

GLOBAL CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION

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ABSTRACT

The aim of this article is to discuss the importance and relevance of global citizenship education. What kind of knowledge, values and skills are needed for becoming global citizen and the foremost aim is to understand the implementation of global citizenship education in the classroom. Information and communication technology has made the world a global village. Interconnectedness has brought the people of different countries very close to each other. Therefore, all persons should learn to become citizens of the world. Global citizenship education requires the knowledge and skill in the following areas: social justice, diversity, globalization and interdependence, sustainable development, peace and conflict resolution. Critical thinking, debating, minimizing inequalities and injustice, respect for each, cooperation and conflict resolution. Following values and attitude need to be developed in order to understand the intricacies of global citizenship education like identity and self esteem, empathy, belief that everyone can make a difference. Therefore, there is need of teaching global citizenship at various developmental levels. We must teach controversial issues so as to develop a positive attitude to resolve the conflict in a peaceful and non-violent way.

Keywords: *Peace Education, Global Citizenship Education, Critical Thinking*

INTRODUCTION

The importance of education for global citizenship is increasing because information and communication technology has interconnected the world through globalization. This is not a new phenomenon because many great philosophers, scientists and saints have spread the message of peace and brotherhood throughout length and breadth of globe. The core value of global education is that education which inculcates nationalism or patriotism to a particular country is limiting and can become a source of conflict (John, 1859-1952). With broad and open vision young and adult should yearn for global citizenship education. Global citizenship education incorporates elements such as environmental sustainability and social justice (Andrzejewski and Alessio, 1999), with the development of such skills as non-violent conflict resolution and critical awareness and respect. This education gives a well-rounded shape to students and makes them conscientious citizens of the world. This enables the students to understand the effect of legislation and actions on population throughout the world. The students will be prepared to work for change that promotes peace, stability and job for everyone and not simply for their countrymen only.

John (1859-1952) was one of the most important theorists who promoted global-citizenship education. Destruction of world war-I made him to believe that rampant nationalism was the root cause of war. Therefore, Dewey proposed an education for people to become global citizens rather than citizens of a particular country. Tsunesaburo Makiguchi (1871-1944) from Japan also developed a philosophy for global citizenship combined with education. He was influenced deeply by the tenets of Buddhism. He strongly believed that religion and education should promote happiness and non-violence in the humanity and therefore should serve the needs of human beings.

Core Ideas

Global citizenship consists of multitude of ideas that covers several areas. Oxfam have elaborated in a comprehensive way that outlines the knowledge, skills and value/attitude which are practiced and promoted by global citizens. Each of the above mentioned area has its own importance in educational psychology perspective. Traditionally, a teaching method that is followed combines knowledge and skills. Knowledge is required to use and understand the skills. Both knowledge and skills are dependant upon

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each other and students will not be able to use their knowledge in a meaningful and effective way without relevant skills. There is incredible importance of moral education from an educational psychology perspective (Teachers without border: Peace education program (2011). Students need to learn and practice important values to ensure that they are able to transfer their ideas in future situations (Woolfolk, 2007).

Knowledge

Knowledge in several areas, such as, social justice, diversity, globalization and interdependence, sustainable development and peace and conflict studies are required to impart global citizenship education. It will create greater understanding about the meaning of becoming citizen of the world. These areas have been elaborated as given below:

Social Justice

It may be defined as promoting equality, brotherhood and fairness in order to create an egalitarian world. While studying social justice by the students, there is need to develop understanding about inequality persisting in this world. It requires a deep thought and consistent effort to work for equality. The understanding of social justice depends upon the development level. Oxfam has clarified that social justice is correlated to the issues of income inequalities and poverty. Moreover, social justice is related with power too which may be linked to poverty and may not exclusively tied with wealth. Issues of social justice are good examples of interconnected nature of the world.

Diversity

The religion, philosophy and culture of a particular region have a significant effect on the life of a person. Therefore, diversity is related to the fact that there are similarity and differences between all people. Thus, understanding of diversity requires the evaluation of prejudice and discrimination on the basis of caste, colour, race, religion or region. There is a need to know the technique of combating these prejudices and discrimination.

Globalization and Interdependence

The world is increasingly becoming interconnected and interdependent. Such phenomenon may be referred to as globalization. This interconnectedness has an astounding effect on various aspects of our lives such as economics, culture, political system, language and technology. This interconnectedness has made the world more interdependent. One pertinent example is of USA whose economic collapse in 2008 and 2012 had a significant effect on economy of all countries. Globalization education focuses on general power relations between various countries and emphasizes on economic relations. There is need to educate the students about the various connections between the countries and their effect on justice.

Sustainable Development

Sustainable development refers to meeting the needs of present generation, while preserving the environment to ensure the needs of future generations can also be met (Brudtland Commission, 1987). Moreover, sustainability may also refer to promoting sustainable relations around the world. Thus, to teach the students about sustainable development, there should be emphasis on maintaining healthy relations between humans and nature. Therefore, there is need to learning the sustainable lifestyle.

Peace and Conflict Studies

The aim of teaching peace and conflict studies is to get the knowledge of root causes of past conflict, how they were addressed and how we can resolve the conflict peacefully. Students should be taught the skill of peace building and resolving the conflict amicably. They may be encouraged to think about various complex realities and factual positions that exist and make conflict resolution more complicate.

Skills

There is a need to promote the following skills for global citizenship education.

Critical Thinking

Critical thinking refers to the ability to think critically in order to find out the strength and weakness of the system. The students learn to question and listen carefully. They learn to view the things from different angles and search the biases and prejudices inherent in the system. The students can use their skills to critically evaluate issues. Paulo (1973) believed that we must look critically at what is presented

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to us to see the influence of power relations. Tsunesaburo Makiguchi also endorsed the idea of critical thinking by stating that people needed to be educated global citizens to not blindly follow abusive governments.

Debating

Debating refers to the ability to express his/her views and supporting their views with facts, evidence and proof. By establishing their skills, the students will be able to participate in political process because this skill inculcates their competency in articulating their opinions and beliefs clearly. As a global citizen may need to participate in political processes and this is very important skill which is needed for meaningful and effective participation.

Challenging Injustice and Inequality

For challenging injustice and inequality, students are required to develop ability to recognize the existence of inequality and find out the factors responsible to generate it. Once they are able to find out the areas of inequality, then there is need to learn the techniques of minimizing there inequalities. This skill will enable the students to crusade against injustice and inequality and make them active participant. Therefore, students must learn not only about the blind spots of injustice but must learn about how to tackle it and become an active member of global community.

Respect

A global citizen should respect not only to human beings, but also for all things on this earth. Students must learn to give respect to each other and other things. Students should think from other's point of view. Such personal life style should be developed which give importance to sustainability. It should ensure peaceful, non-violent relations. Students should develop such skills which will help to live in respectful way with all living and non-living things.

Cooperation and Conflict Resolution

Cooperation and conflict resolution are essential skills which help the students to solve problems in peaceful ways. Students learn cooperation through sharing and including the others in decision making. They prepare themselves to accept the mandate of majority of people even if they disagree the decision of majority. Students must learn the art of negotiation, mediation and resolving the conflict peacefully.

Values/Attitudes

The following values and attitudes needs to be developed for global citizenship education:

Identity and Self Esteem

Identity and self esteem refers to those building blocks which develops open mindedness and compassion. The students possessing a sense of personal worth and value will be capable of having open mind which is required for global citizenship. Global citizenship education requires the students to explore the different facets of their identity, such as gender, race, ethnicity, nationality, and abilities. Their global identity will minimize a sense of "us Vs them" that is often a source of conflict and their open minded identity will bring better understanding that each person despite belonging to many different groups in society is a global citizen.

Empathy

Empathy refers to those feelings when a person feels the sufferings and shocks of others. This is a sense of common humanity that brings all of us close to each other and unites us. Empathy is learned gradually by first feeling concern for our kins, relatives and friends and then this concern move outward for all people throughout the globe. Development of this sense of empathy for all people on this earth will make the students effective global citizens.

Belief that Everyone Can Make a Difference

Without the belief that everyone can make a significant effect will demoralize us to make concrete efforts to resolve conflict and bring peace in this world. Every drop counts in the formation of sea and ocean. In this way, the students may feel disempowered to take action. Thus, there is need to strengthen the belief that they had the power to bring changes what they have learnt about. In this process, the students may make mistakes but they will learn to recover from them. They must learn that all actions have effect

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which may be positive or negative. They should work to bring peace and help in building the public opinion for resolving the international conflict amicably which is based on their beliefs and opinion.

Ideas in Practice

Teaching Global Citizenship at Various Developmental Levels

It is necessary for the teachers that they should understand and respect the developmental levels of their students. Education for global citizenship is appropriate for all developmental levels. The Oxfam curriculum has described the following age groups: younger than five, 5-7, 7-11, 11-14, 14-16 and 16+. Students learn different concepts within different age groups. Students in younger stage learn by doing and by making mistakes. Students in the higher age group learn through many sources and in many learning environment. Older students are ready to learn to take position of global issues.

Teaching Controversial Issues

Many issues pertaining to global citizenship will be controversial. This is essential to teach such controversial issues because during this process, students will learn to navigate in the real world and thus will be able to build their own opinion. Teaching controversial issues is not so easy task. There are many chances of arising controversial discussions. Therefore, teacher should be prepared for such situation. Teacher should ensure some guidelines to be followed for navigating such issues and establish respect and positive interaction in all situations. Moreover, being a teacher you must decide your role you want to take. A teacher can play so many roles such as presenting your own opinion, presenting opinion of all people etc. Finally, teacher should avoid didactic and explain their students what is wrong or right. Activities that may start discussion, such as use of photos or that promotes these skills which are essential for informed discussion are good. Because such activities make sure that all students can share their opinions.

Stephanie (2010) recognizes the inseparable connection between classrooms and peace. She understands the role that educators around the world play in building peace in their classrooms, schools and communities. She sees teachers as peace builders and strongly believes that road to global peace begins in the classrooms, in the hearts and minds of teachers and their pupils around the world. Stephanie in an article on peace education said, “I hope that someday we won’t even need to say ‘peace education’ that it will simply be education – that there will be education for all, and that all education will be education for peace” (Knox, 2010).

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