Global citizenship: abstraction or framework for action?

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This paper explores whether the notion of ‘global citizenship’ is too abstract to be valuable in driving curriculum policy and active citizenship for students. The paper looks firstly at three of the key aspects of an active role: a concern for social justice; rights; and culture and cultural conflict. It then examines actual curricula and programmes of study for global citizenship, and compares the conceptual frameworks, progression routes and emphases within these curricula. It moves on to review the research on teachers’ practices and orientations in teaching global citizenship, finding some variation and problems, particularly in areas such as teaching controversial issues. Factors in successful impact of global citizenship education are outlined, such as various forms of democratic decision-making and community service. Constraints are nonetheless identified of curriculum overload, resources, time and confidence. The paper then describes existing research on the needs and wishes of learners within global citizenship. The conclusion confirms the consensus on the importance of global citizenship and argues that it can be turned into a more radical and politicised curriculum area; however, more research is needed on impact of the learning, including research by students themselves.

Introduction

It could be argued that the notion of ‘global citizenship’ is simply a metaphor, a linguistic fancy which deliberately transposes a national political reality to a wider world order. We cannot be citizens of the world in the way that we are of a country (or, for an increasing minority of stateless people, would like to be). So is global citizenship a fiction, a seeming paradox or oxymoron? This paper examines the background to the notion of global citizenship, how it is conceptualized and why it is seen as valuable. This overview is to act as an introduction to the other papers in this volume, so that empirical or comparative research can be placed in context. Some of what is written here stems from an initially 2 year (but continuing) activity of the West Midlands Commission on Global Citizenship, which worked in a central area of the UK to explore what global citizenship meant in a cultural diverse area with complex economic traditions and international links. The theme becomes...
particularly important in the light of the bombings in London in July 2005 and the likelihood that those that carried out the raids were British citizens who had attended—and in one case worked—in British schools, while also operating in a context of global events or connections. What do children and teachers need to help them explain and understand such phenomena?

While global education or World Studies have been advocated and practised in schools in UK since the 1970s at least, global citizenship education is a relatively new concept. The insertion of ‘citizenship’ into global education implies something more than—or different to—previous conceptions. The linked question is whether global citizenship education is not simply more informed local citizenship education. In World Studies in UK, there were a number of funded curriculum projects that were promoted in schools, often linked to development education and the work of Development Education Centres. Key concepts were global interdependence and cultural diversity, and the key pedagogical approaches were participatory learning and examination of values. Robin Richardson uses the analogy of six blindfolded people looking at global education and coming to their own conclusion—and being in part right. He states

> The term ‘global education’ is as good as any to evoke the whole field ... It implies a focus on many different, though overlapping levels from very local and immediate to the vast realities named with phrases such as ‘world society’ and ‘global village’. It implies also a holistic view of education, with a concern for children’s emotions, relationships and sense of personal identity as well as with information and knowledge. (quoted in Ballin & Griffin, 1999, p. 1)

What seems to happen with global citizenship education is a confirmation of the direct concern with social justice and not just the more minimalist interpretations of global education which are about ‘international awareness’ or being a more rounded person. Citizenship clearly has implications both of rights and responsibilities, of duties and entitlements, concepts which are not necessarily explicit in global education. One can have the emotions and identities without having to do much about them. Citizenship implies a more active role. In this paper, I look firstly at some of the key drivers of this active role: social justice, rights and engagement with culture and with cultural conflict. These imply action in that if one perceives injustice and/or abuse of rights, one is more likely to seek ways at least to publicize these; similarly, if one learns about the links between conflict and interpretations of culture, one is less likely to accept passively the imperatives of unquestioning adherence to cultural traditions. After this discussion, the paper moves to exploration of how such issues may or may not get played out in curriculum and teachers’ practice in the classroom, and whether these match what the research says about pupils’ expressed wants.

**Social Justice**

For Wringe (1999) the key principle of social justice with regard to citizenship means ‘ensuring that the collective arrangements to which we give our assent do not ...
secure the better life of some at the expense of a much worse life for others’ (p. 6). For him, this does not mean reducing global citizenship to ‘international do-goodery’, rather it means understanding and being able to influence decision-making processes at the global level, together with their effects on peoples’ lives. The UK Oxfam Curriculum for Global Citizenship draws on previous models of global education such as Richardson’s (1979) Learning for Change in World Society, but goes further. It defines a ‘global citizen’ as someone who ‘knows how the world works, is outraged by injustice and who is both willing and enabled to take action to meet this global challenge’ (Richardson, 1997, p. 1). In this definition, we see that empathy is not enough: there must be ‘outrage’, so that motivations for change are high. This has profound implications for teaching and learning, and may not sit easily with current pedagogical philosophies tied to content knowledge and passing of examinations.

Oxfam states (1997):

- is aware of the wider world and has a sense of their own role as a world citizen
- respects and values diversity
- has an understanding of how the world works economically, politically, socially, culturally, technologically and environmentally
- is outraged by social injustice
- participates in and contributes to the community at a range of levels from the local to the global
- is willing to act to make the world a more equitable and sustainable place
- takes responsibility for their actions

A crucial but unresolved task at this stage is how people can ‘act to make the world a more equitable and sustainable place’. Those of us feeling paralysed by the Iraq war, who went on the unprecedentedly massive march opposing the invasion, who filled in the petitions, will know the frustration experienced in a so-called democratic society at being apparently unable to change the course of a government action which seems fundamentally unjust. However, as this paper is being written, lawyers are attempting to bring a case against Blair for war crimes in Iraq. Knowledge of the law would be a key part of the struggle for social justice, although detailed legal knowledge would probably not be possible in a crowded curriculum. What is possible and indeed crucial, however, is knowledge of rights, their legal implications and their attendant responsibilities, to which we now turn.

Rights

Griffiths (1998) outlines the ‘shared agenda’ that characterizes various international non-governmental organizations (NGOs), which is that global citizenship transcends the artificiality of national boundaries and regards ‘Planet Earth’ as the common home of humanity. For him, the common identity which unites human beings is not primarily cultural, national, political, civil, social or economic, but ethical. Global citizenship is based on rights, responsibility and action.
A picture, then, of the global citizen: not merely aware of her rights but able and desirous to act upon them; of an autonomous and inquiring critical disposition; but her decisions and actions tempered by an ethical concern for social justice and the dignity of humankind; therefore able, through her actions, to control and enhance the ‘trajectory of the self’ through life while contributing to the commonweal, the public welfare, with a sense of civic duty to replenish society. (Griffiths, 1998, p. 40)

For him, pupils should be accorded the rights of citizenship and educated not in or about citizenship, but as citizens.

A particular thrust in much global citizenship education writing is this accent on rights. Lynch in 1992, in his *Education for Citizenship in a Multicultural Society*, had argued for the development of knowledge, skills and values based on two international dimensions: human rights and social responsibilities. Osler and Starkey in various texts have argued that international human rights declarations, adopted by the whole international community, provide a common set of universal values that can be used to make judgments about global issues and about the implied responsibilities to respect the rights of others (see Osler, 1994; Osler & Starkey, 2000, 2001). It would seem that the growing acceptance of, or publicity given to international rights conventions makes us global citizens in ways that were less recognized earlier. It needs to be recognized, however, that although international rights conventions are to ‘guarantee’ rights, the rights are still enacted primarily at the national or local levels. We return to the need for some legal knowledge, in order to be aware of how global conventions are translated into various national Acts and where the gaps or loopholes might be.

It is not argued that this emphasis on rights gives a complete blueprint for thinking or for action, but it can be seen to provide a way to tackle some of the dilemmas around culture. Under a rights framework, respect for others is not unreserved or unthinking: if those others, or the culture that they claim to represent, infringes the rights of others as expressed in the international conventions, then there must least be a debate. Figuera (2000, p. 56) noted that while cultural pluralism propounds openness to all cultures

... that openness [does] not mean accepting any position proffered but ... instead being willing to give a genuine hearing to the reasons for any position held. The respect that cultural pluralism calls for is critical respect. The critique must be carried out in practice. The outcome cannot be guaranteed.

So together with outrage we have another perhaps uncomfortable aspect for teachers in any country which has a National Curriculum and national assessment guidelines: an outcome of a critical debate which is not guaranteed.

**Culture, global links and global conflict**

One of the important tensions in global citizenship then is how to treat ‘culture’. In discussions of cultural integration, there is often the language of ‘one’s own culture’ and ‘others’ culture’—yet as our research started to imply (Yamashita, in this issue), this notion of ‘us’ and ‘them’ may become more complex in a world of migration and of dual or hybrid identities. Culture is not just about origin but about current
linkages, trading and economies. There is the argument that we are all becoming
global citizens whether we like it or not: the spread of international conventions give
us common rights and entitlements, but on the other hand the globalization of trade
and concentration of economic power may erode some of these rights. Globalization
is both a threat and an opportunity, in terms of the impact of trade, technology,
media, social organization and cultures. For Brownlie:

Global citizenship is more than learning about seemingly complex ‘global issues’ such
as sustainable development, conflict and international trade—important as these are. It
is also about the global dimension to local issues, which are present in all our lives,
localities and communities. (2001, p. 2)

The West Midlands Commission on Global Citizenship (WMCGC) similarly
stated:

Global citizenship is important to us in the West Midlands both because of its identity
as a dynamic region involved in global trade and because of the multiple cultural
identities and loyalties of its citizens … This means it is crucial that we look outward,
developing a disposition towards connecting with the wider world, as well as
contributing to economic, social, environmental and political decision-making in our
region which could have an impact elsewhere. (2002, p. 14)

Here the emphasis on culture and identity is not just a better understanding of
the multicultural society we live in, but the fact that this hybrid society is itself
engaged in various economic and cultural linkages outside. The now familiar
slogan ‘act local, think global’ is an attempt to overcome some of the problems in
what can be an abstracted or far removed concept of global citizenship. Because
of the mesh of international linkages, the idea is that a local action (for example
on pollution or choices that contribute to global warming) could have a wider
impact.

An ecological linkage between local and global is however perhaps easier to
understand and take action on than is the cultural linkage—or discontinuity.
AREIAC (2000) in their RE Curriculum for Global Citizenship in fact see a tension
between the national and the global:

Our world is divided into the rich and poor … It is this kind of world into which the idea
of education for global citizenship enters. Global citizenship suggests that we should
regard ourselves not only as belonging to our own nation, or the group of nations which
we call our natural competitors, but to the world, to human beings, to all life …
Education for global citizenship is in some tension with education for national
citizenship …. (Hull, in AREIAC, 2000)

Klein (2001) argues that learning from other cultures means more than learning
about the Kingdom of Benin or Indus Valley civilizations from secondary sources.
An internationalist perspective on citizenship by definition demands:

- an interest in world cultures and a curiosity to find out more
- learning respect for cultures different from one’s own
- regarding cultures as living and changing, affected by external circumstances such
  as invasion, colonization, globalization.
This third point moves us on from simplistic ideas about multiculturalism and ‘tolerance’. As Klein points out, citizenship used to be about nationalism. Citizenship was defined by nationality and brought with it notions of national unity and pride. A century ago, British textbooks with names like True Patriotism, Brave Citizens and Good Citizenship were used in schools. The latter included a lesson in which children were asked on page 2 how many of them could recite the first verse of God Save the Queen. The aim of the lesson was ‘to inculcate loyalty to the Monarch and to Christ.’ Clearly, we have moved on from that, but Klein implies we still need to go broader. She argues that exploring rights documents with children, such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights or the Convention on the Rights of the Child, can lead teachers to widen their remit onto an international level. Much would depend on how this was taught, of course. If such teaching were automatically reinforcing the notion that ‘other’ countries are the greater infringers of rights, this could just reproduce stereotypes. It would seem obvious that global citizenship education is not about learning about other countries, but a means to reflect critically on one’s own.

A working group of the WMCGC identified some of the implications for thinking about ‘building new citizenship’. They included the need to enable:

- an understanding of our commonality with people in other places;
- an understanding of interdependence;
- ‘a critical spirit’ … the ability of young people to think for themselves;
- ‘an inclusive sense of belonging’ and a sense of self esteem;
- an awareness of ‘multiple identities’ [our own and as a community];
- the valuing of our diversity;
- the confidence and skills to respond to change. (WMCGC, 2002, p. 56)

These relate more to understandings and attitudes rather than action, and here again there is a tension. The question of ‘multiple identity’ is the idea that we have a number of cultural facets to our personal identities and, more importantly, loyalties. Yet this is again seemingly a taken-for-granted concept, and one in danger of lacking meaning in practice. Is multiple identity something people ‘naturally’ have, that you acquire, or that you try to have? I commented in Whose Citizenship? (Davies, 2002) that for conflict, only one or two people are needed to fan the fires of hostility, but for actions for peace and security, very broad and strong bandings of people are needed who are comfortable with notions of multiple identity, and who have enough in common to work together. They also need to recognize difference to value and cope with diversity. (Davies, 2002)

So for me, a global citizenship identity is the recognition that conflict and peace are firstly rarely confined to national boundaries, and secondly that even stable societies are implicated in wars elsewhere—whether by default (choosing not to intervene) or actively in terms of aggression and invasion. I would add a third or middle dimension to the usual phrase, so that it becomes ‘act local, analyse national and think global’. Migration for example is a global phenomenon; but then national policies on immigration, refugees and asylum seekers have highly local implications. How robust is our acceptance of ‘multiple identities’ and ‘dynamic cultures’? How far are...
we prepared to take action to defend the rights of those whom others see as threatening the local culture and economy? Who counts as a citizen in our own backyard or school? This might be a true test of a vibrant global citizenship education.

Curriculum

In the remainder of this article, I look at actual curricula and programmes of study for global citizenship, to analyse and compare the various emphases. This is followed by an examination of the research on what teachers actually do and research on the actual impact of curriculum and practice in this area. Underpinning this exploration remains the concern about how we teach the ‘active’ components of global citizenship discussed earlier—social justice, rights, culture and conflict, and therefore how the linkages between knowledge, understanding, attitudes and action are conceived.

For Oxfam (1997), global citizenship education has three components:

- **knowledge and understanding** of the background to global problems (such as conceptual understanding of social justice, peace/conflict, diversity, sustainable development and globalization/interdependence);
- **skills** (such as critical thinking, argumentation, cooperation/conflict resolution and the ability to challenge injustice); and
- **values and attitudes** (such as commitment to equality, respecting diversity, concern for the environment and a sense of identity and self-esteem).

Clearly, these components or areas are integrally linked: critical thinking demands examination of one’s own values as well as those of others, and skills for change demand a firm political literacy. Fisher and Hicks have argued this in their _World Studies 8–13: A Teacher’s Handbook_ (1985):

> All the above skills are of little value unless they involve at the same time, or later, action to influence decisions in the real world. Such action involves political skills. Political decision-making, centring as it does on the distribution of scarce resources and power, goes on all the time in schools, at home and in the community. Political skills are needed by all citizens in a democratic society. (p. 28)

At an international level, we might of course argue that political skills are needed in an undemocratic society as well. In any country, the clear difference to local citizenship education would be the recognition of local/global interdependence and a wider perspective on economics, political systems and on causes of conflict.

Most texts and curriculum guidance have a number of ‘key concepts’ which they use as the basis for various curriculum stages; for example, the DfID/DfEE (2000) booklet uses:

- citizenship
- sustainable development
- social justice
- values and perceptions
- diversity
There is a question then of the difference between education for global citizenship and education for sustainable development. The Council for Environmental Education (CEE) stated:

Education for sustainable development enables people to develop the knowledge, values and skills to participate in decisions about the way we do things individually and collectively, both locally and globally, that will improve the quality of life now without damaging the planet for the future. (CEE, 1998, p. 3)

As always, the issue seems to be the ‘umbrella’ term. In the above list, sustainable development was just one of a number of other concepts which combine to form a global citizenship curriculum. However, if we examine the Citizenship Foundation (1998) programmes of study for key stages 3 and 4 citizenship education, these are to include knowledge and understanding of:

- rights and responsibilities
- human rights
- diversity—national, regional, religious, ethnic
- voting/democracy
- parliament and other forms of government
- media/free press
- voluntary groups
- conflict resolution
- consumers, employers and employees’ rights
- global citizenship
- the economy
- sustainable development
- the legal/justice system
- how to bring about social change

Here we see that global citizenship appears to be just one of a list of other areas, rather than integrated into a set of key skills which automatically apply to local and global. This is strange, as it would be impossible to see the economy and diversity except in international terms.

However, it could be that recognition of the need to ‘think global’ is actually increasing considerably. Official government guidelines on global citizenship may reflect such new thinking. In UK, the DFID/DfEE (2000) document *Developing a Global Dimension in the School Curriculum* recognized the need to prepare students to live in contexts of global change, interdependence and diversity. It can be noted that key stage 3 and 4 has more ‘global’ dimensions in curriculum than earlier stages. Is this based on the belief that it is difficult for younger children to understand ‘global’ dimensions? There was no evaluation or assessment guideline in the booklet, so it is unclear how teachers could assess the attainments which are listed.
OFSTED (2002), in their booklet on *Inspecting Citizenship 11–16* however do give some clues in describing what to look for in lessons:

For example, do pupils know and understand about:
- the diversity of identities in the UK, and the need for mutual respect and understanding;
- political, economic, social, environmental and sustainability implications of the world as a global community, and the role of the European Union, the Commonwealth and the United Nations?

Our question would be whether pupils are expected to turn such knowledge and understanding into action, and how this would be assessed in lessons. OFSTED recognize that in a complex curricular area:

The effectiveness with which provision is monitored and supported will be crucial in the early stages of implementation, particularly if curricular arrangement is complex. Where citizenship is delegated to a range of subject departments, does the co-ordinator have sufficient seniority or senior management backing to provide effective leadership?

This will be an issue returned to later, affecting global as well as national citizenship.

There are inevitable questions of progression in global citizenship curriculum. I take some examples of UK curriculum here, to analyse the difficulties. In the religious education booklet (AERIAC, 2000), on first reading, key stage 1 (primary) seems to deal with abstract ideas compared with key stage 3: their key stage 1 learning objectives appear very broad, for example, ‘Look at and respond to our world. Learn about caring for our world’. It is difficult to know whether children do have a concept of ‘our world’ which is not just in fact the local. The Citizenship Programme of Study in UK however specify that by the end of key stage 3 pupils should know about ‘the world as a global community and the political, economic, environmental and social implications of this, the role of the European Union, the Commonwealth and the United Nations (QCA, 1999, p. 14). There is a shift of emphasis in key stage 4, in that pupils are to learn about UK’s relations in Europe, the Commonwealth and the United Nations. By the end of key stage 4, pupils are expected to know about ‘the opportunities for individuals and voluntary groups to bring about social change, locally, nationally, in Europe and internationally’ (QCA, 1999, p. 15). Here the progression does seem to lead to awareness of where social action might occur, even if not in this moment. There is an emphasis on rights and responsibilities in the documentation, as well as diversity. Pupils are to learn about the various charters and about ‘topical and contemporary issues and events … at international levels’ (QCA, 1998, p. 44). The skills to be used, however, are obviously to be located in the local rather than the international community, although there is recognition that making connections between acting locally and thinking globally would facilitate pupils’ understanding of global citizenship and interdependent links.

All this exploration of curriculum enables us to see even more permutations of ‘global citizenship education’. Is this

(a) global citizenship+education (definitions of the ‘global citizen’, and the implied educational framework to provide or promote this)
(b) global+citizenship education (making citizenship education more globally or internationally relevant; think global, act local)
(c) global education+citizenship (international awareness plus rights and responsibilities)
(d) education+citizenship+global (introducing ‘dimensions’ of citizenship and of international understanding into the school curriculum, but not necessarily connected)

Schools may take different emphases—often depending on practical issues such as staff availability in particular subject areas (whether geography, history, social science, personal and moral education, etc.). This leads to the very large question of who decides what a global citizenship curriculum should look like, particularly in a context of education for democracy, and in whose interests such definitions operate. Interestingly, there is a view that young people are more drawn to global citizenship than are adults:

Perhaps the younger generation know instinctively what it is to be a global citizen, because that is what they are. Schools need to foster their knowledge and understanding of other countries throughout the curriculum—always remembering that the young can teach their elders too. *(Times Educational Supplement, 12 November 1999, in Brownlie, 2001, p. 2)*

Here is the recognition that with globalization itself, with the internet and with mass media, the young are actually much more global in outlook that their elders; this is reflected particularly in developing countries where young people are making use of global knowledge exchange in the way that their parents or teachers lack confidence.

**Teachers’ practices**

What do we know then of teachers’ existing practices and orientations in global citizenship? In a study of 200 teachers in UK, Steiner (1992, cited in Robbins *et al.*, 2003, p. 93) found that teachers were selective about which aspects of the world studies curriculum they included in their classroom practice. They were comfortable with teaching about the environment and other cultures but tended to ignore more complex global issues:

Most teachers concentrate on the self-esteem building, interpersonal and cooperative element of the world studies approach. They also engage in work that questions stereotypes such as racism or sexism. The environment, local or ‘rain forest’, is a common theme. Global issues, such as those to do with the injustice inherent in the current systems of the global economy, or highlighting the cultural achievements and self-sufficiency of Southern societies … receive far less attention. (*Steiner, 1992, p. 9, cited in Robbins *et al.*, 2003)*

Our concern with social justice was not then uppermost, although there could be an argument that giving pupils self-confidence and group skills would enable an active approach for the future. However, Griffiths’ (1998) 5 year study of lessons at primary and secondary schools in one local education authority (LEA) found that the predominant teaching style was a didactic presentation of factual information.
This did not match the school mission and rhetoric. When asked, not one teacher or pupil could quote any of the school aims. Interventions to introduce collaborative projects ‘to empower themselves along the lines suggested by the definition of the global citizen’ were nevertheless successful. However, this change in the development of global citizenship attributes requires the teacher to transfer her invested power to a class and then support pupils as they adapt to the change. This, suggests Griffiths, is precluded by the whole style and structure of state education.

Indeed, Davies et al. (1999, p. 24) suggest that since the 1980s,

The global perspective has also reduced. While there are teachers who retain an internationalist position, models of citizenship which purport to look beyond the nation state seem to speak less to them than other characterisations. In fact, teachers see citizenship as something which is given real expression mainly in local terms.

Yet, in their questionnaire survey of 700 teachers, the teachers ranked world-wide needs and responsibilities as top of their list of activities which would be helpful in developing a child’s citizenship (p. 75). However, more in-depth follow up interviews suggested that:

While quantitative analysis shows teachers rated world-wide needs and responsibilities as very important, the global factor does not appear to have a substantial place in the informal curriculum of education for citizenship. A broader world view did not figure in the activities suggested by teachers as being ‘helpful’ in the process. The traditional view of citizenship from a social perspective appears safely ensconced in a highly local context. (Davies et al., 1999, p. 83)

Moreover, there were strong indications that this would not be interpreted in a political or controversial way. Indeed, the survey found that the teachers had a depoliticized or apolitical view of citizenship and overwhelmingly saw citizenship as about meeting our obligations to fellow members of a community. It was perceived as being about active concern for the welfare of others:

Time and time again the language of caring, unselfishness, co-operation and demonstrating respect is used to give substance to the distinguishing characteristics of a good citizen, be the context school or the wider community … it is perhaps not surprising that the notion of participation in the community emerged as a key theme on how one discharged the responsibilities of being a good citizen. (Davies et al., 1999, pp. 50–51)

It is at this point that it becomes clear that there needs analysis of the different definitions of and motivations for the ‘active’ global citizen. A welfare approach, based on duties to others, can be seen as distinct from an approach based on some ‘outrage’ against social injustice towards the disadvantaged or oppressed. In Davies et al.’s study, the teachers were reluctant to get involved in teaching about controversial views. One of the most common ways that teachers thought schools could promote good citizenship was by encouraging pupils to pick up litter, although obeying school rules, coming to class on time and taking pride in your school were also seen as important. Yet, as Davies et al. argue (1999, pp. 55–56), issues of racism, sexism, international issues and human rights are crucial in preparing young people to be citizens. Indeed, a report by Birmingham Advisory Service found that one reason why
ethnic minority pupils are under-achieving is because the curriculum is Eurocentric, with little emphasis on Black or Asian culture and history (Lepkowska, 2004). Moreover, a recent survey of pupils felt sensitive issues in history should be taught in schools (Times Educational Supplement, 5 March 2004, p. 4).

A further issue for education for a critical and active global citizenship is that, as the Crick Report warned, citizenship education may simply be conflated with personal, social and health education. A report on the first year of citizenship education in England by both Her Majesty’s Inspectors (HMI) and the Qualifications and Curriculum Agency (QCA) have suggested that this is indeed what is happening (Kerr & Cleaver, 2004). While this is problematic because of the emphasis on personal and individual needs rather than the wider social and political structures that shape our lives (Harber, 2002), it may equally mean that that global issues are played down or ignored. Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) may touch on culture and conflict, but it may do this from a more individualistic perspective relating to peer and family relationships, without linking these to broader political structures and histories that shape such relationships.

This has certainly been the contention from gender analyses of citizenship education, as argued in Arnot and Dillabough’s (2000) collection. Not only are gender issues such as patriarchy or violence towards women generally played down in citizenship education, but the whole question of the distinctions between the public and private sphere does not receive attention. It could be argued that the implications of a multicultural or multifaith society can be particularly difficult for teachers, in dealing with sensitive issues of gender culture such as participation by women in religious office, reproductive rights, female circumcision, family honour or what is seen as ‘forced marriage’. Yet there would be different views on whether women are excluded from citizenship in its broadest sense in both majority and minority cultures; these issues and debates should at least be raised.

Factors in the impact of global citizenship education

The literature on the preparation of young people for active citizenship points to the paucity of research internationally on the impact of various aspects of schooling on whether people become active citizens—locally or globally. The need for longitudinal studies, and the difficulty of isolating variables within students’ school and out-of-school experiences, means that systematic survey research is problematic. However, there seems to be universal agreement that the two best school-based predictors of whether people become active citizens (engaged in voluntary work or activism) are: (a) involvement in school democracy and (b) experience of doing some form of community service (Davies, 2004a).

Given, as we saw, that most descriptions of education for global citizenship stress the importance of democracy and human rights, if pupils are to be educated in and for global citizenship this suggests that they should experience democracy and human rights in their daily lives at school—and not just be told about it. This means that pupils must have some role in the decision-making structures of the school.
Arguably, experience in elective and decision-making procedures is the most direct and important form of education for democratic citizenship, in terms of a first hand way of learning democratic skills and values and a democratic political vocabulary. The Crick Report recognized this:

There is increasing recognition that the ethos, organization, structures and daily practices of schools, including whole school activities and assemblies, have a significant impact on the effectiveness of citizenship education. (QCA, 1998)

However, although the Advisory Group considered making school councils compulsory, they rejected the idea ‘for fear of overburdening schools and teachers’. Instead they aimed to ‘plant a seed that will grow’ (QCA, 1998, pp. 36, 25–26). School councils are indeed growing in UK, although schools in England have some way to go before they reach the level of democracy of some of their European counterparts (Davies & Kirkpatrick, 2000). The research on what school councils do in the UK suggests sometimes a very localized concern—lockers, school trips, litter—which relates to how much power is given to them by the school. Yet they can also be active in anti-racism as part of drawing up behaviour policies. From September 2003 school governors have been able to appoint under 18 years olds as associate members. These pupils can attend meetings and be members of the governing body committees, although they will not have voting rights. Hallgarten and Breslin (2003) see this as providing a means of enabling pupils to increase their influence over the real business of the school—tests, targets and curriculum. How much influence they could have over the global citizenship curriculum is unknown. The European research (Davies & Kirkpatrick, 2000) noted pupils being active on curriculum committees in the school, advising on content and method; this would seem to have a more direct link to global citizenship education and the possibility of learning about the controversial issues that pupils want (see Yamashita, in this issue). Yet how all pupils can experience the democracy and decision-making which would be a precursor to active local and global citizenship is a vexed structural issue for schools, when so little autonomy is allowed in learning. It is possible that the charitable, welfare side of active citizenship, the fund-raising for poor countries, does reach more pupils than representative democracy in the school. Clearly, a whole school approach is crucial, as evidenced in some of the 7400 UNESCO Associated Schools across the world who are dedicated to UNESCO ideals of peace, democracy, human rights and sustainable development. The more active of these schools tried to involve all of their pupils in international activities and in making an impact on the local community, but the research report of 50 years of ASPnet schools found a variation in what schools could achieve, or their interpretations of global citizenship (Davies et al., 2002).

Community service, too, is patchy. While in some countries this is a compulsory element to all formal education, or is linked to grades, this is not mandated in the UK. Again, community service or voluntary work is recommended in the Citizenship guidelines, but will take many different shapes, and could be confined to picking up litter—or hence even seen as a punishment. From the international research (Yates & Youniss, 1999) it would seem that for community service to have
an impact, it must create a self-identity as a person who can influence things, with the knowledge and skills to do this. Helping in a project for the homeless, for example, if linked to critical discussion about the causes of poverty, can lead to a reformulation of identity as someone who wants to get involved. Community service can rarely be engaged in at the international level, unless there are funds for travel, but, like school councils, it would still seem to be an important breeding ground for that sense of efficacy which is crucial to active global citizenship. Community service which worked for example with refugees, asylum seekers or with disadvantaged ethnic minority groups, would immediately provide a global dimension to thinking about social structures.

Where the research is sorely lacking is in what predisposes people to take part in issues related to their role as global citizens, a role which might almost bypass the local to go straight to the global. What influences young people to take part in rallies or demonstrations about global events? Why do they join global social movements, whether environmental groups such as Greenpeace or economic forums such as the European Social Forum? What in their schooling on the other hand predisposes young people to join fundamentalist groups, or even extremist groups such as Al-Qaeda? I have argued elsewhere (Davies, 2004b) that contemporary schooling in many countries does not always protect against fundamentalism, and indeed its structure of selective, competitive individualism does not give the secure identities which are needed to resist the lure of absolutism. For global citizenship education to have a real impact, it would need to be set within a learning environment which not only taught knowledge and skills, which not only gave some experience of participating as a citizen of the school, but which enabled comfort with uncertainty and fluidity.

What are the contexts and constraints on global citizenship education?

In looking at such possible ‘defining moments’ in the educational experiences of young people, we need to look at research on what actually happens in formal school curriculum and what are seen as possibilities as well as gaps in a subject such as global citizenship. The Department for International Development (DfID) ‘Enabling effective support’ (EES) project identified resources, particularly those suitable for key stage 1, as key needs of primary teachers. Yet at the same time, it pointed out that ‘this might not be a problem of lack of resources available but that the teachers are not aware of resources that are available’ (DfID, 2003). For secondary school teachers, ‘resource materials’ and ‘training to increase knowledge’ were identified as needs. One of the interesting insights in the research was the difficulties on assessment. Lawson concluded that the

English curriculum model is outcomes-based … Values and attitudes, which form a central part of development education initiatives, are not easily included in an outcomes driven framework because they are not easily reduced to elements specified in terms of indicators and measures. (2002, p. 14)

The EES research in south-east England and London found that:
The majority of responses identified lack of time as the main barrier to including the
global dimension, followed by a lack of suitable resources, then a lack of adequate
training. Lack of confidence was also identified, to a much lesser extent. Additional
comments referred to an overcrowded curriculum with the emphasis on literacy and
numeration, and a lack of up-to-date resources that are easy to use and fit into the existing
curriculum. (SERDEC and LDESG, 2002)

In 2003, the DfID summarized the regional research and put together the following
as teacher/advisors’ needs, in terms of dealing with global issues at school

- an apparent overload of education policy initiatives which are felt to be prioritized
  over the Global Dimension
- confusion as to how the Enabling Effective Support strategy relates to initiatives
  on citizenship and sustainable development
- a lack of awareness of initiatives and experiences across and between different
  local authorities
- a sense of isolation in promoting these issues
- a lack of access to teaching materials
- a lack of time to develop ideas, assist in developing initiatives of to disseminate
  learning from previous work with practitioners
- anxiety about dealing with potentially controversial issues and a lack of confidence
  in dealing with unfamiliar material and ideas. (DfID, 2003)

This does not bode well for the future. The EES document (DfID, 2001) suggests
the following under the school section:

- There is a need to address a range of matters in each of the following areas:
  - the curriculum and what is taught;
  - the experience of school as a whole;
  - the role of the school as a key civil society organization;
  - the personal and professional development of teachers

... Key to this approach is presenting the challenges as an educational ‘problem’ … a
‘problem’ that teachers, schools, LEAs, policy makers etc. have to respond to. NGOs
such as DECs are there to help schools respond to their ‘problem’. [DfID emphases]

Whether teachers see issues in terms of teaching global citizenship education as their
problem or not would be a question to be answered. Robbins et al. (2003) carried
out an interesting research study on the attitudes toward education for global
citizenship among trainee teachers. While ‘Global citizenship should have a high
priority in the primary school curriculum’ was agreed by 59%, the percentage went
down to 40% for ‘I dealt with global issues during my school experience’, to 35% for
‘I feel confident to contribute to a whole school approach to global citizenship’, and
to 31% for ‘I feel confident to contribute to a whole school approach to sustainable
development’. The complexity of the subject and the need to deal with highly
controversial issues would be a key source of this lack of confidence.

Not directly termed ‘global citizenship education’, some research on citizenship
education has relevance to this, and touches upon teachers’ needs. McKenzie’s (2000)
baseline questionnaire survey on citizenship education in UK schools found the
highest priority was attached to ‘values other than one’s own’, followed by ‘global
issues, questions and problems’ and ‘human rights concepts and instruments’. At the time of research, both primary and secondary schools’ ‘citizenship content’ focused on global issues, problems and questions and social and moral education. The questionnaire results show when asked about areas of collaboration (with UNICEF), most respondents considered in-service teacher education and assistance with the selection and use of materials to be the most important.

It seems that although the most of the research on teachers’ needs provides a broad understanding of gaps, it does not touch on the deeper issues which are creating these needs. To teach global citizenship one needs not just knowledge of contemporary events, crises, economics and cultural patterns, but also the confidence to tackle issues which could be problematic in a fragile multicultural classroom. A national curriculum which simultaneously takes up time and is narrow in terms of specified performance outcomes is not conducive to the free-ranging, unpredictable and contentious nature of much global citizenship education.

The needs of learners

The vast majority of pupils (81%) believe that it is important to learn about global issues at school and that young people need to understand global matters in order to make choices about how they want to lead their lives. (MORI Survey on children’s knowledge of global issues, 1998, quoted in DfID, 2003, p. 3).

This is one of the most quoted figures in the field of development education and global citizenship education after 1998, and demonstrates clearly students’ interests in learning about global issues.

MORI (Market Opinion Research International) has been commissioning pieces of quantitative research by DfID or Development Education Association (DEA) on students’ perspectives on global issues and on developing countries. Its survey on children’s knowledge of global issues (MORI, 1998) involved 4245 pupils in 179 middle and secondary state schools in England and Wales. The research found that pupils wanted to know more about the reasons for war (49%), human rights abuses (48%), destruction of the environment (39%), the Third World’s economic problems (37%), famine (36%), environmental problems caused by some large companies (33%), and overpopulation (30%). Other options were not offered. Only 12% of respondents did not want to know more about any of these issues (figures quoted in Peaty, 2001, p. 16). These are all big issues, and indeed difficult to cover in a squeezed curriculum.

But children are not, as might be surmised, parochial in their outlook, and it would be important not to underestimate their interest and aptitude for the big issues. By looking at three different pieces of research on children’s orientations towards developing countries and global issues (MORI, 1998, 2000; BMRBSR, 1999), Peaty concludes that the ‘... clear message is that children want to find out more about developing countries and from various sources’, and ‘... children are evidently concerned about the problems of developing countries’ (Peaty, 2001, p. 17).
As well as these orientations towards global issues, there are studies which explore students’ views of citizenship and citizenship education (e.g. Lister et al., 2001; Kerr et al., 2002), of primary curriculum generally or particular curriculum areas such as geography (Pollard et al., 1997; Norman & Harrison, 2004). Burke and Grosvenor (2003) gathered views of children about varieties of aspects of their school life. All these studies point to the lack of student consultation and discussion in the area of school practice and planning. Lister et al. point out that:

The absence of discussion with young people in preparation of both the Crick Report and the new curriculum guidelines seems strange, especially given that both documents emphasise the need to provide pupils with opportunities for consultation within schools as practical experiences of citizenship. (2001, p. 5)

Had one consulted young people or listened to them one would found the requirement for hard-hitting approaches and treatment of uncomfortable issues. In terms of war and conflict, there is a relevant piece of qualitative research by Carlsson on children’s views towards issues of survival (Carlsson, 1999), and there is also Lister and Paida’s (1998) research on the young children’s images of the ‘enemies’.

In the field of global citizenship education and development education, there had not hitherto however been any major piece qualitative research on children’s needs with regard to their learning. Clough and Holden (2002) in their book *Education for Citizenship: Ideas into Action* report on various pieces of research about young people’s global perspectives (but not on needs). In summary, children in the UK are found to be predominantly Eurocentric, and their main source of information is television; however, direct links through which students gain access to the voices of children living in different material and cultural conditions can counter Eurocentrism and promote new understandings. Yet between the ages of 11 and 14, students at school become increasingly pessimistic about the prospect of alleviating poverty, hardship and pollution world-wide. Various activities are then suggested for the ‘global dimension’ of citizenship (the last chapter in the book), with the aim of challenging stereotypes and developing thinking skills, and relating topics to controversial issues of power and justice. The difficulty, as with all the books on global citizenship, is whether children want their thinking skills developed, or would couch it in these terms.

Rudduck and Flutter (2004) in their recent book *How To Improve Your School* list areas which pupils in some schools have been consulted about and ‘that are potentially relevant to the agenda of citizenship education’ (p. 119). These include ‘school-wide issues’ such as rules, rewards, bullying, the school mission statement; year group issues such as induction, parents’ evenings, homework support; and form/class issues such as teacher–pupil relationships, group work and noise. It is significant that nowhere does there seem to be a direct consultation with pupils about the content or pedagogy of curriculum, including citizenship education curriculum. Still less might there be consultation about the global citizenship education curriculum, as would be found in Europe (as mentioned earlier). It would seem important that pupils were involved in making the decisions on global
citizenship approaches in their schools, both as a learning experience in its own right and to bring the necessary ‘consumer’ view.

There is now an increasing range of commercially produced resources for teaching global citizenship within the general area of citizenship in schools. They will provide not just ‘topics’ but directly or indirectly tackle the question of suitable pedagogy. To examine these resources, questions would be on the relative balance between information and concepts; the choice of case studies (home or away); the degree to which they tackle controversial political issues such as military spending or the arms trade; how questions of culture or religious freedom are tackled; whether a basic understanding of rights is provided or assumed; and whether they explicitly link local and global connections. In terms of teaching/learning approaches, one could look at the activities suggested for pupils (for example, investigation or enquiry strategies, presentation skills, media analysis, participation in groups). And in terms of agency, one would look at whether pupils are encouraged to take action, join campaigns, write to Members of Parliament, take part in boycotts and so on. It would be interesting to have pupils review or preview the materials too, rather than be simple recipients.

Conclusion

There is a reasonable consensus on the importance of global citizenship, and on the listings of knowledge, skills, values and behaviours which would characterize the area. An abstract term can in theory be turned into a highly valuable and radical curriculum area. This paper has attempted to trace some of these more radical and politicized components of an active global citizenship, locating the arguments for a social justice approach which looked critically at questions of rights and culture, but also looking at the reality of what schools and teachers are able to do, and under what motivation. Debates will inevitably arise as to what are ‘overarching’ areas and what are the entry points at different stages; much more research is needed on actual practice and on impact. As with national citizenship education, there are dilemmas about assessment and monitoring: one could have outcomes of a test or even portfolio work, and evaluate over time the performances of pupils in schools; one can conduct attitude surveys of pupils before and after programmes, on their orientations towards global issues and to diversity; however this does not tackle longer term behaviours, individually or in groups. A recent UNESCO IBE/GTZ Experts Meeting in Geneva tackled the development of a monitoring and evaluation framework for programmes promoting the UNESCO ideal of ‘Learning to Live Together’, and noted the huge challenges involved. There was an interesting notion of a ‘results chain’, moving through inputs, activities, outputs, use of outputs, outcomes and then to the final impact. There is an ‘attribution gap’: the further one goes along the chain, the more difficult it is to attribute the perceived effect to the actual programme. That is, if the intended final impact is a more peaceful society, and if the society does become more peaceful, how far can one go back down the chain to say it was the result of a particular peace education programme (Warner,
2004)? Similarly, if the eventual aim of a global citizenship programme is a collection of ‘global citizens’ who will act concertedly in particular ways to challenge injustice and promote rights, how do we track these individuals and groups during and after their school life, and, conversely, how do we engage in ‘backwards mapping’ to work out what caused people to act as global citizens, and what ‘percentage’ was due to exposure to a global citizenship programme in a school?

Nonetheless, the difficulty of long-term evaluation does not mean we should not engage in the activity. Part of the skill of being a global citizen is the capacity for research, and one can at least start the process in a school by encouraging research skills and working out the effect of action. The notion of ‘citizen research’, whereby citizens contribute to the development of data bases, say on environmental change, can be extended to ‘global citizen research’, where people of all ages can contribute to international data bases on what is happening about rights, poverty or conflict in their local area. One may not be able to accurately monitor the impact of a particular global citizenship education curriculum, but the curriculum and its participants can contribute to a global understanding of how the world works—or does not work.

References


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