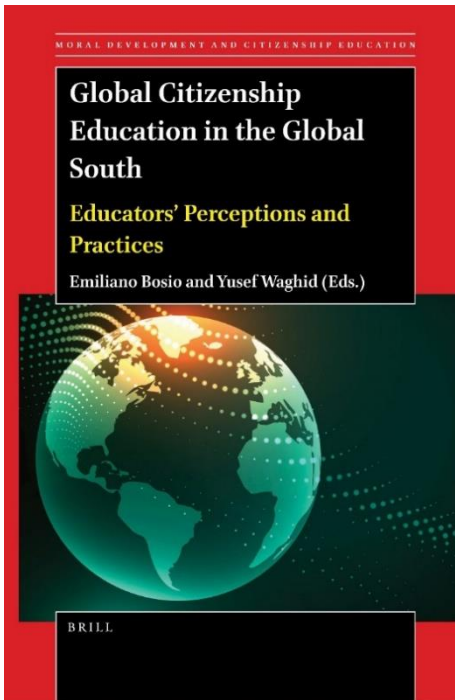


GLOBAL CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION IN THE GLOBAL SOUTH: EDUCATORS' PERCEPTIONS AND PRACTICES

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Bosio, E and Waghid, Y (eds.) (2023) *Global Citizenship Education in the Global South: Educators' Perceptions and Practices*, The Netherlands: Koninklijke Brill.



Global citizenship education (GCE) aims to help learners become critical and emancipated citizens of the world. Yet most theoretical and empirical work on GCE is focused on North America and parts of Western Europe, with little attention to how educators in the global South perceive and implement GCE in their practices. This book seeks to redress the imbalance by introducing case studies and theories from the global South to contemporary academic debate on GCE. Building on Freire's work on 'conscientisation', the book aims to move beyond a Western, market-oriented, and apolitical approach towards a more sustainable model, centred on

principles of criticality, reciprocity, and mutuality. The book is framed as an opportunity to assist learners, particularly those in the global South, to engage critically with GCE and to help create a new future rooted in social justice and sustainability. It is presented as a pedagogical tool for educators, researchers, and a general audience interested in understanding the philosophy, history, and practice of GCE.

So does the book achieve these (ambitious) aims? Yes – to a large extent. The book’s plurality of voices challenges homogenous understandings of the ‘global South’, which the editors stress should be understood not only in terms of geographic location but as political, pedagogical, economic, cultural, and theoretical. The book contains chapters from multiple contributors reflecting on GCE in South Africa, Tanzania, Trinidad and Tobago, Malawi, Ghana, India, China, Zimbabwe, Mexico, and Jordan. These contributors have extensive expertise in international studies and comparative education, and the diversity of their perspectives highlights the multiple ways in which ‘citizenship’ and ‘education’ can be understood. This diversity also mirrors a strong thematic focus in the book on value pluralism, closely linked to ideas of interconnection and relationality. These ideas are richly expounded in Hungwe’s reconceptualisation of ‘ukama’ or ‘relatedness’ in the context of higher education in Zimbabwe (chapter twelve). The book’s editors, Bosio and Waghid, argue that the concept of ‘interconnectedness’ must include all living beings and the environment, proposing an ‘eco-critical’ GCE that reconstitutes and disrupts Western industrial attitudes by rejecting the ‘ego’ (chapter one). Several contributors also propose a move beyond an anti-colonial approach in GCE towards ‘dialogue’ as an iterative process of articulation, listening and creating spaces for others to talk back. These contributors do not ignore structural inequalities, but rather argue that these must be understood as historically and politically situated and as inherent to globalisation.

There is a strong focus on local realities throughout the book, and compelling theoretical visions of a ‘yet-to-come’ for GCE based on empirical case studies. Pathak-Shelat and Bhatia, for example, explore how the socio-political realities of students in India influence their understanding of the world (chapter five). Echoing other chapters, they build on postcolonial theory to critique GCE as an Anglo-European concept involving the universalisation of western values and static and teleological views of history. They also critique the assumption that global technologies automatically subvert methodological nationalism. Pathak-Shelat and Bhatia convincingly show how place-based and spatial politics influence individual experiences of global identities and interactions, including technologies, which are ascribed meaning and functions based on the local realities of which they are part. They make the case for a critical and reflexive

‘remembering’ which recognises how the past influences our views of others in the present, but also call for a ‘conscious forgetting’ that involves new (and more effective) ways of healing the memory of trauma experienced through various forms of colonisation. In doing so they underscore the important role of emotion in GCE, an element which is somewhat under-recognised elsewhere in the book. Future work could usefully build on Pathak-Shelat and Bhatia’s thoughtful analysis to examine the significance of affect in GCE.

Other chapters effectively explore southern theory through case studies to promote the value of GCE as a critical-transformative practice in the global South. Felix, for example, foregrounds the importance of GCE in contrast to the dominant neoliberal discourse on higher education in Trinidad and Tobago (chapter six). Several authors discuss GCE in contexts of migration and displacement, including with refugees in Jordan and migrants in South Africa (Waghid and Al-Husban, chapter two) and with the children of migrant workers in China (Hong, chapter nine). These chapters foreground the importance of GCE in migration contexts while drawing attention to the structural, political, and institutional barriers to GCE for migrants and refugees across the world. Future research might further examine the role of GCE in migration contexts in the global South as well as in the global North, where migration-related inequalities continue to persist.

The book has fourteen chapters grouped into three ‘themes’. Part one looks at ‘Critical Consciousness, De-colonialism, Caring Ethics, Eco-critical Views, and Humanity Empowerment in Global Citizenship Education’. Part two explores ‘Equality and Diversity in Global Citizenship Education Policy and Practice’ and part three deals with ‘Defamiliarisation, Ukama and Active Protest in Global Citizenship Education’. While thematising the chapters makes sense in theory given their significant number, in practice its success has been limited – the themes are very broad and each chapter’s relevance to the theme at hand is not always obvious. Neither is the book consistently readable. In discussing the global South, fluency in the English language is certainly not to be assumed or, indeed, expected. Yet some further editing would have been useful as great variation across the chapters is jarring and distracting. While some pieces are easy to read, others contain significant grammatical errors, missing words, and

messy quotations (which in some instances flirt with plagiarism). These inconsistencies also make the book's goal of targeting a 'general audience' less achievable – it already contains a number of complex concepts and ideas, and a lack of fluency sometimes makes them obscure if not entirely incomprehensible.

On balance, though, this book makes a timely and significant contribution to the discourse on pedagogical and theoretical approaches to GCE at the local level. It foregrounds ideas of relatedness and pluralism, advocating for a GCE which does not supplant the global North with the global South but rather puts the two in conversation, celebrating the specificity of both in relation to each other. At the same time, it is alive to the structural inequalities inherent in, and created by, globalisation and sees it as critical that these are addressed in and through GCE. Indeed, the book makes a solid attempt to rectify the ongoing inequalities that can be found in GCE itself by amplifying the diverse voices of educators in the global South. While language inconsistencies mean that the book is not always an easy read, it paves the ground for future research and theorisation in this area and is sure to be an inspiring resource for anyone seeking to engage with a critical-transformative, post-colonial, and dialogical GCE.

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