

Chapter 9

Global Citizenship Education Curriculum for SADC Countries: Possibilities and Constraints

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ABSTRACT

Global citizenship education (GCED) is touted in many countries as a way of promoting peace, raising awareness, and addressing global challenges. In this chapter, the role of GCED in promoting global citizenship in the Southern Africa Development Community (SADC) states is explored. Further, the chapter examines the economic disparities in SADC states as well as the challenges of realizing lasting peace and stability in the region. Jack Mezirow theory of transformative learning is proposed as providing an appropriate lens for the teaching of GCED. The author argues that GCED curriculum has a role to play in shaping the mindsets of people in the region towards each other and in developing critical reflective skills that are needed to sustain peace and democracy.

INTRODUCTION

In this chapter the terms Global Citizenship Education (GCE) and curriculum are explored in order to situate the discussion in its proper context. The content of global citizenship education is also scrutinised and the pedagogical approaches that may be utilized to ensure that students have the skills that are a prerequisite to being active members of the global community. An overview of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) states and their contemporary challenges are also examined in order to identify the opportunities that the teaching of citizenship education present to SADC member states. In the final part of the chapter, the constraints for GDE education in the SADC are also explored in the light of the current political, economic challenges that SADC countries are facing. Globalisation has

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enabled easy migration between countries and this has led to movement of people, within the SADC region in huge proportions from both immigrants who either have proper or inadequate documentation. In the case of South Africa, there has been an upsurge of migrants after attainment of democratic rule from both SADC countries and beyond the region.

The citizens of South Africa have reacted to the influx of foreigners by treating them in discriminatory manner, and on occasions this has flared into open hostility and mortal attacks on them. This disposition towards refugees and job seekers from other regions in Africa and SADC, presents a huge challenge and constraints in the conceptualisation of GCE and efforts to tackle local challenges of economic development that present themselves in many of the SADC countries. In Mozambique, in 2017, attacks were experienced in the city of Palmer, from radical Islamic groups, which devastated public infrastructure, displaced numerous people from their homes and created a huge refugee crisis, that threatened food security. In 2021, Swaziland also went in turmoil due to civil unrest with citizens demanding a democratic government. All these challenges present opportunities for the teaching of Global Citizen Education in the SADC region, as a strategy to inculcate values that promote peace and democratic dispositions among citizens as well as skills to solve problems within the different countries. It goes without saying that the teaching of GCE, within SADC countries, presents many opportunities for SADC citizens to become global citizens. However, the opportunities flaunt with many challenges.

Citizenship Education as a Curriculum

Citizenship Education (CE) refers to a curriculum that has the goal of equipping young people with the skills regarding their roles and responsibilities as citizens (Kerr, 2004). Citizenship Education has been termed Civic “Education, Social Studies, Studies of Societies, Moral Education, World Studies, Life Skills and Social Sciences” (Kerr, 2004, p. 7). This curriculum has also been embedded in many subjects like, Geography, History, Economics, Value Education to mention only a few. In other SADC states, it is just treated as a cross cutting subject that can be embedded across the curriculum. Citizenship Education became a component of educational reform around 2000, as many nations struggled with strategies to help prepare young people for life and duties in the community.

Citizenship Education is a contested area and their only convergence comes on the importance of the curriculum today in preparing young people for adult responsibilities. Many people concede that Citizenship Education is not a homogeneous curriculum across nations, as it tends to different forms in different socio-economic and political contexts.

If Citizenship Education is conceptualized as a curriculum, then it becomes vital to interrogate the term curriculum early in this chapter. This is because a curriculum can be conceptualised in many diverse and contested ways (Ornstein & Hunkins, 2018). The term curriculum is contested and tends to assume different meanings in different contexts (Carl, 2009). The word curriculum is derived from a “Latin word that means race or track” (Carl, 2009, p.27). The implication of a curriculum being a race or track is that learners under the tutelage of a school are prepared for adult life by undergoing a given curriculum. Schubert, (1986, p.26) postulated features that would characterise a curriculum:

- Content
- Learning outcome
- Learning experiences
- Selected tasks or concepts that learners have to comprehend as a part of their studies

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