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Chapter 1

Global Citizenship Education: Recognizing Diversity in a Global World



Abdeljalil Akkari and Kathrine Maleq

In today's globalized and interconnected world, inequality, human rights violations and poverty still jeopardise peace and environmental sustainability. In response to these challenges, global citizenship education (GCE) has been identified as a means to prepare youth for an alternative, inclusive and sustainable world. Indeed, efforts to move along a sustainable development path may only be achieved by promoting global social justice. Therefore, schools have a fundamental role to play in empowering learners to become responsible and active global citizens.

GCE has suddenly become a strong policy focus in international agendas, in particular in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development adopted at the United Nations Sustainable Development Summit in September 2015. Its promising aim to empower learners to act responsively towards global issues draws attention to the pressing need to foster global citizens; thereby promoting more peaceful, inclusive and sustainable societies. Closely linked to human rights, it conveys values of respect, diversity, tolerance and solidarity (UNESCO 2015).

However, this publication attests that GCE is a contested concept and subject to multiple interpretations. Despite the universal reach of its human values, the practice of citizenship is closely related to national context. GCE therefore requires an adaptation to regional, national and global dimensions of citizenship, making its operationalization in national educational policies challenging.

This book aims to contribute to the international debate, question the relevancy of GCE's policy objectives and their possible articulation with local and national perspectives, ideologies, conceptions and issues related to citizenship education.

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To this end, we aim to open new perspectives, counterbalance the mainstreaming and normalisation of the GCE discourse in global agendas and give a voice to stakeholders from diverse regions that are too often overlooked in the GCE debate.

Global Citizenship Education: A Reshaped Concept in International Agendas

We must foster global citizenship. Education is about more than literacy and numeracy. It is also about citizenry. Education must fully assume its essential role in helping people to forge more just, peaceful and tolerant societies (Ki-moon 2012).

While cosmopolitanism and cross-national border thinking is not new in the history of humanity, we consider that contemporary discourse on GCE is mainly linked to international organisations' agendas. Although GCE is a relatively new concept in UNESCO's policies, its roots go back to the founding texts of the organisation. As we can see in its Constitution, the primary goals of UNESCO have many similarities to those of GCE: peace, human rights and equality.

Extract from the UNESCO Constitution:

The purpose of the Organisation is to contribute to peace and security by promoting collaboration among the nations through education, science and culture in order to further universal respect for justice, for the rule of law and for the human rights and fundamental freedoms which are affirmed for the peoples of the world, without distinction of race, sex, language or religion (UNESCO 2018a, p. 6).

The 1974 "Recommendation concerning Education for International Understanding, Co-operation and Peace and Education relating to Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms" aimed to develop a sense of social responsibility and solidarity towards less privileged groups, paving the way for the GCE framework.

A few years later, in 1989, the concept of a "culture of peace" was formulated at the International Congress on Peace in the Minds of Men, laying the foundations for GCE. Henceforth, education has been envisioned with a global perspective: "an educational concept is developed that no longer merely advocates civic education, education for democracy, human rights education, peace education and intercultural understanding, but does so with a global perspective, i.e. with an awareness of global interconnectedness" (Wintersteiner et al. 2015, p. 6).

The Global Education First Initiative (GEFI) launched in 2012 by the United Nations Secretary-General identified fostering global citizenship as one of the three priorities. This marked a paradigm shift: framing education in a global perspective and aiming to enable learners to understand global issues and empower them to take action. "This investigation of the relationship between micro- and macro-level issues and developments is a critical element in equipping learners to fulfil their potential in a fast-changing and interdependent world" (UNESCO 2014a, p. 15). Following this initiative, GCE became a key priority of UNESCO policy and is a central objective in UNESCO's Medium-Term Strategy for 2014–2021 (UNESCO

2014b), highlighting the need to foster global citizenship in an increasingly interconnected world.

In 2015, the Incheon Declaration and the global Education 2030 Agenda marked a milestone in the advancement of GCE advocacy as the Member States of the United Nations committed to promote and implement GCE within the SDG¹ (Sustainable Development Goal) 4.7 target.

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 non-violence, global citizenship and appreciation of cultural diversity and of culture's contribution to sustainable development (United Nations 2015, p. 19).

We note that the SDG 4.7 target provides a list of ambitious objectives aiming to promote sustainable development. However, the lack of structure and prioritization of these numerous objectives inhibits educators' ability to understand and pursue the target. Furthermore, the wording of this target implies a universal validity without reflecting the complex reality. Concepts such as citizenship and human rights are interpreted differently according to the political, economic and cultural background. Moreover, depending on geopolitical, conflict and post-conflict contexts, concepts such as "promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence" are unlikely to be addressed in the same way.

Despite UNESCO's recent attempts to make the concept both universally and locally rooted (UNESCO 2018b), the voices of all stakeholders around the world are not taken into account equally in the GCE debate. As pointed out in several international forums and seminars on GCE: the difficulty resides in the lack of a shared international understanding of the concept.

As of now, member states must provide further conceptual input, acknowledging the interdependence of global/national citizenship and global realities. The linkage between them must open global citizenship agendas to diversity and indigeneity rather than mainstreaming and narrowing the scope.

We believe that the United Nations' recent focus on the need to foster global citizenship is not a random choice but rather the reflection of the hard realization that the mission entrusted to the League of Nations founded in Geneva in 1920 to prevent wars, unite countries and establish a global governance of international relations has not succeeded. Above all, increasing developmental and environmental challenges, which by definition are global, call for each and every one of us to act as responsible global citizens.

Furthermore, by putting GCE in the spotlight, the Education 2030 agenda also appears to have acted in response to the growing influence of PISA's (Programme for International Student Assessment) focus on learning outcomes in reading, mathematics and science literacy. In turn, GCE has not escaped the prevailing

¹The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development has set 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) with 169 targets. The SDG 4 aims to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote life-long learning opportunities (United Nations 2015).

domination of international educational assessments. Indeed, most educational systems are currently concerned with assessing the impact of reforms and educational innovations.

However, assessing the progress achieved in meeting the SDG 4.7 target is not an easy task and the vagueness regarding its ambitious objectives has resulted in a lack of precision in the formulation of indicators.

UNESCO's Global Education Monitoring Report exemplifies this lack of precision in their global indicator:

The extent to which (i) global citizenship education and (ii) education for sustainable development, including gender equality and human rights, are mainstreamed at all levels in (a) national education policies, (b) curricula, (c) teacher education and (d) student assessment (UNESCO 2016, p. 79)

And four thematic indicators:

- Percentage of students by age group (or education level) showing adequate understanding of issues relating to global citizenship and sustainability.
- Percentage of 15-year-old students showing proficiency in knowledge of environmental science and geoscience.
- Percentage of schools that provide life skills-based HIV and sexuality education.
- Extent to which the framework of the World Programme on Human Rights Education is implemented nationally. (UNESCO 2016, p. 79)

We can identify three key issues in these assessment tools: (1) the indicators do not cover all the goals outlined in the SDG 4.7 target; (2) the lack of precision in the indicators limits the possibility of international comparisons (3) the quality and relevance cannot be assessed without a shared definition among stakeholders and learners.

For its part, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) seems to have responded to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development goals by broadening the framework of the 2018 Program for International Student Assessment (PISA), evaluating young people's understanding of global issues, and their attitudes toward cultural diversity and tolerance. In doing so, they postulate the existence of a universal and measurable global competence they define as "the capacity to examine local, global and intercultural issues, to understand and appreciate the perspectives and world views of others, to engage in open, appropriate and effective interactions with people from different cultures, and to act for collective well-being and sustainable development" (OECD 2018). This could be seen as a measure of the impact of GCE programs, however, the subjective nature of the standardized assessment tests and questionnaires casts serious doubt on the overall validity.

Although some may welcome this initiative, it is important to state that no single international large-scale assessment can fully grasp the complexity of students' global competence as a learning goal, especially regarding the socio-emotional, attitudinal and value dimensions.

National or Multicultural Identities

Traditional conceptions of citizenship have evolved under the influence of globalization, international treaties and conventions, and frameworks for international human rights protection. In addition, the expansion of ICT (information and communications technology) has facilitated the creation of international networks and communities with shared interests and concerns (Sassen 2002). This has reinforced a feeling of belonging to a global community, creating a sense of world citizenship identity and a civic engagement in global issues. Increasingly diverse societies have also shaped this evolution. The traditional national model of citizenship no longer reflects today's changing realities (Castles and Davidson 2000).

These deep societal changes are reshaping the very model that underpins traditional civic identity, and as a result are increasing focus on alternative, cosmopolitan and multicultural identity models. The concept of global citizenship is therefore seeing an unprecedented rise in popularity amongst international organisations and scholars (Gaudelli 2016).

Notwithstanding the foregoing, the values that embody global citizenship and related terms such as global competence, global-mindedness, global consciousness, and world citizenship are subject to divergent viewpoints and political stances. In fact, we can identify two opposing global trends: on the one hand post-national forms of identity are emerging in an increasingly interconnected, interdependent and culturally diverse world and on the other hand populism, nationalism, identitarian closure, ethnic conflicts and religious extremism are rising. Moreover, in many countries experiencing immigration, we can observe growing scepticism and sometimes even outright hostility towards multiculturalism.

In a globalised world, and in nation-states characterized by diversity, there have been calls for a renewed focus on forms of civic education which promote national belonging and loyalty; such calls often target, either explicitly or implicitly, students from minority or migration backgrounds. An apparent binary is established, between those who see the primary purpose of citizenship education as nation-building, and those who want to promote global solidarity. (Osler 2011, p. 2).

Nevertheless, one may argue that citizenship education is still the prerogative of national authorities, and this despite the reinforcement of the multiple processes of globalization. All (national) citizenship education efforts aim to consolidate national cohesion and contribute to nation-building. The question for GCE is how to integrate greater references to global interdependence and responsibility which may not necessary be in opposition to nation-building efforts.

Conceptual Debate

Global citizenship and related concepts have a long philosophical history. Cosmopolitan citizenship, central to Stoic philosophy and later taken up by Emmanuel Kant, is characterized by a sense of belonging to the worldwide

community of human beings and based on the principle of respect for diversity. Originally, these ideas were those of an elite that perceived themselves to be part of a world culture. Today, scholars and educators worldwide have revisited them to define or rethink identity models in our modern globalized world (Myers 2016; Oxley and Morris 2013). These new conceptions and understandings of cosmopolitanism and global citizenship can be divided into two strands: “a conception of cosmopolitanism as a rootlessness that enables people to live and work across borders; and a conception of cosmopolitanism as the political ideology of a well-ordered and conflict-free world respectful of human rights” (Papastephanou 2018, p. 179).

Differing conceptions of citizenship education in a globalized world have resulted in ongoing disagreements over GCE’s definition and scope, thereby weakening its potential. Pashby’s (2016) definition accurately shows the complex and specific nature of GCE: “Global citizenship education generally extends the idea of rights and responsibilities beyond the limits of the nation-state. It can be understood in a variety of ways and reflects different ideologies and ideas of what is and ought to be desired of citizens” (p. 85).

The framing of GCE varies significantly across different national contexts as it is strongly linked to how nation-states experience and respond to the forces of globalization (Ho 2018) and understand the link between national citizenship and the global community. Consequently, a wide range of conceptions and objectives of GCE coexist (e.g. building the capacity to participate in local and global communities, learning about global issues, empowering learners to take social and political action, becoming globally competitive, and promoting the use of information technology and global connectivity) (Gaudelli 2016). Diverging interpretations of the GCE concept and its rooting in national citizenship education consequently requires us to consider different reference models of citizenship throughout the world (Miedema and Bertram-Troost 2015). The key challenge is, however, to overcome binary conceptions of national and global citizenship and bridge the gap between them (Tarozzi and Inguaggiato 2018). Osler (2011) adds that coexistence between these two levels of citizenship education is only possible provided there is a critical approach to patriotism.

Nation-states remain the main actors in the real exercise of citizenship as the acquisition of national citizenship determines access to certain rights from which others are excluded. In this sense, in a world deeply divided between citizens and non-citizens, global citizenship may appear to be an oxymoron.

Nevertheless, citizenship education must be responsive to the current changes in the conception of citizenship and citizen practices and address global issues of a social, political, economic, or environmental nature. Indeed, the role of GCE may be critical for achieving sustainable development (Davies et al. 2018; Langran and Birk 2016).

In the light of these considerations, additional conceptual input is needed to reach an agreement on the scope of GCE and develop locally relevant programs. Furthermore, it is important to underline that GCE frameworks need to go beyond basic concepts such as ‘bring the world into the classroom’ or ‘send students into

the world’ that reinforce the divide between ‘us and them’ and ‘here and there’ (Andreotti 2014). “We wish to resist simplistic notions that may suggest that educational responses to globalisation can be achieved merely by adding international content or token global education type activities to citizenship education programs” (Davies et al. 2005, p. 85). In this respect, the analysis of power relations must be at the heart of GCE:

Despite claims of globality and inclusion, the lack of analysis of power relations and knowledge construction in this area often results in educational practices that unintentionally reproduce ethnocentric, ahistorical, depoliticized, paternalistic, salvationist and triumphalist approaches that tend to deficit theorize, pathologize or trivialize difference (Andreotti and De Souza 2012, p. 13).

Following Andreotti’s (2014) post-colonial approach that advocates a critical perspective and breaks away from asymmetric models that reproduce social inequality, there was a call to embrace a global social justice framework for GCE. Through a decolonial and anticolonial perspective, this framework suggests adopting a “critical and progressive commitment towards human rights, peace, environmental sustainability, social justice and economic equality, and a positive attitude towards diversity” (Tarozzi and Inguaggiato 2018, p.34). Indeed, GCE cannot merely promote human values and overlook the “conditions that create the inequities faced by marginalized groups, specifically by migrants who are perpetually deported to the site of non-humanity and global non-citizenship” (Chapman et al. 2018, p. 155).

In other words, GCE must respond to the challenge of exploring citizenship from the perspective of those marginalized or excluded (Davies et al. 2018, p. xxv). This critical approach requires teachers to address sensitive issues that potentially impinge on their duty of neutrality. For instance, issues related to sustainable development and inequality cannot be addressed without an awareness of the role played by consumers in capitalist societies. The political dimension can pose a real risk for teachers and conceivably lead to resistance.

Global Citizenship Education: Universal Understanding and National Ownership

Over the next few years, the concept of GCE is likely to be at the heart of national and international education policies. The purpose of this publication is to contribute to collective and critical thinking on the 2030 Agenda SDG 4.7 target, question its relevance to national local contexts and point out the challenges the implementation of GCE in national educational systems entails.

First, in an increasingly globalized and interdependent world, which policy directions should be given to citizenship education and GCE and what are the possible articulations between the two? Some of the contributions to this book, particularly from the Global South, identify a crisis of national citizenship where social

exclusion and limited political participation limit the ability to make both GCE and citizenship education operational.

Second, given the fact that the two interconnected phenomena of globalization and neoliberalism are evidently not beneficial to everyone on the planet, GCE raises the questions of social exclusion, national identities and collective narratives. How can we rethink our approach to citizenship education on a national level, in the context of globalization? In educational systems affected by globalization and increased cultural and ethnic diversity, how can GCE provide a framework that effectively links inter/multicultural education approaches to issues related to citizenship and social justice?

This book takes a critical and international perspective to the mainstreaming of the global citizenship concept and analyzes the key issues related to GCE across the world. In this respect, it addresses a pressing need to provide further conceptual input and to open global citizenship agendas to diversity and indigeneity.

With a crucial focus on diversity and inclusiveness, authors provide contextual understanding of the key concepts that underpin GCE (e.g. justice, equality, diversity, identity) and pinpoint issues related to women's rights, marginalised groups, Indigenous peoples and migrant populations. Issues related to peace building, democracy, citizenship education in post-conflict contexts and sustainable development are also covered in several chapters. Although this publication does not achieve a comprehensive coverage of the world, leading experts from across the globe have brought their valuable insights to rethinking education within a global perspective.

The contributions come from countries situated in the five regional groups as well as experts in the field of international education and innovation:

- *Latin America*

The authors will provide insights into the complexity and dynamics of citizenship in Latin America through the emblematic examples of Brazil and Paraguay. On the one hand, Brazil has experienced a remarkable democratic transition over the last decades which enabled millions of people to escape from poverty thanks to ambitious social policies and citizenship participation. Nevertheless, the newly elected far-right government and corruption raise serious doubts about the future of the country's democratization process. On the other hand, Paraguay, despite being the only country in Latin America where a majority speak an Indigenous language, still faces the challenge of political representation and involvement of Indigenous Peoples.

- *Asia and Pacific*

Representing the Asian and Pacific region, Japan, Kazakhstan, Australia and New Zealand provide interesting perspectives on GCE. Japan, as a major player in globalization and the host country to a growing number of immigrant workers, is slowly moving toward greater diversity and inclusion in a context of an insular culture. In Kazakhstan, conceptions of citizenship are marked by both the Soviet legacy (and its portal as the land of Soviet friendship) and by the authoritarian regime that succeeded it. Although the newly independent country managed to maintain peace between different ethnic groups, promote multilingualism and

forge a new Kazak national identity, it currently faces challenges related to democratization and economic globalization. In turn, Australia and New Zealand are seeking ways to promote social inclusion of Indigenous Peoples. In this respect, understanding Indigenous world-views and perspectives on global identity may be a first step in opening different perspectives to citizenship.

- *Africa*

We have chosen to address the complexities of citizenship building in Africa by first focusing attention on the Nigerian context. After a succession of authoritarian regimes that followed decolonisation, Niger has experienced a difficult democratization process and is currently threatened by a growing Jihadist movement. The next chapter broadens the debate and discusses the potential and relevancy of the concept of GCE in the wider West African context.

- *North Africa*

The chapters on Algeria and Tunisia illustrate the current citizen dynamics underway in the region. Following Algeria's independence from colonial powers, the democratization process got off to a difficult start, parallel to a delicate process of identity negotiation. While Tunisia has the most progressive laws on women's rights in relation to other parts of the Arab world, the country is currently marked by political tensions between women's rights and religious conservatism.

- *Europe and North America*

The national contexts presented in the North American and European section address the question of GCE in multicultural contexts. Although the countries presented are economically comparable, they differ in terms of historical approaches to citizenship and diversity. After a historical struggle for civil rights, the U.S. still faces deep social inequalities and ethnic divisions. In Canada, multiculturalism has evolved from a promising idea to an official policy. Yet the promise of recognition and formal equality have not succeeded in addressing the continuing economic, social, and political inequalities experienced by Indigenous Peoples. The examples of France, Switzerland and England are interesting insofar as they have different political traditions: Jacobinism in France, direct democracy in Switzerland and liberal democracy in England. Although GCE could provide an opportunity to open citizenship models to a more inclusive conception of national identity, this potential seems to be hampered by the current political climate and growing scepticism towards multiculturalism.

- *International education and innovation*

Finally, looking at GCE from the perspective of international education and innovation will allow us to better understand the construct of international education and explore the connections between education for creativity and education for global citizenship.

Thus, this book aims to provide a comprehensive and geographically based overview of the challenges citizenship education faces in a rapidly changing global world, question the relevancy of GCE's policy objectives and enhance understanding of local perspectives, ideologies, conceptions and issues related to citizenship

education on a local, national and global level. To do so, we give a voice to stakeholders from geographic regions that are too often overlooked in the GCE debate as we believe that a relevant and responsive global citizenship agenda should recognise the legitimacy of local knowledge systems and go beyond the opposition between “universal” and local knowledge.

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