against segregation and win groundbreaking cases like *Brown versus the Topeka Board of Education*, which became responsible for eventually desegregating schools in 1954. Approximately 20 years later, during the height of “The Troubles,” parents in Northern Ireland proposed integrated schools as a Peace Education model for Protestant and Catholic communities. While having the same objective of



educating children together, these two countries approach Integrated Education as a civil rights issue on opposite ends of a spectrum.

U.S. legislation only required all students to have equal access to neighborhood public schools and never addressed proactively constructing an integrated ethos. Since the 1980's, academics have begun describing a pattern of resegregation happening in American schools. Quantitative data illustrates the over-representation of students of color in special education, lower level classes, and suspensions; the underrepresentation of these students in magnet schools; and the underfunding of urban schools with high populations of students of color (Andre-Bechely, 2004; Blanchett, 2009; Blanchett, Beachum, Mumford, 2005; Bush, Burley, Causey-Bush, 2001; Eitle & Eitle, 2004; Gallagher, 2007; Lyons & Chesley, 2004; Marx & Larson, 2011). While U.S. schools are technically desegregated and students of all races and cultures are found beneath the same roof, the intentional use of curriculum and pedagogy to bridge the gap between different cultural groups and discuss contested narratives, such as the approach used by Northern Ireland's integrated schools, does not exist.

Racial achievement gaps continue to increase as English-only movements sprout throughout the U.S. and non-English speaking students are grouped together and separated from the rest of their classmates in English-language immersion programs. Hostility towards immigrants has also been exacerbated by recent popular state legislation (Ex. Alabama, Arizona) that includes elements of racial profiling by police with the goal of reducing "illegal immigration." Because schools are cultural systems that mimic existing hegemony, they illustrate the consequences of economic, political, and social stratifications that exist within a society (Blanchett, Beachum, & Mumford, 2005). While some racial achievement gaps are decreasing (i.e. between Blacks and Whites), their origination and persistence demonstrates that curriculum,

pedagogy, and teacher persona are not neutral, or culture-free. While attempts are made by American teacher preparation programs to address multiculturalism within schools, truly integrated schools continue to be rare exceptions (Blanchett et al., 2005).

Resegregation phenomena in the U.S. demonstrate that a legal change in behavior isn't sustainable and that additional efforts must be undertaken to reverse this course of action (Gallagher, 2007). Many organizations - in countries around the world, such as Northern Ireland, Croatia, Macedonia, Serbia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Cyprus, and Israel - are experimenting with Integrated Education in the absence of government mandates to desegregate. Three major themes in the literature have been uncovered that describe the ethos of Integrated Education: the importance of teacher training, the strategic use of curriculum and pedagogy, and an emphasis on the importance of contact between groups while acknowledging the caveat against overreliance upon it.

#### **Contact Theory: A warning**

Contact theory is based on the idea that conflicts can be reduced by physically bringing two sides together. It assumes that the conflict arises from the lack of information and opportunity to meet with "The Other" (Horowitz, 2002). While desegregation mandates in the U.S. were based on civil rights issues, not an intercultural group conflict resolution strategy such as that employed by schools in Northern Ireland, the current phenomenon of resegregation clearly demonstrates the danger of relying solely on contact as a peace initiative and serves as a stern reminder that integration is not sustainable and requires constant monitoring. Abu-Nimer (2004), Hayes, McAllister, & Dowds (2007), Hagan & McGlynn (2004), and Montgomery & McGlynn (2009) all describe the superficiality of Peace Education programs that simply place opposing groups in the same locality. Interviews with principals from Northern Ireland integrated

schools describe three different types of integration: passive (such as the American education system), reactive, and proactive (McGlynn, 2007). Providing user-friendly access to academic literature that describes the characteristics of proactive integration for the benefit of international donors, academics, and practitioners was an important outcome of this mixed-methods scoping study.

### **Curriculum and Pedagogy**

As previously discussed, curriculum and pedagogy are not culture-neutral and must be taken into account when creating integrated learning environments. In this setting, brain-based learning techniques are not the sole focus of curriculum and pedagogy; instead each is used in a proactive way to create successful coexistence programs. Abu-Nimer (2004) describes the principles of effective co-existence programs. These include avoiding advantages (real or perceived) for any cultural group; actively acknowledging structural inequalities experienced by different students and self-critiquing one's role within the conflict; creating an open environment for political discussions; allowing opportunities for students within a cultural group to spend time together; and providing professional training for staff. The difference between this approach and desegregation lies in the intentional use of curriculum and pedagogy within a Peace Education strategy. However, unless students are actively involved in constructivism, or constructing knowledge through their interpretation of their interactions in the world, Integrated Education has the danger of becoming associated with transmission and loses its original intent (Moffat, 2007); this mirrors the sentiment of critical pedagogy theory, which will be discussed in a future section of this paper. Two important target areas of an integrated curriculum and pedagogy that are in opposition to the American passive approach are language of instruction and opportunities to address national identity within cultural groups, either formally or informally.

Unfortunately, Abu-Nimer's (2004) principles were not accompanied by case studies demonstrating them in action, which would have been helpful for Integrated Education practitioners. While much of the available literature generalizes the overall benefits of Integrated Education from the perspective of educational leaders and parents, not as much data is available that describes the effects of curriculum and pedagogical changes from the student perspective, or describes the day-to-day activities at the study site. Amara, Azaiza, Hertz-Lazarowitz, and Mor-Sammerfeld (2009), Bekerman (2007), Nasser and Abu-Nimer (2007) have all contributed to painting a picture of the experiences of students in Integrated Education settings through their long-term ethnographic studies of the Hand-to-Hand integrated schools in Israel. Just as Andre-Bechely's (2004) research on resegregation in magnet schools from the perspective of American students is crucial in illustrating this phenomenon, examining the student perspective also provides invaluable descriptions of Integrated Education in action and its progress in reducing cultural hegemony within schools.

### **Teacher Training**

Teacher reflection is vital for the successful implementation of peace-building programs. Not only does it provide the opportunity to identify one's own biases before entering the classroom (Duffy, 2000; Moffat, 2007), it increases the likelihood of genuine inter-group contact that can help to break the polite, unproductive silence characteristic of colorblindness that prevents full inclusivity (Duffy, 2000). McGlynn (2007), Moffat (2007), and Siberry and Kearns (2005) all recognize the effect of pedagogical choice on levels of integration as traditional transmission (as opposed to constructivist) pedagogies perpetuate the superficial and minimal implementation of Peace Education curricula and teacher avoidance of controversy.

Carter (2007) suggests that teacher preparation for Integrated Education must include three main elements: disposition (intolerance of –isms), knowledge (pedagogy, social history, cultural and social concerns), and skill development (critical thinking, problem-solving, and community-building). Although Northern Ireland has a specific national Peace Education curriculum, teachers are most likely to graduate from segregated universities, which often provide superficial treatment of these topics, and leave most graduates feeling ill prepared for multicultural education (Carter, 2007). While American universities also contain diversity courses in their teacher preparation programs, the concept of cultural mismatch is unlikely to be fully understood prior to entering the classroom, as role-playing activities and theoretical exercises do not reflect the infinite variables that exist between teachers and students in conflict. These weaknesses suggest that perhaps learning “how to do Integrated Education” is best learned on the job, with teacher support provided by the employer. Clarke-Habibi (2005) described the success of this professional development approach when examining an “Education for Peace” pilot program in Bosnia-Herzegovina. The results of this qualitative study suggest that this method changed teaching styles, increased enthusiasm, improved creativity between teachers and students, and improved team-building skills and community relations.

Moffat (2007) describes these “on the job” attempts at Integrated Education as “largely improvisational,” suggesting that learning comes from interactions with parents, students, outside professionals, and staff (p. 166). While the organic construction of Peace Education programs designed to specifically fit the context of a community is ideal, it is also time consuming, may increase the tensions of already frustrated teachers, and would likely be led by biased in-house educators. Outside organizations, such as the Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education (NICIE), are important to consult, and its third party objectivity may make

traversing the waters of integration a less stressful and more productive process. Accessing thematically organized academic literature on their website would help practitioners in Northern Ireland and abroad gain “knowledge of other people’s problems and solutions” (“Integrated education: Spring newsletter,” 2012, p. 4).

### **Research Problem and Theoretical Framework**

Much of the academic literature regarding Integrated Education makes reference to some subset of critical theory (i.e. race, pedagogy, multiculturalism). Given its focus on creating destinies, the existence of dominant and subordinate groups, the interdisciplinary nature required to study a problem or phenomenon (an element missing from positivism), the focus on returning education to a state of self-reflection, and a place of empowerment and social justice (an element missing from neoliberalism), it is an appropriate lens through which to view the challenges and victories of integrated schools.

Critical theorist Paulo Freire stated “nobody liberates anybody else, and nobody liberates themselves all alone. People liberate themselves in fellowship with each other” (Heimann, 2003, para. 1). This simple statement captures the ethos of Integrated Education: its focus on change and conflict resolution, its need for a pedagogy of constructivism, not transmission, and the idea that one group cannot dominate another for positive change to occur. Unless there is genuine positive and constructive fellowship between school and student, there will always be a power struggle instead of co-operation, resulting in neither party achieving their goals. If there is not an equal relationship with a common goal of liberation, a dominant and subordinate group exists.

Major themes of critical theory include:

- Teachers and students should be self-reflective about the role of State hegemony in the educational experience.
- All stakeholders in education should be active agents in understanding, criticizing, resisting, and transforming oppressive school practices (deMarrais, & LeCompte, 1999).
- Education should be an empowering grassroots experience that fights for justice and against inequality, exploitation, and hatred.
- Problems should be viewed as multi-faceted and approached through interdisciplinary means.

### Summary

School climate is associated with culture, values, organizational structure, and the background of all teachers, students, and administrators (Eitle & Eitle, 2004). Therefore, if most of the decision makers belong to the dominant ethnic or cultural group of a community, the school climate will reflect their culture and values; this is often referred to as cultural hegemony, which results in biased curriculum, pedagogy, and discipline. However, most of the blame for failure is traditionally placed on students, families, and teachers, which “absolves institutionalized structures, policies, and practices that create and perpetuate failure” (Blanchett, 2009, p. 382).

Although it is natural for cultural mismatches to occur, pro-active efforts must be made to acknowledge the challenges that schools face when teachers from one culture educate students from another. Students must be allowed to openly discuss the difficulties that they face in this relationship. But change will only occur when teachers and students discuss their role in this challenge *with each other* and work mutually to become active agents of true integration. Multiple models for Integrated Education exist for demonstrating how constructivism can help to

cultivate peace between conflicted communities. While much evidence exists that describes the benefits of Integrated Education, the next generation of academic literature must address it in practice, making it easier for others to work towards the same goal.

### **Chapter 3 – Research Methodology**



## **Introduction**

Working in conjunction with the Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education (NICIE), the researcher conducted a mixed-methods scoping study to categorize and quantify available academic literature on the topic of Integrated Education in Northern Ireland. In addition to assisting this organization by providing user-friendly, thematically arranged access to available academic content, this study also exposed academic gaps in the literature that could help provide direction to policymakers, researchers, stakeholders, and NICIE board members and staff.

## **Research Questions**

The following research questions guided this sponsored research co-op and formed the foundation of this scoping study:

1. To what extent is Integrated Education in Northern Ireland represented in academic literature?
2. What is known from the existing literature about the field of Integrated Education?
3. What research gaps exist in the available literature?

## **Research Design and Rationale**

A mixed-methods scoping study was conducted in order to successfully meet the objectives of cataloguing existing literature for NICIE, providing its website users with easy access to Integrated Education academic literature, and informing the decisions of its stakeholders. Scoping involves mapping the relevant literature in any field of interest (Arksey & O'Malley, 2005). This methodology is also referred to as meta-analysis, a rapid review, literature review, narrative review, research synthesis, or a structured review (Arksey & O'Malley, 2005, p. 20). Scoping studies often provide the impetus for full systematic reviews, which analyze the

quality of available literature. This study added to the body of academic literature on Integrated Education, as there is a current lack of knowledge regarding its scope.

The researcher used a concurrent embedded transformative strategy based on Arksey & O'Malley's (2005) scoping methodology. Studies using this particular strategy are heavily influenced by the chosen theoretical framework and are constructed purposefully to benefit qualitative and quantitative researchers examining a similar theoretical foundation and academic interest (Creswell, 2009). Using a critical theory perspective, this researcher informally relied on the advice of stakeholders (i.e. NICIE sponsor) throughout the data collection process in order to best summarize and present qualitative and quantitative data in a way that is most useful to those depending on this research to guide their own work. While consultation is an optional stage of Arksey and O'Malley's (2005) scoping methodological framework, it is crucial to meeting the needs of the sponsor as well as Integrated Education practitioners in Northern Ireland and abroad.

### **Data Collection Procedures**

Given the exploratory nature of scoping studies and the subjectivity associated with thematically arranging literature, a qualitative approach was the primary method followed by quantitative data analysis in the form of frequency distribution. While mixed-methodology can be time consuming and requires familiarity with both methods, quantifying the qualitative data provided the best picture of strengths and weaknesses in the field of Integrated Education academic literature (Creswell, 2009).

### **Measures and Instruments**

Broad research questions formed the basis of this methodology since what will be uncovered ahead of time is often unknown. This characteristic of emerging design, in addition to the use of inductive data analysis, a heavy reliance on a theoretical lens, and the interpretive role of the researcher who is also the key instrument, associates scoping studies with qualitative research (Creswell, 2009). By casting a wide net, breadth of coverage can be increased; parameters can be set later when the researcher thematically arranges the literature (Arksey & O'Malley, 2005).

Electronic databases such as Summon™, available through the Drexel University library website, and Google Scholar™ were used first to identify relevant studies based on the definition of Integrated Education previously provided by this researcher. Summon™ accesses multiple academic databases through one search engine and also incorporates the Drexel University library catalog and works in the public domain ("About summon," 2012). Example search terms used alone or together included: "Northern Ireland," "Integrated Education," "integrated schools," "ethnic conflict," and "peace education." Bibliographies of relevant studies were cross-referenced to identify additional resources not discovered through these search terms. Hand searching through hard copies of relevant journals and textbooks was limited given the researcher's location, however if applicable and possible, these documents were requested through Drexel University's E-Z borrow program. After an initial comprehensive resource list was created, it was shared with the co-op sponsor to solicit additional suggestions for academic literature and thematic organization.

### **Data Analysis**

After developing an initial academic resource list, data extraction was performed, the results of which were later used to thematically arrange the literature. Standard information was collected for each study including: author(s), year of publication, study location, study populations, aims of the study, methodology, and important results (Arksey & O'Malley, 2005). Using a consistent approach to reporting the findings allowed the researcher to make comparisons, identify contradictory findings, discover gaps, and consider new frontiers for research (Arksey & O'Malley, 2005). While the goal was to apply a common analytical framework to all of the studies under evaluation, some flexibility had to be taken into account, as this data was not always available. Results of this data extraction were recorded in Microsoft Word™, and used to facilitate the next stages of analysis and communication. After the academic literature was qualitatively analyzed, it was quantitatively analyzed using frequency distribution statistics. Univariate frequency data tables were created according to identified themes.

### **Ethical Considerations**

While human subjects were not a component of this research project, three major weaknesses existed in this study that must be acknowledged. First, only English language academic literature was incorporated into this scoping study; this limitation may have prevented the researcher from accessing all potentially relevant academic resources as well as unintentionally introducing Western bias. Second, the researcher had a limited window of time to complete this scoping study, a methodology already inherently time consuming. Both issues were addressed by providing an appendix with a list of articles that were not reviewed and/or incorporated into the scoping study due to time or language restrictions (occasionally non-English academic research is accompanied by an English abstract). Last, while a faculty advisor

and co-op sponsor was available to provide feedback, only one researcher was responsible for thematically arranging the literature, possibly introducing unchecked biases.

## Chapter 4: Results

### Introduction:

The purpose of this sponsored co-op project was to catalogue existing academic research on the topic of Integrated Education in order to expose academic gaps and provide useful data to drive the decision making of policymakers, donors, researchers, stakeholders, and NICIE board members and staff in a way that supports their ability to advocate for Integrated Education in Northern Ireland. Research from this co-op project has demonstrated that the majority of academic literature available thoroughly examines the theoretical framework for Integrated Education (i.e. Contact hypothesis) and the social implications of pedagogy and curriculum. However, an overemphasis on academic literature that does not collect primary data exists, as well as a lack of research from the parent and pupil perspective regarding participation in an integrated school and a lack of quantitative data demonstrating the academic benefits of attending integrated schools in Northern Ireland. The results include recommendations for future research projects based on limitations in the available academic literature.

### Findings:

The findings of this co-op support the existence of research gaps in the available literature on Integrated Education in Northern Ireland, and areas are identified for future academic projects that will decrease redundancy in the literature and provide opportunities for continued advocacy of Integrated Education. These findings address the three major research questions that have guided this study:

**1) To what extent is Integrated Education in Northern Ireland represented in academic literature?**

An initial list of 183 references was produced after a thorough web and bibliography investigation that included search terms such as “Northern Ireland,” “Integrated Education,” “integrated schools,” “ethnic conflict,” and “peace education” (see Appendix A for a complete list). After eliminating references that were duplicates (i.e. identical articles written by the same author under different titles), not specifically about Integrated Education in Northern Ireland, not found in peer reviewed academic journals or publications, those whose full text was unavailable through three different search engines accessed from the United States, or was funded by NICIE or Integrated Education supporters, a final list of 55 references was compiled for analysis (see Appendix B for a complete list organized by theme).

**2) What is known from the existing literature about the field of Integrated Education?**

Three major themes in the academic literature were previously discussed in Chapter 2: the importance of teacher training, the strategic use of curriculum and pedagogy, and the emphasis on the importance of contact between groups, with a caveat against its overreliance. This investigation has revealed a significant amount of literature on these topics. However, further analysis has allowed for a more detailed classification of the literature including the following five themes and their subdivisions: principles of effective contact, the history of the Northern Ireland Integrated Education movement, characteristics of integrated schools, the social implications of pedagogy and curriculum (subdivisions include the benefits, identity formation/group identification, the peace-building role of education, and the role of education in perpetuating the conflict), and stakeholder perspectives (subdivisions include the perspectives of

leaders, teachers, parents, and pupils). A quantitative breakdown of the total number of articles representing these themes can be seen below.

Table 1

*Analysis Based on Thematic Arrangement*

Theme	Total (n = 55)
A Theoretical Framework: Principles of Effective Contact	10
The History of the Northern Ireland Integrated Education Movement	7
Characteristics of Integrated Schools	3
The Social Implications of Pedagogy and Curriculum	
The Benefits	7
Identity Formation/Group Identification	4
The Peace-building Role of Education	7
The Role of Education in Perpetuating the Conflict	3
Stakeholder Perspectives	
Leaders' Perspectives	4
Teachers' Perspectives	7
Parents' Perspectives	2
Pupils' Perspectives	1

**A Theoretical Framework: Principles of Effective Contact.** As previously discussed in Chapter 2, the Contact hypothesis forms the theoretical foundation of most arguments in favor of Integrated Education, an argument confirmed by Niens (2009). This theory is based on the idea



that conflicts can be reduced by physically bringing two sides together. It assumes that the conflict arises from the lack of information and opportunity to meet with “The Other” (Horowitz, 2002). Many of the articles analyzed in this scoping study, while eventually placed in other categories, referred to this theory within their literature reviews or own analyses, suggesting that further academic literature focusing on this topic alone is becoming redundant. As referenced in the literature review of this paper, relying solely on Contact theory as a panacea for integration is a slippery slope. Cairns & Hewstone (2000) confirm this sentiment when they state, “the contact hypothesis was never conceived of as a simple solution to intergroup conflict. Nevertheless, this is the way that practitioners have tended to interpret it” (p. 225). Hughes & Donnelly (2006) further support this caveat when they jokingly associate prejudice reduction and contact with the process of osmosis.

The academic literature repeatedly calls for “a collective definition of integrated education” (Donnelly & Hughes, 2006, p. 513), citing the different approaches to integration (McGlynn, 2009b) and the need to differentiate between integration and coexistence (Abbott, 2010; McAndrew & Lemire, 1996). Not only would creating a collective definition further unite the Integrated Education movement, it would give educators, especially those not practicing in Northern Ireland’s integrated schools, concrete indicators to recognize the differences between integration and coexistence and identify the signs of resegregation, a concept previously discussed in the literature review. Donnelly & Hughes (2006) and Niens & Cairns (2005) briefly summarize specific practical approaches to effective contact including: the avoidance of competition, need for institutional support, monitoring of contact to ensure quality, provision of anxiety-reducing mechanisms, balanced enrollments, regular assembly or circle times, and public celebrations of cultural identities. Future academic literature focused on documenting the day-to-

day practices of integrated schools would also help to differentiate them from other contact schemes.

**The History of the Northern Ireland Integrated Education Movement.** As discussed in more detail in the next section, this topic does not lend itself to quantitative methodology and most references simply narrate the challenges and the victories of the Integrated Education movement through the eyes of its stakeholders (Pickett, 2008; Smith, 2001; Tell, 1999; Thompson, 2006). The academic literature categorized under this theme is extremely diverse, covering such topics as the formation of ACT and NICIE, the involvement (or lack therefore of) of the Northern Ireland government (Fraser & Morgan, 1999; Morgan & Fraser, 1999), and the cooperative relationship between parents and teachers necessary when setting up integrated schools (Morgan et al., 1992). No academic literature written solely from the perspective of the Northern Ireland Department of Education about their political and financial decisions regarding Integrated Education in Northern Ireland was found.

Fraser & Morgan's (1999) discussion regarding the consequences of the growth of the integrated sector highlights an interesting Catch-22 these schools face regarding the issue of balancing the student population. At the beginning of the movement, attendance was low, making the task of balanced enrollments difficult. However, increased enrollments have not eliminated this obstacle. Rising interest in integrated schools has perpetuated the challenge as students are now placed on waiting lists and their selection is heavily based on meeting the demands of this essential quota. With demand outweighing supply and the strict financial regulations placed on new integrated schools by DENI that effectively limit these spaces, families that want a desegregated education are likely unable to have one.

**Characteristics of Integrated Schools.** While the three references in this section could have been placed in different categories, they were kept together, *as together* they painted a picture of how an integrated school differs from a Protestant Controlled or Catholic Maintained school in Northern Ireland. Although “a collective definition of integrated education” doesn’t exist per se (Donnelly & Hughes, 2006, p. 513), Dunn’s (1989) discussion of the commonalities of all integrated schools, including membership, ethos, and management, is a good starting point. Gallagher’s (2003) quantitative analysis of student data provided by DENI paints a picture of the types of students found at integrated schools and provides evidence to refute a common and damaging myth that families attending integrated schools are wealthy. This socioeconomic argument is crucial to illustrating the inclusive character of integrated schools, which is also demonstrated by their lack of academic selection of applicants.

**The Social Implications of Pedagogy and Curriculum.** By far, this is the largest section of academic literature as it demonstrates the cultural (reproduction) role that education plays within a society. Similar to the previous section on principles of effective contact, it also provides an argument for Integrated Education in Northern Ireland. Levinson (1996) states, “one of the most important tasks in studying cultures is to figure out how cultural groups shape the mind to perpetuate their existence” (p. 83). Educators often refer to this practice as “hidden curriculum,” which differs from one context (i.e. Catholic Maintained) to the next (i.e. Protestant Controlled). Given the complexity of this topic, this theme is subdivided into the following: benefits of Integrated Education, the peace-building role of Integrated Education, identity formation and group identification, and the role of education in perpetuating conflict.

**Benefits of Integrated Education.** This theme contains the most quantitative research, conducted mostly through survey analysis, which has allowed researchers to make universal

correlations between Peace Education models such as Integrated Education and increases in out-group friendships and forgiveness in an ethnic conflict (Al Ramiah et al., 2011; Hayes & McAllister, 2009; Hewstone et al, 2006; McClenahan et al., 1996; Stringer et al., 2009).

Although Northern Ireland has a religious segregated university system, Al Ramiah et al. (2011) demonstrate that levels of prejudice among university students can be moderated by previous out-group friendships no matter whether the student is Protestant or Catholic. While their results don't specify which cross-community contact programs are most responsible, Hayes & McAllister (2009) demonstrate that adults with previous integrated school experience are more likely to maintain out-group friendships and hold a "more optimistic view of future community relations" (p. 437). In addition to the benefits of inter-group friendships formed at integrated schools, McClenahan et al. (2003) provide powerful evidence for the emotional benefits of attendance as their data suggests that integrated school students generally perceive themselves more positively than those attending segregated schools.

***The Peace-building role of Integrated Education.*** Multiple authors discuss the peace-building role of education and cite Integrated Education as an example of a mode of transformational conflict resolution in Northern Ireland (Byrne, 2001; Duffy, 2000; Dunn, 1986; Dunn & Morgan, 1999; Johnson, 2007; Wylie, 2004). However, the historical and current intertwined political and religious context of Northern Ireland prevents its citizens from taking full advantage of the positive peace-building impact that integrated schools have to offer. Northern Ireland's shared government, which remains divided in regards to support for integrated schools, prevents the fulfillment of one of Byrne's (2001) tenets of transformational conflict resolution: the involvement of all key stakeholders. This point is supported by Johnson (2007) who states, "systemic approaches to peace education must include concerted engagement

at multiple levels of government, education ministry, political party systems, labor/teacher unions, commercial enterprise, school and university, and family and community” (p. 22).

Luckily, the creation of integrated schools has presented the opportunity to parents to “begin to function on their own behalf [as opposed to the churches which influence the political parties in Northern Ireland] when educational policy issues are being discussed” (Dunn & Morgan, 1991, p. 186). The ripple effects of this slow, but powerful shift in dynamics will hopefully make its way up the political ladder and result in the elimination of Northern Ireland’s publically funded segregated educational system.

***Identity formation and group identification.*** The academic literature regarding group identification, an essential piece of this conflict, is closely associated with the complexities of teaching history in Northern Ireland’s schools (Barton & McCully, 2005; Barton & McCully, 2007; Barton et al., 2003). The contested narratives of each group compete with each other in and out of the classroom, which perpetuates the conflict. History curriculum and pedagogy in schools located in conflict societies is especially tricky as textbook choice and teachers employed can bias students towards one interpretation of events over another. Bekerman et al., (2009) support the argument presented in the next section regarding the need for integrated teacher training when they state, “...it is not easy [for teachers] to overcome their own position as historical actors” (p. 227). Quantitative research has demonstrated which groups of students are most negatively affected by the delivery of Northern Ireland’s national history curriculum (boys, Protestants, and lower socioeconomic class) and the process by which these specific students pick and choose historical events to support their identity formations (Barton & McCully, 2005).

Barton & McCully (2007) provide practical proactive suggestions for those teaching history in a conflict society. Contrary to what some might believe would be the best way to approach this controversial curriculum was the suggestion for the teacher not to hide his or her own position and uncertainties. This advice suggests that remaining objective or neutral may not provide the best learning opportunities for all parties in these situations, including the teacher. This reference supports critical pedagogy theory, the theoretical framework of this research, and the idea previously discussed in the literature review that unless students are actively involved in constructivism, or constructing knowledge through their interpretation of their interactions in the world, Integrated Education has the danger of becoming associated with transmission and loses its original intent (Moffat, 2007)

*The role of education in perpetuating the conflict.* Education systems are fraught with hidden curricula containing powerful messages. These lessons have changed throughout the course of history, no matter the geographic location, but are always dependent on the goals of the existing hegemony. Davies (2005) states, “the three way interface between education, poverty, and conflict is complex and casts doubts on education’s benign role” (p. 358). In Northern Ireland many wonder, “...what message does segregated schooling provide about the need to be educated apart from others of different faiths, or from others taking a secular position” (Davies, 2005, p. 361)? Why are these segregated school systems so durable (Dunn & Morgan, 1991)? Why is more privilege given to difference (Gallagher, 2005) than to education’s relationship with economic and employment issues (Dunn & Morgan, 1991)?

### **Stakeholder Perspectives**

Semi-structured interviews were the most common methodology used to capture the experiences of integrated school principals, teachers, pupils, their parents, and NICIE, IEF, and

DENI representatives. The multiple challenges of managing integrated schools are discussed, mainly from the perspective of principals, including unchartered “curriculum development and implementation, handling increased financial management responsibilities and establishing a close working relationship with parents” (Morgan et al., 1992, para. 14) as well as the difficulties of balancing time for proactive integration with traditional academic expectations and expanding performance pressures (McGlynn, 2007). However, even in these challenging circumstances, principals overall “are united in their conviction that the shared daily experience of learning in an integrated school breaks down barriers, develops friendships... broadens the mind of the children in their care...[and impacts] positively on the wider family circle” (McGlynn & Bekerman, 2007, p. 694). In a comparative study between Northern Ireland and Israeli integrated school principals, the authors’ data continues to support the need for a collective definition of Integrated Education in Northern Ireland, as discussed in the previous sections (McGlynn & Bekerman, 2007). McGlynn (2008b) provides depth to this argument by classifying the leadership approaches to integration in a sample of school principals.

The academic literature from the perspective of Integrated Education stakeholders repeatedly calls for integrated teacher training (Bekerman et al., 2009; Carter, 2007; Donnelly, 2004a; Donnelly, 2004b; Donnelly, 2008; Kilpatrick & Leitch, 2004; McGlynn, 2007; Morgan et al., 1994; Moffat, 2007) as “teachers have been asked to exercise new skills for which they had no formal training” (Morgan et al., 1994, p. 159). In addition to providing teachers opportunities to personally address their own stereotypes and assumptions (Donnelly, 2004a), the current lack of formalized training (through university teacher education programs) also makes committing to a united proactive integrated ethos more challenging if integrated teachers are “neutralizers” or “avoiders” (Donnelly, 2004b; Donnelly, 2008). While many teachers take posts at integrated

schools “mainly because it [is] a job” (Donnelly, 2004b, p. 14), Morgan et al. (1994) point out the likelihood of career suicide that many integrated teachers are making by committing to this educational sector as it is “the general belief that any teacher who had chosen to work in an integrated school would not be employable in any other type of school in Northern Ireland” (p. 160). This reality demonstrates that a career move is unlikely to be as powerful as the ideological, religious, and educational commitments motivating teachers to take these posts.

Academic literature from the parent perspective focuses on the overall public support for Integrated Education. Survey data overwhelmingly suggests that family interest in Integrated Education is *not* the prohibiting factor in this sector’s growth as they see this system of integrating pupils and teachers from opposite communities in one setting as a crucial factor for long term peace in Northern Ireland (Cairns et al., 1993). Mcaleavy et al., (2009) suggest “further examination of the parental decision-making underpinning the selection of integrated education...in order to inform policy-makers of how best to support parental preference in relation to their development” (p. 553).

### **3) What research gaps exist in the available literature?**

The final thematic arrangement of academic literature was then organized based on research design (classified as qualitative, quantitative, mixed, or other) as seen in Table 2. A large amount of academic literature did not produce primary data, a concern addressed in a future section of this paper.



Table 2

*Themes Analyzed by Experimental Design*

Theme	Methodology			
	Quantitative	Qualitative	Mixed	<sup>a</sup> Other
A Theoretical Framework: Principles of Effective Contact	0	5	1	4
The History of the Northern Ireland Integrated Education Movement	0	1	0	6
Characteristics of Integrated Schools	1	1	0	1
The Social Implications of Pedagogy and Curriculum	6	2	2	12
Stakeholder Perspectives	0	10	0	3
Total (n= 55)	7	19	3	26

<sup>a</sup> Examples of literature in this category include literature reviews, critical analyses, essays, etc. and did not involve the collection of primary data.

As the data demonstrate, almost half of the academic literature meeting the research criteria did not involve the collection of primary data. While many of the topics, described in the previous section, lend themselves to a narrative discussion of Northern Ireland history or theoretical background in support of Integrated Education, primary data is an essential piece of advocacy for the continued financial support of Integrated Education and its official recognition as a Peace Education model by the Northern Ireland government. Most of the references using a

quantitative design collected data using questionnaires and focused on intergroup friendship and identity (Al Ramiah, Hewstone, Voci, Cairns, & Hughes, 2011; Barton, McCully, & Conway, 2003; Hayes & McAllister, 2009; Hewstone, Cairns, Voci, Hamberger, & Niens, 2006; McClenahan, Cairns, Dunn, & Morgan, 1996; Stringer, Irwing, Giles, McClenahan, Wilson, & Hutner, 2009).

Results of these quantitative studies established causality between variables such as socio-economic status and out-group friendships (i.e. friendships with the “Other”) (Hewstone et al., 2006), reduced prejudice and quantity of out-group friendships (Al Ramiah et al., 2011), and the long-term impact of prior out-group friendships (such as those established in integrated schools) on current levels of prejudice (Al Ramiah et al., 2011; Hayes & McAllister, 2009). However, it is wise to note that McClenahan et al. (1996) warn about the dangers of assuming that out-group friendships can only occur through contact within integrated schools. This quantitative research has contributed universality to these statistical relationships, which demonstrate overwhelming support for increased contact between groups involved in ethnic conflict and are applicable to other countries besides Northern Ireland, such as Croatia, Israel, Macedonia, Serbia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, and Cyprus. Often associated with objectivity and persuasiveness (Creswell, 2009), quantitative research is essential in advocating for Integrated Education, especially in a contentious environment.

Qualitative research is also extremely important for advocacy. Most of the qualitative research analyzed depended on semi-structured interviews that focused on the various perspectives of stakeholders associated with Integrated Education, such as principals, parents, teachers, pupils, and NICIE, IEF, and DENI representatives. The flexibility inherent in this methodology allowed for in-depth descriptions of the experiences of those involved with

Integrated Education in Northern Ireland and helped to paint a picture of the cultural, political and social contexts in which these integrated schools are found.

However, while elements of ethnography exist in studies that incorporated classroom and staffroom observations, it was minimal and its purpose was not to document the day-to-day elements of life at an integrated school, another major gap in the academic literature. No literature meeting the search criteria was found that described the daily assemblies common at integrated schools in Northern Ireland, how controversial holidays are dealt with, or how or if balanced enrollments were maintained through individual class schedules. The perspective of integrated pupils and parents was also extremely limited. Only one reference meeting the search criteria specifically deals with pupils' educational experiences within integrated schools (Kilpatrick & Leitch, 2004). Also, no academic literature was found that documents the daily experiences of Protestant and Catholic clergy working together at integrated schools, non-Christian students, or recent transfers from segregated schools.

Mixed methods studies are minimal and would be useful in illustrating the academic benefits of inclusion, a theme also missing from the academic literature meeting the search criteria. Fraser & Morgan (1999) illustrate the importance of extensive documentation of academic benefits to garner support for Integrated Education when they state, “[the] continued satisfaction with the performance of each school will continue to determine its viability for the foreseeable future” (para. 29). Comparative data controlled for socioeconomic status examining academic performance, drop-out rates, and college enrollments between educational sectors would effectively demonstrate the impact of Integrated Education and highlight potential signs of resegregation. Qualitative interviews with graduates of integrated schools would then be able to support or refute the findings of this data.

Finally, the impact of NICIE is missing from the academic literature. Although its role and organizational history is briefly mentioned in many references, and interviews with representatives are often quoted, the impact of its training programs has not been analyzed, specifically its anti-bias teacher training, offered since 2008. This accredited program is currently filling the gap left wide open by Northern Ireland university teacher training programs mostly conducted at segregated universities. Its intense overnight training sessions attempt to address the concerns of teachers who feel ill-prepared to teach at integrated schools and become instruments of proactive integration, as discussed in previous sections.

**Results:**

This study has identified major gaps in the academic literature on the topic of Integrated Education in Northern Ireland. In addition to a disproportionate amount of literature found that does not contribute primary data to the field, gaps exist in describing the day-to-day life of an integrated school and the experiences of its entire student population and staff. Given the inclusive ethos of the Integrated Education movement, not enough quantitative data was found meeting the search criteria to illustrate the academic benefits of attending these schools; however, much data exists to describe the emotional and social benefits. Finally, the peace-building impact of NICIE, including the documentation of its attempts to fill the gaps created by segregated teacher training programs, is missing from the academic literature. A series of recommendations for new research projects will be proposed to broaden the field of research on this topic.

**Summary:**

A mixed-method scoping study was conducted to categorize and quantify available academic literature on the topic of Integrated Education for an international NGO, the Northern

Ireland Council for Integrated Education (NICIE). Because the search criteria were designed to reduce bias in reporting given the contentious topic, the quantity of articles analyzed was limited. However, the results of the chosen sample demonstrate areas for commendation and areas for improvement in the range of academic literature. Identification of these areas will provide data to drive the decision making of policymakers, donors, researchers, stakeholders, and NICIE board members and staff in a way that supports their ability to advocate for Integrated Education.

## **Chapter 5 – Conclusion, Implications, and Recommendations**

### **Conclusion**

This project involved a thorough investigation of academic literature available in peer-reviewed journals or books on the topic of Integrated Education in Northern Ireland. In addition to contributing academic content for NICIE's website re-launch, its thematic arrangement and quantification will provide feedback to policymakers, donors, researchers, stakeholders, and NICIE board members and staff in a way that supports their ability to advocate for Integrated Education. Based on the findings of this research, a series of recommendations was developed for new research projects with the goal of reducing redundancy and filling academic gaps in the literature. Exploring new avenues for research on Integrated Education, especially those producing quantitative data, will continue to build a universality surrounding the benefits of Integrated Education and become applicable to a larger global audience.

Only one previous informal scoping study was found on the topic of Northern Ireland's segregated educational system (Abbott, Dunn, & Morgan, 1999). Located on the University of Ulster's website and last updated in 2006, this resource is not an analysis of literature but merely a bibliography; it also does not focus solely on Integrated Education. The results of this co-op project present valuable quantitative and qualitative data that not only incorporates more recent citations, but supplies a thorough picture to the reader about what current and historical research exists on the topic of Integrated Education, as there is currently a lack of knowledge regarding its scope. It also provides the impetus for a future systematic review, which would analyze the quality of academic literature available.

## Implications

After data extraction, this study found multiple references to support Critical Theory as the preferred pedagogy of proactive integration. The literature continually identified the need for training to help teachers confront their own biases and become confident practitioners within this peace-building model versus simple transmitters of an integrated ethos. Repeated identification of this need within peer-reviewed academic literature sends a strong, clear message to Integrated Education supporters that continued funding for NICIE’s anti-bias teacher training is crucial to strengthening the Integrated Education movement.

Also identified multiple times is the need for a collective definition of Integrated Education, as opposed to passive coexistence of multiple definitions. In addition to helping strengthen the Integrated Education movement through improved communication, achieving consensus on this definition would have a global impact. For example, the term “integration” within the United States has a completely different context. In 1954, the *Brown versus Board of Education* decision officially declared to the nation that segregation was unconstitutional and “separate but equal” was no longer a legally acceptable mantra (Lyons & Chesley, 2004); thus schools became “integrated.” However, the meaning of Integrated Education in Northern Ireland as compared to the United States is very different. While U.S. schools are legally required to incorporate students of color into their enrollments, they are not required to include teachers of color on their staff or maintain enrollment ratios between student ethnic groups. Today, evidence supports the argument that American schools are experiencing resegregation, leading to massive achievement gaps between racial and ethnic groups. This researcher proposes that passive integration techniques have contributed to this phenomenon and the U.S. would benefit from applying many of the proactive integration practices used in Northern Ireland, especially the use

of critical pedagogy to directly address the individual experiences of students, to reverse this trend.

Finally, NICIE has recently collaborated with international donors, practitioners, and academics from other countries to promote an Integrated Education ethos on the global stage. As the host of the inaugural conference of the Global Network for Practice and Research on Integrated Peace Education in March 2012, this researcher's observations and conversations with practitioners demonstrate that NICIE is viewed as an international role model for promoting the development and sustainability of integrated schools. In addition to widening the scope of its anti-bias training to include other regions of the world besides Northern Ireland, it will be able to use the results of this co-op to build a comprehensive academic resource for those wanting to learn more about proactive integration. Future scoping studies on these locations would not only add depth to this academic resource, but also contribute to a common Integrated Education definition and practice.

### **Recommendations:**

In an effort to reduce gaps and introduce new themes into the literature, the following four recommendations for future research projects are offered to the Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education based on research findings, the literature review, and the theoretical framework of Critical Theory:

- 1) Most of the academic literature is focused on the ethos of Integrated Education and less on the actual practice. To better paint a picture of the day-to-day practices of Integrated schools, especially for an international audience, more effort must be placed on illustrating the realities of attending or working at an Integrated school. Long-term ethnographic studies would give readers a better sense of how integrated schools balance ethnic ratios in individual classes,



what teachers do to actively encourage all students to participate equally during classroom lessons, the role of on-campus clergy and descriptions of how they work together to implement an integrated ethos, what happens during assembly times, whether student discipline policies and actions are consistent with school mission statements, and how parents are involved in the day-to-day life of the schools. While immersed in the culture, researchers will also have the opportunity to view controversies related to symbols of the conflict as they arise within the school setting instead of leaving them to the memories of participants, as well as observe the school climate when controversial holidays and memorial days arise. Not only would additional research in this area benefit an international audience not able to observe these schools in action, it would contribute to a collective definition and allow others to judge whether a school is in fact implementing a pro-active version of integration.

2) Given that only one article was found dealing strictly with the specific experiences and perspectives of integrated pupils, more must be done in this area! While many studies focus on intergroup friendships, more research is needed to document pupils' day-to-day experiences within an integrated school. The experiences of transfer students (those previously attending a segregated school or living within another country) and recent graduates would also add depth to these studies. However, researchers must also remember that student populations are not just made up of Protestants and Catholics. All of the academic literature found deals exclusively with issues affecting only these two groups. In order to fully provide evidence for and fully actualize the inclusive ethos of Integrated Education, more efforts to incorporate the views of non-Christian students, as well as recognize that learners are diverse for more reasons than their ethnicity (i.e. learning style; physical, emotional, and learning disabilities) are needed in the academic literature.

3) As previously stated, parental satisfaction with the academic performance of integrated schools determines their viability. While this data can be found on the NICIE website, more quantitative studies must be published in peer-reviewed journals to document the academic performance of Northern Ireland's integrated schools. After controlling for socioeconomic status, comparative studies between integrated and segregated schools examining indicators such as drop-out rates and college enrollments could further illustrate the benefits of inclusion on academic performance, similar to McClenahan et al. (2003), who demonstrated the educational differences in self-perceptions of integrated vs. segregated students.

4) Finally, the academic literature clearly presents data demonstrating that Integrated Education stakeholders want integrated teacher training. Current literature, mostly based on the opinions of student teachers not yet practicing, suggests that Northern Ireland universities lack student teacher preparation programs that build the skills necessary for candidates to create inclusive classrooms and fully embrace the ethos of integration. Since 2008, NICIE has offered an intensive Anti-Bias in Education training for integrated teachers to fill in these gaps. However, no academic research was found in peer-reviewed journals that documented the experiences of teachers who completed this training. A mixed methods experimental design including pre- and post- surveys of teachers, principals and students, and training observations and analyses of teacher discussions and products (i.e. journals, lesson plans) would be beneficial for gaining financial and political support. In addition to illustrating the continued need for funding of this program, pre- and post- quantitative and qualitative data would be able to document how teachers are actively challenged to address their own biases as well as the benefits of this training on the greater Integrated Education movement.

## **Summary**

This project was the first known scoping study on the topic of Integrated Education in Northern Ireland. The results of the study support previous literature on the need for integrated teacher training, the dangers of relying solely on Contact theory as a peace-building model, and the different styles that exist for “integrating” schools. This work not only has produced an extensive bibliography to be incorporated on the NICIE website, it has also provided new data to policymakers, donors, researchers, stakeholders, and NICIE board members and staff in a way

that supports their ability to advocate for Integrated Education. The results of this study have demonstrated the extent to which Northern Ireland's integrated schools are represented in the academic literature, the themes that a sample of articles are focused on, and multiple academic gaps to be filled in future academic projects. Given the recent formation of a global network of integrated educators, future academic projects that involve scoping the academic literature of these countries would further contribute to a cohesive international movement for Integrated Education in all countries.

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## Appendix A

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## Appendix B

**I. A Theoretical Framework: Principles of Effective Contact**

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