

GLOBAL CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION FOR THE 21ST CENTURY

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Abstract

Many children and youth are growing up in a complex world as we approach the third decade of the 21st century. Science and technology have sped up the rate of industrialization, urbanization and globalization, with expanding networks and channels of communication and transportation connecting people across borders and cultures. The power of education has no boundary. It is not enough that we only learn to read, write and count. Through education, we gain knowledge and skills to enhance our lives and environment. At the same time, we cannot overlook the role of education to inculcate non-cognitive learning such as values, ethics, social responsibility, civic engagement and citizenship. Global Citizenship Education addresses the intersection of globalization, education and programmatic efforts to prepare young people to live in a more interdependent, complex and fragile world.

Keyword: global citizenship

Citizenship

Citizenship can be thought of as 'a set of social practices which define the nature of social membership' (Turner, 199). In other words, it is a set of agreed conventions that are used to indicate who is allowed to become a member of the socio-political community. These social practices are defined not just in laws and through rights, but also through the development of civic norms, political identities, and expected behavioural practices. Citizenship thus has multiple dimensions, and it can encompass everything from a legal status to a set of behaviours, entitlements and expectation. It means "a productive, responsible, caring and contributing member of society."

Citizenship education

Citizenship education can be defined as educating children, from early childhood, to become clear-thinking and enlightened citizens who participate in decisions concerning society. 'Society' is here understood in the special sense of a nation with a circumscribed territory which is recognized as a state. The knowledge of the nation's institutions, and also an awareness that the rule of law applies to social and human relationships, obviously form part of any citizenship education course.

When citizenship education has the purpose of 'educating future citizens' it must necessarily address children, young people and adults, who are living beings, having the status of human beings endowed with conscience and reason. It cannot, therefore, exclude consideration of individuals as subjects, each with individual characteristics. Moreover, human rights include civil and political rights, the latter obviously relating to the rights and obligations of citizens. Thus a comprehensive human rights education takes account of citizenship, and considers that good citizenship is connected with human rights as a whole. All forms of citizenship education inculcate respect for others and recognition of the equality of all human beings; and at combating all forms of discrimination such as racist, gender-based, religious, etc. by fostering a spirit of tolerance and peace among human beings.

Citizenship education helps to equip young people to deal with situations of conflict and controversy knowledgeably and tolerantly. It helps to equip them to understand the consequences of their actions, and those of the adults around them. It helps to equip them to understand the consequences of their actions, and those of the adults around them.

Global Citizenship Education

Education can transform the way we think and act to build more just, peaceful, tolerant and inclusive societies. Against the backdrop of an increasingly globalized and interconnected world, and amidst calls for education to promote peace, well-being, prosperity and sustainability, there is growing interest in Global Citizenship Education (GCED), especially after the launch of the Global Education First Initiative (GEFI) in 2012 (United Nations). Highlighting the role of education in developing values, soft skills and attitudes for social transformation, GCED strives to foster the following attributes in learners (UNESCO, 2014): an attitude supported by an understanding of multiple levels of identity, and the potential for a

- ‘Collective identity’ which transcends individual cultural, religious, ethnic or other differences; a deep knowledge of global issues and universal values such as justice, equality, dignity and
- Cognitive skills to think critically, systemically and creatively, including adopting a multi-perspective approach that recognizes the different dimensions, perspectives and angles of issues;
- Non-cognitive skills including social skills such as empathy and conflict resolution,
- Communication skills and aptitudes for networking and interacting with people of different backgrounds, origins, cultures and perspectives; and behavioural capacities to act collaboratively and responsibly to find global solutions for global challenges, and to strive for the collective good.

The important role of GCED was reaffirmed in the vision of education for 2015-2030, or Education 2030, declared at the World Education Forum 2015 co-organized by UNESCO, UNICEF, World Bank, UNDP, UN Women and the UNHCR in Incheon, Republic of Korea. The Incheon Declaration on Education 2030, towards inclusive and equitable quality education and lifelong learning, emphasized that while foundational literacy, numeracy and technological skills are essential, they are not sufficient. Education should not be reduced to the production of skilled workers. Rather, quality education must also develop the skills, values and attitudes that enable citizens to lead healthy and fulfilled lives, make informed decisions, and respond to local and global challenges through education for sustainable development and global citizenship education, as well as human rights education and training in order to achieve the post-2015 sustainable development agenda (UNESCO, 2015c). The ABCs of Global Citizenship Education (UNESCO) noted that there is no globally agreed definition of global citizenship. Global citizenship has no legal status. Rather, it refers to a sense of belonging to the global community and a common sense of humanity.

By 2030, ensure that all learners acquire the knowledge and skills needed to promote

sustainable development, including, among others, through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and nonviolence, global citizenship and appreciation of cultural diversity and of culture’s contribution to sustainable development.

Global dimensions in citizenship education

The large worldwide population flows that are a characteristic feature of the modern world mean that schools cater for children from different cultural backgrounds. This cultural heterogeneity should be regarded as an opportunity for citizenship education. In this situation, children are all required to mingle with and thus learn about and understand cultures other than their own.

Far from blurring the cultural diversity of pupils, citizenship education can bring out the value of differences while respecting and affirming the universality of human rights principles. Respect for others - a universal principle - means, in the daily life of the school, a dialogue with others, and taking an interest in other family lifestyles, social habits and cultural practices. This is a new form of action to combat racism. Racism is frequently due to the ignorance in which children are reared in respect of cultures other than that which is the majority culture of their country. Through the knowledge of these other cultures and the very existence of multicultural life in the classroom, children are fortified against despising the 'Other' and against hostile indifference, both of which are sources of racist behaviour.

Citizenship Education Worldwide, national educational systems have sought to promote the goal of developing responsible citizens who will contribute to the well-being of their nations. Citizenship Education has three main objectives: educating people in citizenship and human rights through an understanding of the principles and institutions learning to exercise one's judgement and critical faculty; and acquiring a sense of individual and community responsibilities. It emphasizes the importance of educating children, from early childhood, to become clear-thinking and enlightened citizens who participate in decisions concerning society (UNESCO, 2010).

The Role of Teachers in Global Citizenship Education

Many children and youth are growing up in a complex world as we approach the third decade of the 21st century. Science and technology have sped up the rate of industrialization, urbanization and globalization, with expanding networks and channels of communication and transportation connecting people across borders and cultures. The GEFI has identified the lack of teacher's capacity as one of the barriers to GCED. As key actors in ensuring quality education, teachers face a lot of pressure. They are required to deepen their knowledge base and pedagogic skills in response to new demands and changing curriculum. Great teaching needs practice and teachers must be nurtured through high-quality training and continuous learning.

Conclusion

The problem posed by citizenship education is how to blend together the particular and the universal, the national and the international, the individual and society. The difficulty can be solved by integrating human rights education in this new subject, civics education. This approach opens up new paths for education for peace, human rights and democracy. Thus, global citizenship education addresses both the individual and the citizen and provides an avenue for each individual citizen to acquire an understanding of the issues of peace in the world, and the challenges of the globalisation of economic, environmental and cultural problems. Since sustainable development of human beings and the world they live in is linked to the quality of education, the time has come to regard citizenship education as a vital part of any education system and any teaching programme.

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