

STANDARDS AND BENCHMARKS FOR EXCELLENCE IN
LEARNING TEACHING AND RESEARCH

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GLOBAL CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION FOR MENTAL HEALTH DEVELOPMENT

Tohid Moradi Sheykhjan

Research Scholar in Education,
University of Kerala, Thiruvananthapuram, India
E-mail: tohid294m@gmail.com

Abstract

It is obvious that today's students are graduating into a world that is interconnected as never before and education for international understanding for global citizenship education (GCE) inspires action, partnerships, dialogue and cooperation through formal and non-formal education. It promotes an ethos of curiosity, solidarity and shared responsibility. The changing educational landscape in the global context and the increasing interconnectedness and interdependence of the world have placed unprecedented demands on mental health education programs in preparing people all around the globe to educate for twenty first century global citizenship. It is time to bring mental health into focus. Momentum is gaining in terms of raising awareness, mental and behavioural disorders are the source of enormous human suffering across the lifespan. The paper is an effort to find out the ways for the significance of global citizenship education for mental health development. It requires high level and long-term policy and resource commitment to the goal of "learning to live together" in the twenty first century. The vision of a new world picture must precede the creative acts and the detailed organization of new knowledge necessary for its realization.

Key Words: *Global Citizenship Education, Mental Health, Development.*

Introduction

It is obvious that the world today is one unit in the sense that events in one country may have repercussions in all countries. The supply of food in producer countries has an immediate effect on consumer countries. There is vital interdependence between countries in the supply of raw materials or manufactured goods. A disease epidemic is not confined to the boundaries of one state, nor is a new type of therapy used only in the community in which it originated. The spread of ideas is not halted by passport regulations. Today's students are graduating into a world that is interconnected as never before. As citizens in the twenty first century, they are required to be responsible and responsive to the myriad complex problems and issues of global and local concern, whether in health, environment, peace, or economic security. This shifting global context demands that students today develop the knowledge, skills, attributes, and commitment to global citizenship through the educational process.

Objective of the Study

The objective of the paper is to find out the significance of global citizenship education for mental health development.

Global Citizenship Education

Global Citizenship Education (GCE) is a framing paradigm which encapsulates how education can develop the knowledge, skills, values and attitudes learners need for securing a world which is more just, peaceful, tolerant, inclusive, secure and sustainable (UNESCO 2014).

Global citizenship education (GCE) is a 'highlights essential functions of education related to the formation of citizenship [in relation] with globalization. It is a concern with the relevance of knowledge, skills and values for the participation of citizens in, and their contribution to, dimensions of societal development which are linked at local and global levels. It is directly related to the civic, social and political socialization function of education, and ultimately to the contribution of education in preparing children and young people to deal with the challenges of today's increasingly interconnected and interdependent world' (S. Tawil, 2013). Global citizenship education (GCE) inspires action, partnerships, dialogue and cooperation through formal and non-formal education. (GCE) applies a multifaceted approach employing concepts, methodologies and theories from related fields, including human rights education, peace education, education for sustainable development and education for international understanding. It promotes an ethos of curiosity, solidarity and shared responsibility. There are also overlapping and mutually reinforcing objectives, approaches and learning outcomes with these and other education programmes, such as intercultural education and health education. (M. Bracken, 2014). Global citizenship education could then be defined as education which aims to enable students to challenge power imbalances, negotiate identities and, ultimately, to achieve greater equality, justice, democracy and peace via individual and societal transformation (Nussbaum 1997). The review establishes that (GCE) has a critical

role to play in equipping learners with competencies to deal with the dynamic and interdependent world of the twenty first century. While (GCE) has been applied in different ways in different contexts, regions and communities, it has a number of common elements, which include fostering in learners:

- 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 respect;
- 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 (UNESCO, 2014).

Goal of Education for Global Citizenship

Educational practices conducted through the lens of global citizenship aim to prepare students to become global citizens. The overriding goal of citizenship education is to prepare students to play an active and positive role in their dealings with school, family, society and globally. This includes being active and responsible participants in their own communities, and when possible being active and responsible participants in the wider community of human beings - others living in their own country, their own region and on Planet Earth. Of particular importance in many settings is acceptance of diversity and respect for other human rights norms, and development of a mind-set of collaborating with others to solve shared problems in a peaceful way. The educational objective is to empower students with the knowledge, skills, values and attitudes needed to achieve this goal.

It Is Time to Bring Mental Health into Focus

Positive mental health is “a state of well-being in which the individual realizes his or her own abilities, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to his or her community” (WHO, 2001).

Positive mental health enhances social cohesion and social capital and improves peace and stability in the living environment. The changing educational landscape in the global context and the increasing interconnectedness and interdependence of the world have placed unprecedented demands on mental health education programs in preparing people all around the globe to educate for twenty first century global citizenship .It is time to bring mental health into focus. Momentum is gaining in terms of raising awareness, increasing understanding, and articulating strategies for advancing and integrating mental health as part of the global health agenda (Becker AE, Kleinman A, 2013 & Collins PY et al, 2011). Mental and behavioural disorders are common, serious and global. Integral to the human condition since recorded history, mental and behavioural disorders have a profound, life-altering impact on the human experience and exact enormous tolls of suffering, loss, and disability. Ruthlessly indiscriminate, mental and behavioural disorders afflict individuals across race, ethnicity, religion, nationality, socioeconomic status, gender and age. Yet, these disorders have largely been absent from the global health agenda. Focused on other priorities, the field of global health has engaged in a practice of “intentional blindness” (Chabris CF, Simons DJ, 2010).

It Is Difficult to Watch a Bulletin of World News

It is difficult to watch a bulletin of world news without concluding that there is a need for much improved education to prepare people world-wide to address the numerous problems confronting humanity at this time. Education can play a powerful role in helping develop people’s capacity to contribute positively to their societies. Global citizenship is marked by an understanding of global interconnectedness and a commitment to the collective good. Global citizenship does not entail legal status, and cannot be simply defined as progressive politics or extensive world travel. It is a twenty first century approach to living in which principles of global responsibility and accountability are applied to everyday local actions and complex global problems are addressed on an individual basis. Global citizenry requires awareness and action consistent with a broad understanding of humanity, the planet, and the impact of our decisions on both. Students in the twenty first century need global citizenship education in order to be empowered with the knowledge, skills, and values that can assist them in taking actions to address the interconnected social, political, cultural and global realities of the twenty first century (Linyuan Guo , 2014).

Acceptance of the Concept of World Citizenship

Studies of human development indicate the modifiability of human behaviour throughout life, especially during infancy, childhood and adolescence, by human contacts. Examination of social institutions in many countries shows that these also can be modified. These newly recognised possibilities provide the basis for improving human relations, for releasing constructive human potentialities and for modifying social institutions for the common good. Systematic explorations of the human mind in health as, well as in disease, carried out by psychiatrists and others in recent decades; give some conception of the nature and dimensions of the problems facing mankind today (World Federation for Mental health, 1948). Principles of mental health cannot be successfully furthered in any society unless there is progressive acceptance of the concept of world citizenship. World citizenship can be widely extended among all peoples through the applications of the principles of mental health. The concept of world citizenship implies loyalty to the whole of mankind. Such new loyalty need not conflict but rather embraces traditional loyalties to family, community and nation, which alone are no longer sufficient for the protection of the interdependent peoples of the world (World Federation for Mental health, 1948).

Conclusion

Mental and behavioural disorders are the source of enormous human suffering across the lifespan. The accumulating evidence base documents the burden of mental and behavioural disorders and the relationship of mental and behavioural disorders to global health, education and development. The challenge of global citizenship will continue for the rest of the twenty first century and beyond. Can the peoples of the world learn to co-operate for the good of all? On what basis is there hope for enduring peace? There are challenges regarding how to approach education for the global aspects of these themes. Strategies to improve mental health should prioritize improving classification systems, expanding research capacity and collaborations to grow the extant knowledge base, and re-envisioning the workforce and systems delivery. Conviction and commitment to advancing mental health as a global health priority will transform for the better the lives of people all around the globe. However, as the Frederick Douglass said “it is easier to build strong children than to repair broken men.” This is not a challenge that can be solved by a stroke of the pen or any number of short term projects. The current situation of the globe it cannot be changed without changing our thinking. Education itself is not enough, of course, to resolve the numerous problems of our times. Programmes for social change to be effective require the joint efforts of psychiatrists and social scientists working in co-operation with statesmen, administrators and others in positions of responsibility. It requires high level and long-term policy and resource commitment to the goal of “learning to live together” in the twenty first century. The vision of a new world picture must precede the creative acts and the detailed organization of new knowledge necessary for its realization.

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