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**Project description**

**The Complexity of Implementing Ideals of Global Citizenship: A Comparative Study of Human Rights, Peace and Sustainability in Education**

*Abstract*

*What*, *how* and *why* do secondary students learn in relation to guidelines and ideals of global citizenship education? This question is the starting point of this project investigating the implementation of global citizenship education (GCED) in Sweden, South Africa, USA, India, Germany, France, England, and New Zealand. GCED is today emphasized as a pivotal part of education including ideals of human rights education (HRE), peace education (PE) and education for sustainable development (ESD). But how students are educated to “become” global citizens and the potentials and pitfalls of learning *about*, *through* and *for* human rights, peace and sustainability has so far not been investigated in a systematic and comparative way. Questions regarding what, how and why sustainability, peace and human rights can and should be taught in schools can be answered in multiple ways – opening up for some educational opportunities while hindering other learning potentials. The interplay of different dimensions of HRE, PE and ESD is today not clear, not in theory and nor in practice, and we will in this project investigate this to clarify relationships in theory and practice and how this relates to what students have learned after nine years of formal schooling.

*Introduction*

*Global Citizenship Education* (GCED) is today emphasized internationally by organizations such as the UN, UNESCO, UNRWA, OXFAM and CONCORD in internationals efforts to support peace, human rights and sustainability. GCED is, for instance, a strategic area of the UNESCO 2014-2021 Education Sector program (UNESCO, 2017). Whereas contemporary emphasis on educating global citizens dates back to the Second World War and efforts to promote international understanding in a post war era, current global environmental situation and digital flows of information have added new dimensions to the potentials and challenges of building a peaceful, just and sustainable world. Peace education (PE), human rights education (HRE) and education for sustainable development (ESD) are somewhat overlapping concepts commonly used to implement transformative pedagogies designed to promote global citizenship (Flowers, 2004; Harber & Sakade, 2009, UNESCO, 2015, 2016).

As UNESCO (2015: 15) states:

Global citizenship education aims to be transformative, building the knowledge, skills, values and attitudes that learners need to be able to contribute to a more inclusive, just and peaceful world. Global citizenship education takes ‘a multifaceted approach, employing concepts and methodologies already applied in other areas, including human rights education, peace education, education for sustainable development and education for international understanding’ and aims to advance their common objectives.

But this is a tall order for educators to implement in practice, not least since GCED has been noted as diverse with challenging goal conflicts as education has limited time and resources to support students’ global competence and global consciousness (de Andreotti, 2014; Dill, 2013; Ibrahim, 2005; Oxley & Morris, 2013). Previous research has highlighted how implementing international guidelines is complex and not an automatic top-down process (Nygren, 2011, 2016). Transforming the ideological international curricula with cognitive, socio-emotional and behavioral goals of global citizenship into learning is intricate, not least, since there are numerous ethical and practical dilemmas for teachers to consider when teaching about, so called, universal values in an unjust world (Osler, 2015; Aldersson, 2016). For instance, the imperative to do good and help others, a normative decrees, can be seen as a contrast to more critical and reflexive viewpoints which analyses global political, economic and social structures (Apple 1998; Popkewitz 1997; Davies & Pike, 2008). Even if OECD (2016) plans to assess students’ global competence, including knowledge and skills emphasized in GCED like “knowledge and understanding of global and intercultural issues” (p. 3), we still lack a deeper understanding about the teaching and learning about, through and for global citizenship in education. Researchers have especially focused on the need for a teaching promoting human rights, peace and understanding in developing countries and young democracies (OSCE, 2009). But, so called universal values is not least a concern for wealthy and democratic countries where there is a risk that democratic problems and violations of human rights becomes a problem for people in distant places, when in fact values of human rights need to be acknowledged and defended everywhere. Not least in the Nordic countries (Osler, 2015).

A normative approach focusing on good practices in education has been central in previous studies, but some studies have also underlined the need for critical analyses of this practice (Ulrich & Wenzel, 2004). For example, today we lack a structured systematic overview and analysis of implementations of peace education (Standish, 2016) and more critical perspectives are necessary (Osler, 2015).

Previous research has noted how international guidelines may have a direct and non-direct impact on educational policies on a national level (McNeely, 1995; Meyer et al 1997; Irye, 2002; Nygren, 2016). A recent report, funded by UNESCO (Mc Evoy, 2017), found that aspects of global citizenship was evident in educational policies in 89% of the member states. GCED was mandatory in teacher education in 61% of the states. But this does not mean that students necessarily learn what is intended in the recommendations. Scholars call for more empirical comparative studies of GCED but find the challenges daunting (Davies et al 2010). Still, we will take on this challenge in this project.

*Purpose and aims*

The purpose of this project is to study the possibilities and challenges when implementing ideals of global citizenship beyond national borders. By deepening the understanding of complex interactions that intervene between presumed causes and observable effects (i.e. not solely *what* GCED achieves, but *how it works*), we attempt to advance the understanding also of how GCED evolves through negotiation and application in situ (cf. Ball et al. 2012).To understand the complexity of implementing GCED we need to systematically analyze formulations, interpretations and outcomes in different cultural contexts, from the international level to the skills, knowledge and attitudes of the students. In this project we will analyze the formulations and implementations of GCED across theoretical, geographical and cultural borders at different levels of curricula. We will investigate the following questions:

* How is GCED and elements of HRE, PE and ESD formulated and understood on different levels of curricula in a global world?
* How do HRE, PE and ESD relate in theory and to students’ knowledge, skills and attitudes after ten years of schooling?
* How do international and national guidelines relate to ongoing secondary school practices in different parts of the world?

This way we will deepen our understanding about the “enactment” (Ball et al. 2012) of GCED policy, as well as, why and how students are educated to “become” global citizens and the potentials and pitfalls of learning *about*, *through* and *for* human rights, peace and sustainability.

*Theoretical and methodological considerations*

Recommendations and guidelines are interpreted, transferred and neglected on all levels of the educational system (Goodlad, 1979; Nygren, 2011). Politicians formulate curricula to fit ideological and cultural interests on both, national and regional levels (Apple, 1998; Ball et al. 2012). In schools teachers read, interpret and transform curricula into educational designs in various ways and students coming in to the classroom with a diversity of backgrounds learn contents, skills and attitudes in a number of ways (Nygren, 2016a, 2016b). On all levels there are a number of dilemmas regarding what contents, methods and mindsets to prioritize. Questions regarding *what*, *how* and *why* sustainability, peace and human rights can and should be taught in schools can be answered in multiple ways – opening up for some educational opportunities while hindering other learning potentials.

With the inspiration from John I Goodlad’s (1979) curriculum theory, and Ball and colleagues’ (2012) notion of “policy enactment” we will treat the implementation of GCED as a process including direct transactions of ideas, interpretations as well as more independent creation of value in a complex interplay with the world at large. Each curricular level can contain several different perspectives. What is formulated in recommendations and national guidelines does not automatically seep down to the students.

The levels of curricula studied here are: 1. The ideological curricula, analyzed in formulations in international guidelines for global citizenship education. 2. The formal curricula, examined in national guidelines. 3. The perceived curricula, studied through interviews with teachers about their teaching. 4. The operational curricula investigated in observations of teaching. 5. The experiential curricula, examined through students’ responses to questionnaires (see Figure 1). In line with Goodlad’s theories we do not see the guidelines as more important than students’ experiences – rather the opposite – the center of this project is what students actually find most important regarding peace, human rights and sustainability and how this relates to other levels of curricula and students in other countries.

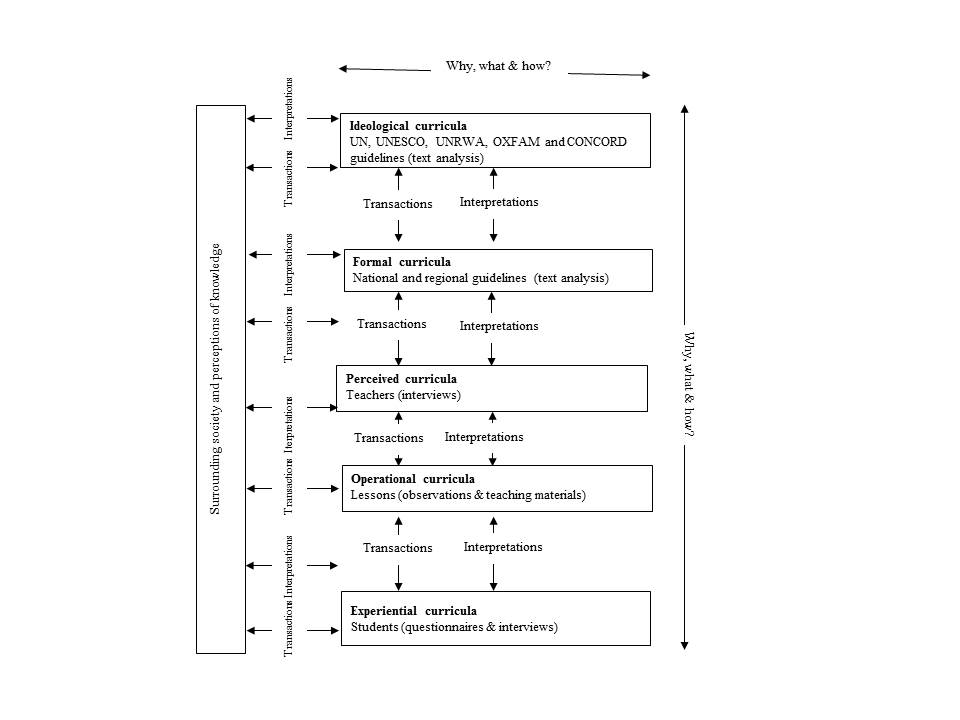


Figure 1. *Theoretical and analytical model of the relationship between and within curricular realities on different levels.*

Figure 1 illustrates the analytical and theoretical framework of this study: different curricular levels with different means and goals and possible interpretations and transactions between them. The illustration shows the different curricular domains that will be included and methods of study. It demonstrates the great importance of interpretations for how guidelines are constructed, understood, neglected and passed on in domains with didactical considerations regarding *what*, *why* and *how* students should learn about global citizenship in school. This point of departure makes it possible to study the interplay between the levels and opens up for critical analysis of content, ideas and values in line with previous notions of curricula as a matter of discourse within societal context (Apple, 1992). By comparing formulations in curricula we can see what is emphasized and ignored on the arena of formulations (Lindesjö & Lundgren, 2001), while studying on-going GCED in different educational settings – arena of realizations – will help us better understand the complex reality of teaching and learning.

The study will be guided by a European didactic tradition focusing on meaning, intentionality, and complexity (cf. Hudson, 2007; Klafki, 1995) where content, methods and goals of education are considered through the fundamental questions of what, how and why students should learn something. Across sites we will consider (1) *what* student learn *about* human rights, peace and sustainable development, (2) *how* educational designs may promote learning *through* transformative pedagogies and (3) *why* this may be considered *for* the promotion of peace, human rights and sustainability. In line with Robin Alexander (2001) we find that essential empirical questions regarding content, methods and values of education can and should be addressed in practices beyond national borders.

Noting how GCED is an umbrella concept holding ideals of education to promote human rights, peace and sustainability (UNESCO, 2015) we need to study the implementation of GCED in light of theories of human rights education (HRE), peace education (PE) and education for sustainable development (ESD). In theory we find that HRE is concerned with teaching students *about* human rights and helping students identify their rights and human rights in the world (Tibbitts, 2002, 2016; Struthers, 2015, 2017). This learning should be enabled *through* transformative student active educational designs which will empower learners to critically engage with human rights issues and work *for* a just world. In theory PE also holds three dimensions underlining the importance to learn *about* peace violations, peaceful conflict resolution *through* non-violent actions and worldviews *for* positive peace building (cf Standish 2016). Galtung (1990) underlines in theory how cultural, structural and direct violence are important to identify and deal with to support peace. The importance to learn non-violent conflict resolution draws from theories noting the importance of learning how to deal with conflicts in peaceful and constructive ways (Harris, 2004). Positive peace (Galtung 1996) is based upon theories highlighting how peace is more than just absence of violence, which can be labeled negative peace. Instead positive peace is a matter of positive mindsets, behaviors, beliefs, and perceptions (Boulding 2000; Galtung 1996; Harris & Morrison 2013; Noddings 2012; Synott 2005). ESD theories emphasize how it is important for students to learn *about* environmental, political and social issues threatening the planet in a long term perspective. However, ESD not on only concerned with sustainable development related issues as *content* of education. ESD and the global ESD frameworks (UNESCO 2006, 2014) underscore that what is required is a transformation of the conditions for learning, which is a change in the *processes* of education (Jucker & Mathar, 2015; Læssöe & Öhman, 2010). Thus, the policy frameworks and pedagogies of ESD highlight how education should be reformed in order to empower learners *through* transformative pedagogies to take action, locally and globally, to work *for* a sustainable future (Jensen & Schnack, 1997; Shephard, 2015).

Thus theoretically we find three separate and also connected perspectives under the umbrella of GCED which can help us better understand the complexity and implementation of global citizenship in schools. The content, methods and values promoted and neglected in different contexts and how HRE, PE and ESD interplay on different levels of curricula. We also find how in theory the three dimensions of global citizenship education, HRE, PE and ESD, overlap and, for instance, PE theory identify human rights and eco mind as a central parts of positive peace (Standish, 2016) and theories of sustainability emphasize the importance of peace of human rights as important parts of ESD (Jucker & Mathar, 2015). The interplay of different dimensions is today not clear, not in theory and nor in practice, and we will in this project investigate this to clarify relationships in theory and practice across national borders.

In order to obtain general and valid conclusions, we will combine analysis of formulations in national and international guidelines with large scale cross-national surveys and classroom case studies in all countries (see also Figure 1). Using a mixed methods approach we plan to collect a wide-ranging data sample to capture the richness and complexity of teaching and learning in practice both qualitatively and quantitatively (Greene, 2007; Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2010). Data will, in addition to guidelines and teaching materials, be collected as questionnaires, interviews and observations of ongoing teaching. All data sets will be coded in an iterative process based upon theories of HRE, PE and ESD. We will use a combination of content analysis (Krippendorff, 2013) and discourse analysis (Gee, 2014) to code texts, questionnaire responses and transcripts of from observations. Using qualitative and quantitative data analysis software (primarily *NVivo* and *R*) in the coding, categorization and analysis makes it possible for us to find correlations across diverse data sets. This makes it possible for us to investigate relationships in multiple directions across curricula. The mixed methods approach as a constructive way to conduct comparative studies of limited number of countries which has been highlighted by Lor (2011). In Figure 2 we illustrate how this project opens up comparisons through a mixed methods approach with post-positivist and interpretive meta-theories as starting points. This design welcomes numerous interpretations and pragmatic perspectives. From a pragmatic point of view it is central to investigate the practical consequences of ideas (Punch & Oancea, 2014). In parallel to the comparative study it will also be possible to conduct single country case studies and findings in this study may also be used in future studies of more countries in more quantitative ways. However, as illustrated in Figure 2 we will use a mixed methods approach to make it possible to analyze a rich set of case study data and also link this to more variables in cross-country questionnaires.

*Comparative*

*research design*

~~Many-country~~ Few-country

~~comparison~~

comparison

~~Single-country~~

~~study~~

*Comparative*

*Strategy*

Variable-oriented

Case-oriented

*General*

*Methodology*

~~Quantitative~~

Mixed ~~Qualitativ~~e

methods

*Metatheory*

~~Positivism~~ Post-positivism

Interpretivism

Figure 2: *Methodological approach and the comparative project design*

*Project implementation*

As a first phase in our study we have designed a questionnaire to capture some of the content, methods and values that students have taken away from school. The questionnaire was designed in a collaboration of scholars of education, HRE, PE and ESD to make sure that core aspects of the three would be part of the questionnaire. Questions are open ended and designed to provide us varied student perspectives to help us see a wide variety of experiences and aspects on *what, how* and *why* students learn about human rights, peace and sustainability in schools. The questionnaire will be used in Sweden, New Zealand, South Africa, USA, England, India, France and Germany by circa 200 students in each country. A limited number of respondents will make it possible for us to analyze the data in line with a mixed methods design. All students will have attended school for at least nine years to safeguard experiences from education under the umbrella of global citizenship. Each school will hold students with diverse backgrounds and we will use socio-economic data to contextualize our findings. In all countries we also plan to map and analyze perceptions of knowledge from a historical and sociological perspective. Students’ experiences from different educational practices and their knowledge and perspectives will further our theoretical understanding and development of protocols for case studies and investigations of texts. Thus, the empirical data from the questionnaire will be used in dialogue with previous research and theories of GCED to make sure that our analytical framework is valid and useful across theory, levels of curricula and national borders.

In a second phase we will use the findings from the survey to investigate school practices more closely in case studies. Using nested samples in a sequential mixed methods approach (cf. Collins et al 2006) we will randomly select groups in schools from the set of schools included in the first phase. In selected schools we will be able to study more in detail the perceived, operational and experiential curricula (Goodlad, 1979, see Figure 1). Interviews and observations of practices will be analyzed in relationship to other levels of curricula in the country and in the other countries included in this study. This more detailed investigation will make it possible to study more in detail the implementation of global citizenship education. Using the same survey in all schools and the same protocols (cf Alexander, 2001), developed from the analysis in phase one, will make it possible for us to better understand the bigger picture and the small pixels, making our research truly glocal.

The project group consists of researchers and teachers with diverse and long-term experiences from global citizenship education. The team combines scholarly expertise from education, peace and conflict studies, sustainability and history with experiences from teaching history, civics and socials studies in secondary schools. Researching teachers and researchers will work closely together in the collection of data and analysis. This way our findings will be understood from multiple perspectives and connect to on-going practices and understandings.

PI: Thomas Nygren, Associate Professor, Department of Education, Uppsala University, has previously analyzed the complexity of implementing international understanding (1927-2002) in guidelines and in students’ knowledge construction; investigated in classroom practices critical thinking and universal values in human rights education in Sweden and USA; and also analyzed the Swedish curriculum in light of theories of peace education.

Researcher: Felisa Tibbitts, Senior lecturer, Teachers College, Columbia University, has previously studied human rights, (global) democratic citizenship and peace education; education in post-conflict and transitional societies; curriculum development and reform; critical pedagogy; and social change theory. Current projects in global citizenship education and teacher preparation, political contexts and grassroots human rights education strategies; human rights education in secondary schools; and the infusion of human rights education within the training of professionals.

Researcher: Katerina Standish, Senior lecturer, National Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies, Otago University, is the inventor and primary researcher for the Peace Education Curriculum Analysis (PECA) (pecaproject.org) and creator of Yogic Peace Education. Her previous studies involves curriculum analysis of peace education in Australia, Sri Lanka, Sweden, Israel, England, Mexico, Canada, Saudi Arabia and New Zealand.

Researcher: Johan Wasserman, Professor, Department of Humanities Education, University of Pretoria, has previously studied the teaching of controversial issues; minorities and the minoritised in colonial Natal; violence and history teaching; human rights in history and social studies teaching.

Researcher: Oakleigh Welply, Assistant Professor, School of Education, Durham University, has studied the experiences and identities of immigrant-background children in primary schools in France and England from a cross-national perspective and the interplay between global, national and local dimensions. Her current research focus on the relationship of education to issues of language, religion, immigration, integration, globalisation, identity, gender and citizenship.

Researcher: Thomas Potthast, Professor, International Centre for Ethics in the Sciences and Humanities (IZEW), Tübingen University. Professor Potthast studies moral philosophy, bioethics, environmental ethics. In his research he is interested in for instance "Epistemic-moral hybrids": About the relation of empirical sciences and evaluative/normative dimensions and ethics and Sustainable Development in selected areas of practice such as global change and preservation of nature.

Researcher: David Kronlid, Associate Professor, Department of Education, Uppsala University and research advisor at SWEDESD (the Swedish International Center of Education for Sustainable Development) and previously employed at CEMUS. He has previously studied environmental ethics, ecofeminism, and holistic mobility with a focus on its existential, ethical and environmental ethical aspects. Recently his research focuses on climate change justice, mobility and education for sustainable development.

Researcher: Stefan Bengtsson, PhD, project coordinator SWEDESD (the Swedish International Center of Education for Sustainable Development), has previously studied didactics, curriculum theory, and critical social theory. His research focuses on the politics of education within the area of environmental and sustainability education. In his role as project coordinator at SWEDESD he is responsible for coordinating ESD implementation efforts in Sweden as part of by the Swedish Government assigned role of national focal point for the Global Action Programme on ESD.

Researcher: Anamika, PhD, is currently teaching in the Department of Education (CIE), University of Delhi. She has also taught in Lady Shri Ram College for Women and Jamia Millia Isalmia. Her Ph.D. is on “Pedagogy of Human Rights Education in the Elementary Schools of Taipei and New Delhi” done at the Department of Education, National Chengchi University, Taiwan. She is a recipient of grants from Taiwan Government Scholarship, Australian Aid (AusAID) and Georg Eckert Institute. Her recent publications include “Exploring the notion of inclusive education among B.El.Ed pre-service teachers”, *Indian Journal of Teacher Education.*

Researcher: Judit Novak, doctoral student, Department of Education, Uppsala University, has previously studied the adaptation of school inspection and regulation to ”rights-based” legislation, quality-assurance controls and audit policy (in local, national and international contexts). Of particular interest is how these adaptations (re)construe the aims, means and substance of schooling and shapes our understanding of what knowledge ”is” and what our educational systems are supposed to achieve.

Researcher: Jesse Schrage, MA, is coordinator at CEMUS, Centre for Sustainable Development, Uppsala University and he has previously researched the implementation of sustainability in teacher education in Botwana. In his current research he is analyzing the implementation of UNESCO’s guidelines.

Researching teacher: Lara Hearn-Rollo, MA, is assistant principal and teacher at Craighead Diocesan School, Timaru, New Zealand with a long term experience from teaching history and social studies in a range of secondary schools. In her previous work she has been the National Facilitator for Social Sciences at Otago University and she has designed materials for history teaching.

Researching teacher: Paul Enright, Head of Department of Humanities, Logan Park High School, New Zealand, where he has a long term experience from teaching history and social studies. His previous work has been published in the New Zealand Teachers' History Journal, books on history education and as resources for history teachers.

Researching teacher: Kelly Case

Researching teacher: Amearah Elsamadicy

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