Good example of essay on global citizenship

Technology, Development

Global Citizenship – The School of the Future

Other Details

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Introduction

Citizenship refers to the right of an individual to live, work, and participate politically in a specific geographic area. Global citizenship defines the individual who considers his identity with the global community superior to his identity with a particular area. This identity transcends all geographic boundaries of state, country, or city. A global citizen does not renounce his citizenship of the city, state, or country to which he belongs. He merely places his global responsibilities and duties above those towards his country (Israel, 2012). In the world of education, global citizenship is assuming great importance. As schools, colleges, universities, and faculty adopt technology in education, distance learning becomes feasible. It allows students to cross national borders and study the subject of their choice in the country of their choice. Global citizenship is however a concept as yet restricted to higher education. As far as primary education is concerned, although the diversity in the classroom is on the rise, global citizenship has not been established. In this paper we envision the primary school of the future, the concept of global citizenship as it applies to primary schools and the technology that would be used in the primary schools of the future.

- Features of Primary Schools

It would be better to first examine the concept of school, as it exists today. In his talk in the at the MIT Media Lab, Papert (1996) propounds the theory that

although technology in schools is changing the way schools operate, the way teachers teach and the way students learn, most people still envision schools in the traditional model. They equate technology with computers and have a very narrow perspective of technology in schools (Papert, 1996). Papert presents the features of school vis-à-vis technology. According to Papert (1996), the traditional chalk and board method of teaching was the only thing replaced by technology. Technology merely replaced the blackboard with a computer and a projector. The method of imparting knowledge remained the same. Little attention is being paid to the curriculum. Papert suggests a completely new perspective to education. He advocates need based rather than curriculum based learning. In his talk, Papert cites the example of fractions. He suggests that there is no need to teach fractions other than the basic concept of half and quarter which a child can learn at home. Beyond that, the need to use fractions should dictate the need to learn it. He suggests that segregation in schools should be knowledge based rather than age driven. Papert (1996) suggests that technology is not as expensive as it is thought to be. He presents the idea of bulk purchase and suggests that if sales increase, the price is likely to drop.

- The meaning of Change

Papert's (1996), suggestions lead us to the question what exactly is meant by change with respect to schools. This question is best answered by Fullan M. (2001) in his chapter on educational change in " The New Meaning of Educational Change, London: Routledge." Fullan suggests four different perspectives of change – individual change, subjective change, objective change and change related to program coherence. Fullan suggests that the

need of the hour is re-culturing rather than restructuring. A teacher faces several challenges in course of his work. He is expected to multitask, adapt to sudden and urgent changes, and deal with a diverse student body and yet establish personal relationships with each student. Besides this the tasks that a teacher is expected to perform are multidimensional and must be carried out simultaneously. Oakes (1999) in Fullan (2001) observes that the educators, in their hurry to adopt new strategies, often fail to consider the implications of change. They fail to ponder the process and its implementation. Fullan recommends a three dimensional process of change – change in curriculum, change in approach, and change in beliefs. According to Fullan, ' what people think and do – are essential if the intended outcome is to be achieved' (Fullan, 2001, P46).

- Attitudes of the Teachers

Fullan's recommendation of the three dimensional process of change raises the question of attitudes and beliefs. In the field of education, the attitude of the teachers is paramount as their beliefs influence their approach to teaching and consequently the learning outcome of students. Hogeling (2012), state that teachers often think that the lessons should be linked to current events. Some teachers believe in the concept of global citizenship. Teachers of geography, history, and other social subjects believe that " global citizenship" must be incorporated in the curriculum and students must be exposed to practices and cultures all over the world. On the other hand teachers of subjects like mathematics and other technical subjects may not be receptive to the idea of global citizenship. As far as structural change is concerned, practical application of the concept of global citizenship has not

been very successful (Hogeling, 2012). According to Carabain et. al. (2012) in Hogeling (2012), the global aspect of citizenship lies in the behaviour and attitude towards mutual dependence, equality, and sharing of responsibility. Global citizenship can therefore be achieved through a change in the attitudes of both the teacher and the taught. It is therefore not enough to examine the teachers' attitudes to teaching. We must also consider the students' attitudes towards learning.

- Attitude towards Learning

Guy Claxton (2008), in his paper entitled " Cultivating Positive Learning Dispositions," talks about disposition to learning. He compares earlier schools to a " production line" along which students are " packaged" with knowledge and " Quality Control" is exercised in the form of exams. According to Claxton, this approach to learning is undergoing a change. The world is accepting that the goal of education is to become a learner rather than to gain knowledge. Developing a positive attitude towards learning and transfer of information is the goal of education that can be achieved. He opines that learners must know how to pick holes rather than simply accept facts as they are presented (Claxton, 2008). This process of learning must begin at an early age and technology can go a long way in aiding this process.

- Technology in School

According to the NCCA (National Council for Curriculum and Assessment), Ireland, the main goals of primary education are to allow the child to life a full life, recognize his potential, develop the skills required for living in society such as cooperation, and prepare him for a life of learning.

Information and Communication Technology (ICT) offers the teacher many resources to achieve this aim. Using ICT in the classroom the teacher can help the child attain the learning objectives, build confidence by making learning enjoyable, develop a deeper understanding of the subject matter, develop an attitude of learning, develop social skills like effective communication and problem solving. The school can adopt two main approaches to using ICT in schools – using software or using the internet. The internet is a storehouse of knowledge. There are many benefits of using the internet as a medium of learning. It is an easily accessible source of information. It provides information to both the teachers as well as the students. It facilitates communication between the teachers and students. Teachers can compare techniques with their counterparts all over the world. Students are not restricted by geographical boundaries or availability of text. They can obtain information on any subject at any time from any place. Publishing exemplary work of students encourages them to study further and builds their confidence (NCCA).

- The Challenge of the 21st Century

Children require a wholesome atmosphere of learning and nurturing to flourish. Adapting education methodology to their needs is necessary to inculcate learning behavior. The major challenge to education in the 21st century is adapting the curriculum to the needs of education. The curriculum must be one that encourages learning rather than gaining knowledge. The QCA (Qualification and Curriculum Authority), recognizes that the learning must be organized in such a way that it is flexible and adaptable to the changing needs of the students. The curriculum must be designed to allow

for all levels and paces of learning. It should encourage innovative ideas, be personalized and yet all inclusive. These are the challenges faced by the education system in the 21st century.

- Success Redefined

Carol Dweck, author of " Mindset: The New Psychology of Success", believes that " the view you adopt of yourself profoundly affects the way you lead your life" Vermer (2012). The mindset of an individual varies according to the situation. A person has different attitudes to different subjects and talents like intelligence and creativity. This mindset guides the person's behavior in that particular area (Dweck in Vermer, 2012). In her book, Dweck talks about two mindsets, a fixed mindset and a growth mindset. The fixed mindset believes that a smart person will succeed while the growth mindset believes that it is possible to be smart (Dweck in Vermer, 2012). We need to adopt the growth mindset in education.

- Pedagogy and Curriculum Changes

When we talk about curriculum, it is important to distinguish it from pedagogy.

In their book entitled " ICT, Pedagogy and the Curriculum", Lovless and Ellis talk about ICT in the context of pedagogy and curriculum. They opine that Information and communications technology can extend learning beyond the limitations of the teachers' knowledge and the scope of the curriculum. The internet is a powerful tool and a vast source of knowledge. Apart from classroom knowledge, the students can gain many skills such as hand eye co-ordination, spatial relations, and problem solving from the internet. Thus pedagogy which is an approach to learning can be closely interrelated to

curriculum and the combination can greatly enhance the learning experience.

- Natives and Immigrants

Prensky (2001) calls the students of the 21st century digital natives. These students grow up with technology unlike the previous generation to home technology is a new concept. Prensky calls the older generation who use technology sparingly, digital immigrants. The digital immigrants are tasked with teaching the digital natives and that according to Prensky is the biggest challenge for the education system. In order to teach the digital natives, the immigrants must first learn themselves. Teachers training in the use of technology, and its vast potential, are of paramount importance (Prensky, 2001).

Conclusion

Global citizenship is a new concept that defines a person who holds his identity as a social being higher than his identity with his country, state or city. In the field of education, global citizenship education is the new emerging concept. This concept is all encompassing and supersedes other concepts such as multicultural education, human rights, international education and pace education (Australian Government, 2008). The education system is experiencing a dramatic change. This change is the result of technology which is being used in education. The simplest example of this change is the redundancy of the conventional classroom, as students enroll for online distance learning programs and study over the internet. The internet has also opened the doors of knowledge and widened the scope of education. Knowledge is no longer restricted to the curriculum. Students use

social media, interact with friends all over the world and gain knowledge about the events and practices in other places.

This change has necessitated a change in teaching practices all over the world. The school of the future will be nothing like the traditional concept of school. Prensky's (2001), digital natives will take education from the countries, states and cities to the world community. The schools will be global schools and the students and teachers the global citizens who enroll and teach in these schools. The four walls of the classroom will crumble and give way to a flood of knowledge. The schools will be ' learning oriented" rather than teaching oriented. Students will lead their teachers along the path of learning. Teachers will hold the torch of knowledge and wisdom to light the students' path. A new era of one global race, and one global culture of humanity with ties of knowledge will emerge.

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