

## **Citizenship Education and Inclusion: A Multidimensional Approach**

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My task in this paper is to link my own field of citizenship education to inclusion – in other words to look at inclusion through a somewhat different lens. This is not an idle exercise because the link is an essential one if the agenda of inclusion is to succeed. Both democratic citizenship education and inclusion share a common ethos and language based on concerns for human rights, social justice, and a sense of community. Both aim at the building of democratic relationships.

At the same time we must acknowledge that both citizenship education and inclusion are essentially contested concepts, platforms for debate and a wide variety of voices. The debate within the field of citizenship education is a significant one for inclusion and vice versa. In the field of citizenship education the growing diversity and pluralism both of our own national populations as well as globally suggest that we need to acknowledge that there are many voices in the debate, though not all are equally heard. Parker (1996) writes that what is required is a dialogue about what are “essentially contested concepts.” These contested concepts include “democracy”, “citizenship”, “gender”, “social class” and “multiculturalism” among others. (We could add “inclusion” as well.) What we need, argues Parker, is several advanced ideas that would conceptualize democracy as a “path” or a “journey” rather than an accomplishment; a direct and full participation rather than the mere spectatorship of nominating and then voting for political candidates; and recognition of pluralism including race, gender, ethnicity within society as opposed to the more traditionalist assimilationist view.

As Arnot (2003) puts it more pungently, “Citizenship education which contains the teaching of democratic values has now become the political currency to address the stratificational and destructive effects of performance and managerialist cultures in schools. It has become the means to retrieve the moral order, the sense of community and belonging and the retrieval of social justice.” No doubt some would make the same statement could be said for inclusion and the encouragement of inclusive practices in schools.

Thus we can perceive that there is a strong conceptual link between inclusion and democratic citizenship education. If you will permit me, let me further illustrate the connection between inclusion and citizenship education through the use of the following quotation:

Most *schools* have been based, practically, on the denial of equal rights...Ours begin by affirming those rights. They said, some <*children*> are too ignorant, and *defective*, to share in education. Possibly so, said we; and by your system, you would always keep them ignorant, and *less than human*. We proposed to give

all <children>a chance; and we expect the weak to grow stronger, the ignorant wiser, and all better, happier together. We made the experiments, and the fruit is before us...

On the face of it, this would seem to be a quotation in support of inclusion and inclusive schools, but in fact it is only a slightly modified statement about democratic government from U.S. President Abraham Lincoln nearly 150 years ago. I have only substituted “schools” for “governments” and “children” for “people.” Here is the unedited quotation:

Most *governments* have been based, practically, on the denial of equal rights...Ours began by affirming those rights. They said, some <people> are too ignorant, and *vicious*, to share in government. Possibly so, said we; and by your system, you would always keep them ignorant, and *vicious*. We proposed to give all <people> a chance; and we expected the weak to grow stronger, the ignorant wiser, and all better, happier together. We made the experiments, and the fruit is before us...

■ Abraham Lincoln, 1854, cited in Bickmore (1993)

Indeed, both citizenship and inclusion share as a central concern about “membership,” the former in a nation-state community and the latter in a school community. But membership, as Bickmore (1993) points out, carries the potential for both exclusion and inclusion. In the case of the former the emphasis is on tradition and stability, the privilege of belonging and consensus. In the case of the latter the emphasis is creativity, on the importance of new members, new voices, dissent, and change. The paradox of democratic education is that these two societal needs – tradition and change – exist simultaneously. This Parker (2003) argues leads us to what may be the central citizenship education question of our time: *how can we live together justly, in ways that are mutually satisfying, and which leave our differences, both individual and group, intact and our multiple identities recognized?* (20).

Parker (2003) further argues that those who see the democratic path as a dichotomy between tradition, which has us looking back, and creativity, which has us looking forward is a false one. In truth, there is a need to see value in both tradition and creativity, and to understand the synergy between these two dimensions of societal development. Like Okihiro (1994) we would argue that the core values and ideals of a nation are animated not by those already secured within the mainstream, not by those privileged already, but by those not secured and not privileged. This is a powerful argument for inclusive societies and inclusive schools to serve them. In the end the link between democratic citizenship education and inclusion is based on a common value of accepting and even celebrating diversity and difference. A fundamental prerequisite for achieving inclusion is a citizenship that embraces individual differences, multiple group identities, and a unifying political community all at once. (Parker, 2003, 25) The challenge is how we get there. In other words, what kinds of citizens are needed to provide support for inclusion, that is, to create a polity that is “safe for inclusion”?

### **Citizenship for the future**

To begin to shape an answer to this question I will draw upon a four-year study in the

1990s that tried to identify the qualities required of future citizens to deal with a changing, more diverse and more globalized world. This study, the Citizenship Education Policy Study (hereafter CEPS), used a Delphi methodology to elicit the opinions of 264 policy experts from nine nations about future trends and the citizen characteristics required of people to cope with and/or manage these trends. (Cogan & Derricott, 2000). Specifically, the experts, from a broad range of fields, were asked in an initial interview round to (1) identify the major global trends likely to impact people's lives up to the year 2020, (2) suggest the citizen characteristics required of people to cope with and/or manage these trends, and (3) suggest educational strategies that might best implement these citizen characteristics. The accumulated data were then utilized in the development of educational policy recommendations and policy implementation strategies by the international team of researchers.

The experts reached consensus on eight citizen characteristics and these constitute the traits, skills, and specific competencies citizens living in the 21st century will need if they are to cope with and manage the undesirable trends and to cultivate and nurture the desirable ones. The eight characteristics are presented in descending order of importance as identified by the panelists and include these:

- ability to look at and approach problems as a member of a global society.
- ability to work with others in a cooperative way and to take responsibility for one's roles/duties within society.
- ability to understand, accept, and tolerate cultural differences.
- capacity to think in a critical and systemic way.
- willingness to resolve conflict in a non-violent manner.
- willingness to change one's lifestyle and consumption habits to protect the environment.
- ability to be sensitive towards and to defend human rights (e.g., rights of women, ethnic minorities, etc.).
- willingness and ability to participate in politics at local, national, and international levels.

These traits or attributes of 21st century citizens can clearly be seen to be supportive of and integral to the functioning of inclusive societies and inclusive schools as well as democratic societies. Based on the anticipated conditions in the future and these consensus traits, CEPS advocates that educational policy, in all its aspects, must be based upon a vision of *multidimensional citizenship*. The study found that in order to realize these eight consensus characteristics and thus meet the challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, we need a more comprehensive vision of citizenship, namely *multidimensional citizenship*, which requires citizens to address a series of interconnected dimensions of thought, belief and action.

Here I briefly summarize the four dimensions that comprise *multidimensional citizenship*: personal, social, spatial, and temporal. That is:

- **Personal:** A personal capacity for and commitment to a civic ethic characterized by responsible habits of mind, heart, and action
- **Social:** The capacity to live and work together for civic purposes
- **Spatial:** The capacity to see oneself as a member of several overlapping communities -- local, regional, national, and multinational

- **Temporal:** The capacity to locate present challenges in the context of both past and future in order to focus on long-term solutions to the difficult challenges we face

Time does not permit me to elaborate on each of these dimensions here. To summarize, based on their findings the CEPS researchers argue that only an education that incorporates these four dimensions in a rich, complex and coherent vision of citizenship will equip people to respond effectively to the challenges and demands of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. We believe that the task of preparing citizens for the future can best be addressed by structuring the school itself in such a way that it becomes a model of *multidimensional citizenship*. The school structure and organization, its faculty and staff, curriculum, assessment measures, the body of student learners and the general atmosphere within the school, must be focused upon the development of the four dimensions noted above. The students must live and learn in a living laboratory of democracy from the earliest years of schooling if multidimensionality is to be acquired. The school must become a democratic institution, and the role of educators must be consistent with the aims of *multidimensional citizenship*.

Thus, the development of this vision, or *multidimensional citizenship*, must become the central priority of citizenship education policy. Perhaps most relevant to our discussion of the link with inclusion, CEPS suggests a number of implementing recommendations including focusing upon the school as a model of this concept, strengthening the links between the school and the larger community within which it exists, and a deliberation-based curriculum for learners.

### **The school as a model community**

We believe that the task of preparing citizens for the future can best be addressed by structuring the school itself in such a way that it becomes a model of *multidimensional citizenship*. The school structure and organization, its faculty and staff, curriculum, assessment measures, the body of student learners and the general atmosphere within the school, must be focused upon the development of the four dimensions noted above. The students must live and learn in a living laboratory of democracy from the earliest years of schooling if multidimensionality is to be acquired. The school must become a democratic institution, and the role of educators must be consistent with the aims of *multidimensional citizenship*.

But the school alone cannot develop multidimensional citizens. “Indeed, even if some schools managed to become exemplary havens of mutual respect, caring, and democratic living together of teachers and their students, the rest of the daily surround would challenge or negate the in-school teaching” (Goodlad, 2001, 4). The school and community must become a “core social centre”. According to an OECD study (CERI, 2001, 127-128), in this approach

...the school comes to enjoy widespread recognition as the most effective bulwark against social fragmentation and a crisis of values. There is strong sense of schooling as a “public good” and a marked upward shift in the general status and level of support for schools. The individualization of learning is tempered by clear collective emphasis. Greater priority is accorded to the social/community role of schools, with more explicit sharing of programmes and responsibilities with other settings of further and continuing education/training. Poor areas in

particular enjoy high levels of support.

We would add that these schools should be a model for environmental practices. Given the global trends focusing upon the environment, we believe that schools must formally adopt and abide by a code of environmentally-minded behaviors including the careful use of water, energy, and other resources, as well as appropriate waste disposal and recycling procedures. Teachers and students within schools must also be willing to play active roles in their communities in promoting awareness and action to support sustainable development to ensure the future of the planet.

In this context, schools and their communities should assess their educational culture with respect to the following questions:

To what extent does local school policy and practice foster and/or demonstrate

- sensitivity to human rights?
- respect for the opinions and ideas of others?
- cooperative, collaborative working relationships?
- open communication and the peaceful resolution of conflict?
- active participation and involvement in a variety of communities?
- sound environmental practices? (Cogan, Grossman, & Liu, 2000)

### **A multi-dimensional citizenship education curriculum**

In order to provide the opportunity for students to become multi-dimensional citizens, the CEPS study further recommends that a deliberation-based curriculum be implemented within the school. The goal is the development of global and civic-minded citizens. It would apply to all grade levels and, as appropriate, to all subject areas. This curriculum would be organized around six major ethical questions or issues that cut across the breadth of the curriculum.

- What should be done in order to promote equity and fairness within and among societies?
- What should be the balance between the right to privacy and free and open access to information?
- What should be the balance between protecting the environment and meeting human needs?
- What should be done to cope with population growth, genetic engineering and children in poverty?
- What should be done to develop shared universal values while at the same time respecting local values?
- What should be done to empower learners to act upon the above, both in their schools and wider communities? (Cogan & Derricott, 2000, 158-159)

We believe that these questions are best addressed in multiple learning environments and through interdisciplinary studies both in school and in the wider communities in which students live. The underlying foundation of this learning must be deliberation. Students of all ages must be given the opportunity to examine in depth the great issues of our day which will most certainly impact their lives fully in the coming years. This is the essence of the *multidimensional* citizenship education.

## Conclusion

This brief survey cannot do justice to an exploration of the relationship between citizenship education and inclusion. In conclusion, I might add that another way of elaborating the linkage would be to frame it with what Bernstein (1996) calls democratic pedagogic rights. Using this frame of analysis, schools that embrace democratic citizenship education should institutionalize three interrelated rights of enhancement, inclusion and participation.

Enhancement refers to the provision the rights of individuals to critical understanding and to new possibilities. This could be in the form of the deliberation curriculum advocated above. Inclusion, of course, means the right to be included socially, intellectually, culturally and personally. Social inclusion is a condition for a shared sense of community. This of course provides support for inclusive schools. Participation in this context would prepare students for civic practice and be operationalized in the political sphere.

Whether we adopt the four dimensions of multidimensional citizenship or Bernstein's pedagogic rights in the end, I think, makes little difference. The fundamental premise of this paper is that inclusive schools must be built in a context of democratic citizenship education and a civic culture that goes beyond the school.

As the CEPS study concludes (Cogan & Derricott, 2000, 168), the stakes are high. Without such efforts, and without the cultivation of some form of multidimensional citizenship, we face the prospect of becoming world of economically developed and technically competent people who have lost, or who have never gained, the ability to be citizens able to reason cross-culturally, think critically, to cooperate on problems with people very different from ourselves, and to celebrate the humanity and diversity of our multiple communities.

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