CITIZENSHIP AND PEACE EDUCATION

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Summary

This chapter examines how citizenship education could contribute to peace education and peace itself. This depends upon the social conditions in which education for peace and citizenship is required. Three social conditions that might distinguish different types of Education for Peace (EFP) and citizenship programs have been hypothetically identified: times of peace, times of war and a peace-making process, and after war. A comparison of different EFP and citizenship programs in these different social conditions allows the identification of elements built by school-based curricula and others built by civil society itself that contribute to peace. EFP developed by citizens as a way to build citizenship for peace rather than learn it in a school environment. This kind of EFP is a result of the trauma and enormous cost of facing war in the everyday lives of these citizens. Civilians are forced to learn when participating and taking action in the face of war and peace-making processes. Bosnia-Herzegovina illustrates how after war EFP can contribute to healing, reconciliation and trust in human nature, and can rebuild hope for the future. In contrast to EFP during war, this program is designed for primary and secondary school children. Curriculum content of EFP after war does not differ greatly from EFP during peace times, except perhaps for its emphasis on peace and participants' questions directly associated with their war experience. These are absent in the English and Mexican citizenship programs, that this paper used as EFP in times of peace. In these cases it is more difficult to learn at first hand about problems of war, peace and conflict. Citizenship, democracy and social justice become the most important issues. Transversal curriculum and the participation of students in school and community-based activities become crucial to learn citizenship and EFP.

1. Introduction

Peace and citizenship education has evolved following the development of war and

peace history worldwide. During the 1960s, in addition to accounts of war, mainstream peace history concentrated on diplomatic traditions and elite foreign policy decision-making. Nevertheless, civic society and its increasing involvement in issues of war and peace has linked citizenship, peace and education. Within this view, citizenship has synthesized several themes under which peace education has been studied or put into action: anti-nuclearism, international understanding, environmental responsibility, communication skills, non-violence, conflict resolution, human rights awareness, tolerance of diversity, coexistence and gender equality. All of these themes have engendered specific education strategies as well as specialized school curricula in related subjects and disciplines. However, recent research has led to the classification of at least three different approaches to peace education: peace education as conflict resolution training, peace education as democracy education and peace education as human rights awareness training. The first approach to peace education focuses on:

> The social-behavioural symptoms of conflict, training individuals to resolve interpersonal disputes through techniques of negotiation and (peer) mediation. Learning to manage anger, "fight fair," and improve communication through skills such as listening, turn taking, identifying needs, and separating facts from emotions constitute the main elements of these programs (Clark-Habibi, 2005).

The second approach to peace education suggests that an increase in democratic participation decreases the likelihood of societies resolving conflict through violence and war. Although this approach requires that citizens accept the inevitability of conflict, it also relies on the view of it as a positive opportunity for tolerance, growth and creativity. The objective of this approach is to produce responsible citizens who will demand governments which are accountable to the standards of peace.

The third approach to peace education, based upon human rights awareness training, is focused "at the level of policies that humanity ought to adopt in order to move closer to a peaceful global community." Thus there will be committed participation in which all persons "can exercise their personal freedoms and be legally protected from violence, oppression and indignity".

In this approach, peace is not defined simply as the absence of war or open conflict. Peace is defined in terms of conditions that ensure positive and lasting social conditions for justice, equity and respect for human rights based on values of non-violence, social justice, freedom, trust, equality, responsibility and solidarity.

In these three approaches it is evident that the role of civil society—people voluntarily organized to defend common interests or work for social and political change—is central to peace education. However, the role of education may vary due to differing societal conditions, i.e. peace, war or postwar experiences. The way a society forms peace and citizenship education depends on whether it has undergone war or human rights violations, is currently experiencing war, or has not recently experienced war.

Civil society plays different roles in these diverse contexts and accordingly requires different capacities. There are cases in which civil society could be one of the key actors in a peace-making process. It is important, then, that civil society—whomever it may

represent—be prepared to act effectively. Civil society played different roles in peace-making processes in Guatemala and El Salvador. The Salvadoran government faced an organized guerrilla campaign "that exerted considerable influence over opposition forces in civil society". As a result, civil society did not contribute substantially to the advancement of economic or other social justice issues in the negotiation process. In contrast, in Guatemala, different civil society sectors played an important role in the peace-making process. The Guatemalan civil society sector participated in the design of accord packages and later in monitoring and advising the civilian government. Of course, it raises the question of whether such citizenship capacities are necessary and if society needs to be prepared for such challenges. The costs and consequences of war indicate that this is indeed necessary. Post war, "Education for Peace" (EFP) and citizenship could be part of the healing process, reconciliation and the building of a culture of peace. Education for peace specialists posit that peace education does not aim to achieve peace as an educational process, but rather it prepares students to achieve peace (Reardon and Cabezudo, 2002).

Societies that have no recent experience of violent conflict seek education for different purposes. They often try to use education for peace to create citizenship that promotes democratic institutions and governance, and eventually prevents violence and war.

Different situations demand different kinds of education for peace programs and curricula which match particular social conditions. However, according to specialists, there are certain central elements that any education for peace program must consider: knowledge, skills and values must be a core part of any peace education program.

Knowledge content in EFP refers to the information necessary to think about and get acquainted with various issues related to peace, conflicts and alternatives to conflicts. For example, an education for peace program must include the following: human rights covenants, varieties of human, personal, and cultural identities, multiple forms of democratic processes and governance, and alternative ways of responding constructively to human differences and conflicts. However, it is insufficient to simply learn about these elements in order to train citizens to build peace. It is necessary to have the skills and capacities to exert freedom responsibly; for example, taking care of oneself and controlling one's own behavior. Citizens must also be capable of living with diversity and think critically with respect to dominant war or violent behaviors. At the same time, they must learn how to manage conflict by means of discussion, debate, reconciliation and cooperative problem solving, construct collective initiatives, and practice attitudes of tolerance and acceptance toward those different from themselves.

Knowledge and skills alone are insufficient in an education for peace program without values. First, one must be capable of confronting those dominant norms and existing values that do not promote peace, and next, based upon values of social justice, one may approach the issues of non-violence, respect for human rights, freedom, trust, equality, responsibility and solidarity, inspiring knowledge and skills.

The three elements of knowledge, skills and values can be found in different Education for Peace programs. There is one additional important element which is related to the general objective of peace and citizenship education: training students, young citizens

and adult citizens to achieve a culture of peace. Education for peace programs should not be satisfied with merely developing awareness of a person's social and political responsibilities, or with solely guiding and challenging students to develop their own perspectives on problems of justice and peace. All of these intermediate objectives are necessary in an education for peace program, but they are also indispensable in making part of the education program the student's exploration of his or her own contributions toward solving conflicts and building a culture of peace.

In this framework of the knowledge, skills and values that citizens must be equipped with to contribute to a culture of peace, and the trends that have developed in education for peace programs, some specialists have offered other concepts that could help advance forms of instruction, contents organization and pedagogic activities. Some of these concepts help us to specifically address peace education programs by examining the causes of and alternatives to war and obstacles to peace, or by analyzing particular problems, such as gender or economic inequality, or ecological sustainability.

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Biographical Sketch

Medardo Tapia Uribe was born in the state of Morelos in Mexico. He is a 1988 graduate of the doctoral program of the Harvard Graduate School of Education under the Fulbright Scholarship of the United States government. He has been a Researcher for Centro Regional de Investigaciones Multidisciplinarias of Mexico's National University since 1989. He does research on citizenship education and he has several publications in Mexico and abroad on this issue. He was part of the group that formulated the state of the art of research on Citizenship and Values Education in Mexico in the 1990s. He has just finished a national study on Why Mexican indigenous girls abandon school? He also was part of an international research group to study "Values Education for Dynamic Societies: individualism and collectivism?"