

Citizenship Education for the 21st Century Leveraging the K-6 Developmental Time Window

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Abstract

An online survey of K to 12 teachers, graduate students, and college instructors, ages 18 to 60+, from Western and Non-Western countries, was conducted to measure opinions about and experiences with Citizenship Education (CE). CE is fundamentally defined in this paper as the teaching of individual and collective rights and responsibilities in academic and social contexts in K to 12 schooling (~ 4 to 18 years of age). The purpose of this preliminary research was to develop several core conclusions about CE using literature support and develop a number of basic survey expectations based on some of those conclusions and the experiences of the author. Literature-supported core conclusions included that CE: a) has the power to equip students with the knowledge of their individual and group rights and responsibilities regarding both academic and inter-personal or social pursuits; b) has elements that can be leveraged in many academic and social learning experiences in elementary and secondary schooling; c) is important to citizens as a general rule, but often takes an informal form, which tends to lead to a lack of awareness regarding its value; d) when viewed as ‘engaged learning’, may lack adequate funding, especially in K to 6 schooling; e) is qualitatively dependent upon the degree to which especially K to 6 education is based in facts, critical thinking skills, hard work, respect, and reflection; f) is most effective when started in the K to 6 school years and continued through secondary schooling; and g) in order to be effective internationally needs the world’s educational systems to focus support for foundational academic and social learning and development early in the education lives of children, where it is the most efficient and effective. A conclusion that ties these together is that, while it is ultimately the responsibility of young adults in any society to take over the mantle of power, it is the precursory responsibility of parental generations to prepare young people for this task through continuous lessons, in every possible context, about how to think and act in ways that serve themselves and their communities well. Qualitative analysis of survey results from 28 respondents from 10 countries and 6 age groups indicated a pattern of responses that supported study expectations, including that: a) respondents tended to have CE definitions that centered on creating good and responsible citizens; b) a significant number of respondents (about 1/3) reported experiencing informal CE; c) most respondents reported experiencing some form of CE in elementary or secondary schooling; and d) members of all age groups surveyed felt that CE is important. Given the preliminary nature of the survey investigation, age- and country- based consistency was tested rather than response differences correlated to age or country. Recommendations include doing a more age and internationally extensive survey to check for said patterns and using a better structured survey to check for more precise opinions, especially regarding how CE might have affected respondents’ lives overall and how CE, or a lack thereof, may be affecting the adult lives and childhoods of ‘millennial’ and 21st century generations.

Keywords: Citizenship education, Cognitive and social development, Self-determination, Social brain, Return on investment, Sensitivity to learning, Global issue

1. Introduction

What is citizenship education (CE)? The perspective of this paper is that it is fortunate that there is no standard definition of CE, in that while what exactly goes into the process of growing good citizens defies codification, the desired outcome seems to have wide, if somewhat differing, agreement, which opens the door for research into what CE means in people’s lives and what it could be or should be in theory.

Childhood has been historically recognized as a teaching ground (for better or worse) for what a given culture considered ‘good’ citizens (see Dunne, 2006; Heater, 2002; Iserbyt, 1999; Dewey, 1924), but it is the purpose of this paper to dwell on the positive potential of inculcating CE that serves students’ wellbeing rather than the negative potential for indoctrinating children into become blindly ‘compliant’. The foundation for CE that is advocated in this paper was developed by the author (Schneider) and consists of the following: CE is the educational process through which students are taught to recognize, understand, and exercise their social and academic rights and responsibilities as individuals and as members of a larger social group such as a class, a school, or a nation. This broad definition is based in one of the ancient purposes of formal or informal education—to help children grow into healthy and responsible adults. In this perspective, virtually any social or academic learning experience, especially within K to 6 age groups (roughly 4 to 12 years of age), can be used to teach aspects of CE, especially since this age group tends to be very receptive to such lessons (Durlak, Weissberg, Dymnicki, Taylor, & Schellinger, 2011). In general, whether or not the term ‘citizenship’ is used, the

quality of the theoretical and operational understanding that students acquire regarding their social and academic rights and responsibilities is dependent on the quality of the teaching that accompanies such learning experiences in schools the world over. To be clear, the rights and responsibilities that students discover and enact in this conception of CE include those normally associated with citizenship, such as civic awareness and action, but also those associated with academic and social development, awareness, and action. Thus, while optimally Citizenship Education is viewed herein as being comprehensive, opportunistic, and long-term, it is logical to assume that CE occurs across a quality continuum of comprehensiveness, duration, and depth. Thus, CE will be referred to variously in this paper as COLCE, education-long CE, long-term-opportunistic CE, etc., or simply CE, depending on the contextual purpose of the reference. The key teaching elements in COLCE include hard work, respect for self and others, learning, critical thinking, fair play, tolerance, humility, active listening, and confidence both academically and socially. These will be referred to collectively as COLCE principles.

The perspective of this paper is that there are currently a number of different academic and social problems associated with the concept of citizenship and education's relationship to citizenship, specifically in the United States, but also globally, as American ideas tend to be exported and accepted with little critical examination (Merino, 2011). These problems are anchored in the contention herein that part of the purpose of education-long CE is the production of socially and academically aware and pro-active students, who not only learn, but readily accept and apply the responsibility of self-determination.

Another contention of this paper is that all K to 12 education has the potential of including citizenship education elements, and thus it is not necessary to create a special field of study called 'citizenship education' because, generally speaking, an understanding of one's citizenship should not be limited to one class with a term paper or a mid-term and final exam to measure 'understanding', but instead be a life-long pursuit. The importance of successful CE is analogous to the effectiveness of the growing number of global apprenticeship programs that could potentially replace college training in some fields (Bewick, 2015), where apprentices are generally carefully screened due to the small student-teacher ratios and costly professional teaching environments involved. Much the same as those of past eras, what modern-day apprentices are seeking is the self-efficacy (Bandura, 1977) and purpose (Damon, 2009) accorded them in such training by a set of skills that will be with them for a lifetime, not a 'grade' that will be filed away and never seen again. COLCE skills are the same, but even more important, as they cover every aspects of life.

The contentions above were variously investigated with a literature review and a small, exploratory survey on CE.

2. Literature Review

There are a number of literature-supported perspectives that support the views about Citizenship Education that are proposed in the introduction of this paper.

2.1 A Global View of Citizenship Education

According to UNESCO (2014, p. 9), Global Citizenship Education (GSE) includes a number of common elements as practiced internationally. These include:

- "an attitude supported by an understanding of multiple levels of identity, and the potential for a 'collective identity' which transcends individual cultural, religious, ethnic or other differences;
- a deep knowledge of global issues and universal values such as justice, equality, dignity and respect;
- cognitive skills to think critically, systemically and creatively, including adopting a multiperspective approach that recognizes the different dimensions, perspectives and angles of issues;
- non-cognitive skills including social skills such as empathy and conflict resolution, communication skills and aptitudes for networking and interacting with people of different backgrounds, origins, cultures and perspectives; and
- behavioural capacities to act collaboratively and responsibly to find global solutions for global challenges, and to strive for the collective good."

In the actual world of 2017, not a great deal of reflection is needed about the above set of ideal principles to conclude that these words have little, if any, operational value in many parts of the world where corruption in education is a serious problem. Two-thirds of 159 countries surveyed by a UNESCO study in 2005, for instance, scored a 5 or greater on a ten-point scale, where 10 was considered to be very corrupt (Hallak & Poisson, 2007, p. 38). UNESCO (2014) acknowledges that there are a number of challenges to the implementation of GSE, which center around the tension between creating a common understanding and application of GSE versus respecting individual rights (p. 10). This, it is argued, is a distinction without a difference that may rest in how 'global citizenship' is presented to 'trainees' in various parts of the world. That is, common sense would dictate that when a message is presented to a country's citizens about politically correct social practices that require some level of self-sacrifice of individual rights to benefit the masses, they are unlikely to accept this prescription or 'common understanding' if they are individually suffering from massive economic and social inequities. Citizens

with such a ‘deprivation mentality’ (Freire, 1989), are likely to put their needs ahead of the ‘greater good’ because their personal needs are more fundamentally important to their wellbeing than those of society (Maslow, 1943).

2.2 All Education Is Citizen Education

Ladson-Billings cite Spindler’s (1987) anthropological perspective that all education is citizenship education, and that: “Schooling—from the most highly technical modern systems to the most informal traditional practices—is designed to socialize the young into the order and orthodoxy of the old” (Banks, 2004, p. 120). The perspective of this paper is that all education *is* most productively characterized as citizenship education because, ideally, the process of all education about all academic and non-academic experiences in schools contains aspects that are important to the formation of good citizens, such as hard work, responsibility, fairness, honesty, and respect. In the process of learning various things students also learn the relationship between their rights and responsibilities, particularly as a part of a social unit such as a class, a team, or a school. The ‘orthodoxy’ comment above seems to indicate that education functions to inculcate a kind of obsolete citizenship that is out of touch with students’ modern needs. However, the ‘old’ can be interpreted to mean the ‘established order of things’, which has been modified over many hundreds of years of trial and error. Schooling should, however, be transparent about what parts of the ‘order and orthodoxy’ work well and what parts might need some updating—the latter part being up to the students themselves to change. It is further argued that strong citizenship education is and always has been a global issue. That is, properly equipping students with COLCE principles is a process whose summed effects exceed the boundaries of national borders.

Effective citizenship education, thus, can be accomplished more, it is argued, through an ongoing series of academic and non-academic teachable or opportunistic moments in and out of schools than through formal training. “More effective” in this case is defined as having a greater, positive overall impact on the short-term and long-term lives of students. In this scheme, the goal of creating responsible citizens is met by juxtaposing CE ‘training’ with any appropriate moment in the school day, whether it’s knowing more about and solving social-emotional problems or puzzling out academic exercises. More basically, school should guide students toward an understanding that no matter what they want to succeed at, it is ultimately their responsibility to figure out how to get from where they are to where they want to be—whether that’s learning how to value themselves, learning how to fit into peer groups, learning how to be a great basketball player, learning how to be a great mathematician, or individually or collectively figuring out where they sit in the social order of things (& what they might want to do about it).

Through such ongoing cooperative efforts, responsible schools, teachers, and students can fulfill the author’s definition of Citizenship Education, throughout K to 6 schooling, by teaching students to understand and proactively exercise their academic and social rights and responsibilities. Within this definition, ‘academic’ is used to connote all parts of life that are involved in accumulating extrinsic knowledge and associated critical thinking skills, and solving associated reasoning problems. ‘Social’ is used to define all parts of life that involve accumulating intrinsic or emotional knowledge and solving associated intra- and inter- personal problems. The term ‘proactively’ is used to stress the idea that students should, in the process of CE, be taught how to act upon life situations to enact self-determination rather than passively putting themselves in the position of only being able to react to the outcome.

Of course, the academic and social sides of students’ development have enhancing and diminishing effects on one another depending on the quality of development of both pathways, and part of that quality is affected by number of years that students are exposed to CE as conceived herein. That is, the meta-awareness that is necessary to responsibly navigate life’s academic and social vicissitudes is argued to be a critical thinking skill akin to reading, writing, or calculating, which take eight to ten years of exposure and practice to become automatic in students (Ericsson, Krampe, & Tesch-Römer, 1993). Thus, although well-intended, having students participate, once a year, in a ‘Model UN’ is hardly sufficient to produce this crucial awareness and skill in most students. Overall, it is argued that formal ‘International Citizenship Education’ is not necessary if there exists a well-rounded education based on COLCE principles, which tends to produce well equipped and critically-minded students who are just naturally curious about and stimulated by other cultures.

2.3 Social-Emotional Development Can Be Taught in K to 6

Another way of looking at citizenship education is through the lens of social-emotional development (SED). That is, in order to become aware of individual and collective rights and responsibilities, students need to be guided to learn as much as possible from their social experiences in school, including those in academic contexts. This is especially true when students are in their K to 3 years of schooling where social-emotional reflection and skills can actually be imparted by teachers (Lieberman, 2012). This is consistent with the finding that better preparation among pre-K to 3rd grade teachers is associated with the greatest impact on school children’s future academic performance compared to equal preparation for teachers of higher grades (Mead, 2012). Furthermore,

the data indicate that facilitation of children's 'social brain' development also has facilitative effects on cognitive development (Payton et al., 2008; Ragozzino, Resnik, Utne-O'Brien, & Weissberg, 2003). Given the importance of this developmental period on the lives of children's future wellbeing, which is in part reflected in a strong sense of citizenship as defined in this paper, it would seem important to focus educational funding on the early school years. In the US, this is supported by the work of Heckman, that suggests that the earlier educational support dollars are applied to children's academic and social development (2008), the greater the positive impact on their futures in terms of their ability to be productive in society (2008a). However, the most recent OECD data available (2013) finds that the 38 developed or developing nations surveyed were, on average, spending markedly less public funding per pupil, per year, on elementary education (about 8,000 USD) as compared to secondary (about 10,000 USD) or tertiary (about 15,500 USD) education (OECD, 2016, p. 183). Considering the greater impact funding support has the younger children are, would it not be advisable for funds at the elementary level of education be at least on par with those of secondary and tertiary?

2.4 The Return-on-Investment Perspective

Figure 1 illustrates that the best time to intervene in the educational life of children is at the K to 3 school level from a societal return-on-investment perspective (Heckman, 2008a); this would naturally include the comprehensive form of CE supported in this paper. In light of this well-established data, children might be looked at as a stock whose potential to grow is significantly greater the earlier it is invested upon. It must be stressed, however, that students who grow up in an atmosphere of ongoing citizenship education will be less likely limited to simply serving society with their enhanced 'human capital' (Friedman, 1962), and more likely to be proactively involved in determining their own futures through enhanced operational awareness of their rights and responsibilities.

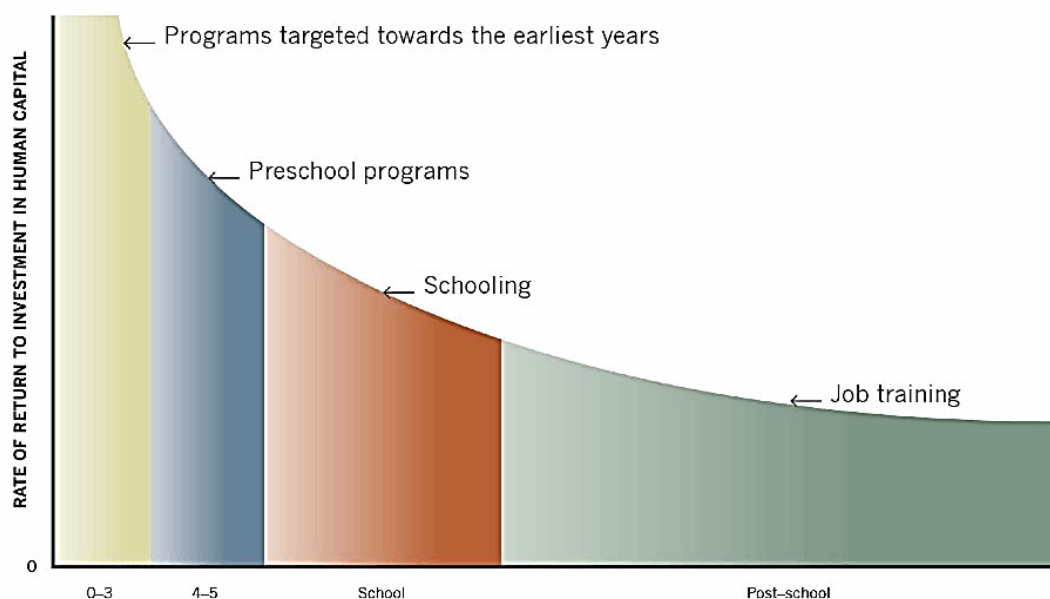


Figure 1. Return on Investment in Human Capital Relative to Developmental, Educational, and Work Age. Reprinted from *Big ideas for children: Investing in our nation's future*, by J. J. Heckman, 2008a, Retrieved from: http://heckmanequation.org/sites/default/files/F_WhiteHouseSpeech_web.pdf. Copyright 2017 by Heckman.

2.5 Global Spending on Different Levels of Education

Evidence for globally inadequate funding for early COLCE comes from 2013 data that indicate less funding for elementary schooling as compared to lower secondary schooling (about 33% less) and as compared to upper secondary schooling (about 56% less), on average, in 38 OECD developed and developing countries (OECD, 2016, p. 185). The work of Heckman (2008a) on early educational intervention in general, Lieberman (2012). on training the social brain in children, and Payton et al. (2008) on the facilitative effects of social training on cognitive development all support early and focused support, that starts with funding, for essentially the whole child, who then has a better chance at becoming a well-rounded member of society. In particular, the work of Mead (2012) on the significance of better trained pre-K to 3 teachers as compared to such training for higher grade level teachers is an indication that it is more important for children to receive early well-rounded training that supports social-emotional and cognitive development in the context of learning than whatever training may occur later in their school careers, however well crafted.

2.6 US Focus

2.6.1 CE in theory and in practice.

A 2006 analysis of citizenship education in the US concluded in part:

“...positive school climate is crucial for the development of competent, responsible and capable citizens.... A positive school climate includes an identifiable, open and nurturing school ethos that attempts to foster a sense of responsibility and efficacy among students and staff.... Above all, there is an atmosphere of conscious commitment to foster the well-being, academic achievement and civic development of students. In working with other disciplines across the school, the [sic] social studies provides a powerful framework with a natural relationship to the goals of citizenship education through which positive school climate for citizenship can be achieved” (Homana, Barber, & Torney-Purta, 2006, p. 12-13).

In contrast to the above conclusions, the same source cited a 2000 study (Kahne, Rodriguez, Smith, & Thiede) of 135 8th to 10th grade Social Studies classes in Chicago, which found that: “a typical social studies classroom primarily engaged students in lower-level thinking, provided a thin and fragmented knowledge base, offered few substantive opportunities to experience democracy, rarely linked content to understanding and respecting diversity, and provided limited opportunities to examine and respond to social problems” (Homana, Barber, & Torney-Purta, 2006, p. 3). In essence, this finding echoes the perspective of this paper that proper citizenship education must be a comprehensive effort in schools to *live* COLCE principles through supportive in-class and out-of-class climates.

2.6.2 A history of concern regarding educational standards.

In 1983 a report was issued by the US Department of Education entitled, “A Nation at Risk” (The National Commission, 1983). In essence, it concluded that the American K to 12 system was failing its students because the curriculum was not rigorous enough (especially in promoting critical thinking), and students lacked a proper educational work ethic. Twenty-five years later, another US Dept. of Education study concludes, in part, that “If we were “at risk” in 1983, we are at even greater risk now” (Spellings, 2008, p. 1). Thirty years after the original study, Given (2013) reports that educational outcomes have not improved and summed up findings by saying that high school students “*still* emerge from high school ready neither for college nor for work” (p. 1) (emphasis added). Apparently, this is basically true for many college graduates as well, as a 3-year study of “5,247 hiring managers, regarding 20,000 new employee hires, from 312 public, private, business and healthcare organizations” found that 46% of new hires failed in their new positions within 18 months (Murphy, 2012, p. 2). Interestingly, 81% of the time new hires failed because of their inability to accept coaching, ineffective management of their own emotions, a lack of sufficient motivation, and attitudes that did not fit well with their positions (the so-called *soft skills*)—and only 11% failed due to a lack of technical skills (p. 2, 3). This is no surprise given the current situation on many US college campuses, where little effort is required by students to achieve a B or an A (Vedder, 2010). One could argue that too many of the current generation of young adults in the US are not being exposed to well-rounded CE early in their educational careers and thus simply see no value in working hard to become more knowledgeable and skilled. This seeming lack of motivation is consistent with work of Viadaro (2008), which indicates that “a majority” of young people lack a sense of direction in life, and that of Dweck, Walton, and Cohen (2014), who find that young people need to be challenged in productive ways to become academically ‘tenacious’—if they ‘need’ it, they are clearly not ‘getting’ it.

Anyone who grew up in the very imperfect 60s in the US, in contrast, can attest to the fact that American students in the era were exposed to a daily dose of the fundamentals, and that included everything from studying and thinking well, to washing one’s hands regularly, to playing outside in the fresh air, to treating other students with respect and tolerance. In the author’s educational experiences in that era, the concept of citizenship was often reinforced in elementary school, if not stated explicitly, as illustrated by students saying the *Pledge of Allegiance* every morning. In counterpoint to those who might suggest that this practice was a form of indoctrination (Montgomery, 2015), it should be pointed out that legions of American students grew up reciting the Pledge of Allegiance since its publication in September of 1892 (U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, n.d.), but history is rife with many of these same Americans questioning and criticizing US policies.

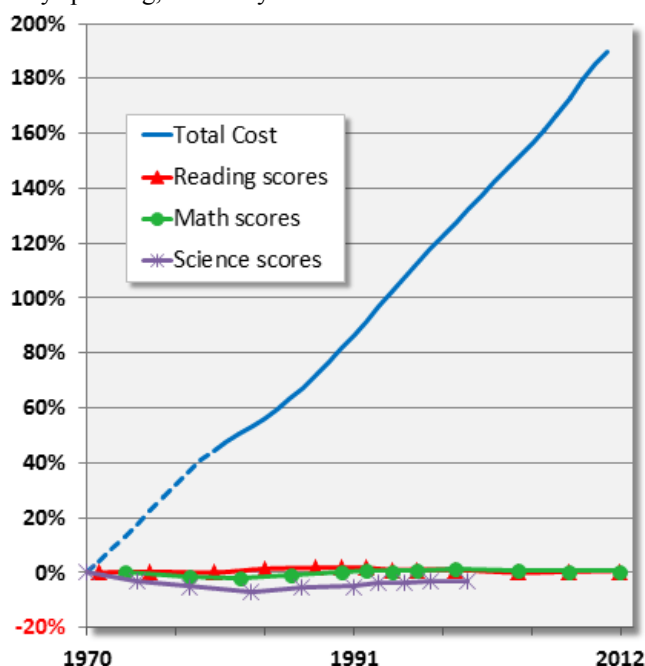
The decade of the 1960s, however, saw many changes in the social structure of American culture. For instance, from the 1940s to the early 1960s, the crime rate in the US was comparatively low (Pinker, 2013) as compared to the 70s up through now in 2017. In the early 1960s Americans started to question traditional roles in US society and the population became more critical of the US in general. Examples of this include: a) Friedan (1963), who questioned traditional male and female roles in the family and there-to-fore accepted societal roles; b) the critical questioning of the role of the US in world affairs by many groups in the US, particularly the Vietnam War (1964-1973), who tended to portray American involvement in foreign wars as being less about ‘democracy’ and more about geo-political interests (Zunes & Laird, 2010); c) Rosenberg (1964), who questioned the integrity of the US in race relations and portrayed American education, employment, and housing practices regarding African Americans as being racist, and d) concerns as far back as 1966 about the level of respect being

accorded to teachers and the teaching profession (UNESCO, 2016). While these social concerns were reflections of bone fide, if contentious, citizenship issues, the social trends of the succeeding decades indicated a tendency of the US population to be less civically engaged, or in other words, less concerned with the benefit of others (Levinson, 2010) and at the same time more concerned with self-interests or narcissism (Gray, 2014).

2.6.3 Educational funding trends versus learning outcomes.

In the US, the amount of money spent on K-12 public education has dramatically increased from 1970 (\$228 billion) to 2007 (\$583 billion), without a commensurate increase in learning outcomes (Rotherham, 2010). This is consistent with the data in Figure 2, which indicate that US spending for a complete K-12 education has radically increased from about 57,602 USD per student in 1970 to about 166,773 USD in 2011 (adjusted to 2010 dollars), while reading, science, and math achievement have basically flat lined (Coulson, 2014, p. 2).

It's also important to bear in mind the 2013 data that indicates that the US tends to outspend most OECD (2016, p. 183) countries at the elementary (5th of 40 countries), secondary (5th of 40), and tertiary (5th of 38) levels of public education, but at the same time underperforms on academic achievement (e.g. 2015 PISA: math, science, reading) (OECD, 2016a, p. 5). This may indicate that well-rounded academic and social CE is not a priority in US education, which generally speaking, has every conceivable educational resource at its disposal.



*Total cost is the full amount spent on grades K-12 from 1970 to 2011, adjusted for inflation. In 1970 the cost was 57,602 USD (extrapolated); in 2011 166,773 USD.

Figure 2. Total cost of US K-12 public education, 1970 to 2011. Reprinted from: *State education trends: Academic performance and spending over the past 40 years*, by A. J. Coulson, March 18 2014, retrieved from: <https://object.cato.org/sites/cato.org/files/pubs/pdf/pa746.pdf> Copyright 2014 by CATO Institute.

2.6.4 Where educational funds are focused.

In 2013, US spending support for tertiary education (about 27,000 USD) was almost 2.3 times greater than that on elementary school spending (about 11,000 USD) (i.e. spending by educational institutions, per pupil, per year, for all services) (OECD, 2016, p. 183). Despite this, Arum & Roksa (2010, p. 151) found, in a study of 2300 college and university students studied, that only 55% showed a significant improvement in critical and analytical reasoning aptitudes over their freshmen and sophomore years, and only 64% showed improvement over four years of study (p. 151). This supports the contention that educational interventions should be focused earlier in the academic career of students, as alluded to above, especially when referring to the supportive relationship between early social-emotional training and cognitive development (Payton et al., 2008).

2.7 Major CE Concerns Developed from the Literature

2.7.1 Poor awareness about citizenship.

The apparent long-term decline in social skills (Murphy, 2012) and lack of academic skill improvement (Coulson, 2014) since the 1970s in the US indicate may be interpreted as a lack of awareness about the value of CE. This lack of awareness may be due, in part, to the 'commodification' of education, which puts a focus on learning outcomes as being a commodity to be bought and sold in the global market place rather than being a knowledge and skill set intended to create good citizens (Altbach, 2002), who want to actively play a role in their

futures. This is a global issue.

2.7.2 Inadequate funding for COLCE.

Not only does it seem to be the case that there is a lack of funding internationally for the early years of education where COLCE does the most good (OECD, 2016), it appears that *how* educational dollars are spent is also important. In the US in particular, the academic component of COLCE has not been adequately supported in the last 35 years, as evidenced by consistent findings that US rankings in math, science, English, and critical thinking skills have continued to fall significantly behind many developed and developing countries since the 1970s (see Desilver, 2017; OECD, 2016a; Spellings, 2008; Jacobson, 1988). A University of Southern California, Department of Education report in 2011 indicated that while the US is spending significantly more per child on public K-12 education than 11 other developed or developing countries, it ranked 9th in science performance and 10th in mathematics performance (The College Board, 2012). Unfortunately, past concerns about school time spent on academic pursuits seem to still be an issue even though *engaged time in study* is one of the most reliable correlates of achievement and learning (Gettinger, 1995, p. 954). For example, a 1998 study found that less than 125 days of 180 educational days allocated in Chicago elementary schools were devoted to academic work (Smith, p. 3). In addition, a 1994 study indicated that, at the time, as little as 50% of classroom time was typically spent on instruction-assisted learning in US schools (Hollowood, Salisbury, Rainforth, & Palombaro, p. 1). The evidence persists that US schools are in need of increasing time on engaged academic learning (Kidron, & Lindsay, 2014), or “quality of time on task” (Farbman, 2015, p. 4). If US students need this, it is likely that many other nation’s students do as well.

2.7.3 Missing the developmental time window

Another way of expressing the importance of early intervention in the development of citizenship, as conceived of herein, is the higher developmental impact of early social-emotional training has on elementary-age children (Lieberman, 2012). This is consistent with the work of Bandura (1986), who argued that children learn social-emotional skills by observing and imitating, and that a sense of mastery and self-efficacy is critical to children’s ability to successfully cope with learning in general. According to Bandura, a reliable sense of self-efficacy can only be developed if children are exposed to obstacles which they must overcome. This would logically include the development of critical thinking skills about both academic and social problem-solving scenarios, as becoming effective at solving both kinds of problems would bring a sense of control over one’s own learning.

In addition to that alluded to above, evidence of a lack of social-emotional training comes from the finding that too many of today’s college students are not acquiring academic skills (Arum & Roksa, 2010), lack mature social skills (Murphy, 2012), and are narcissistic (Twenge, 2006). It is not only that the US has too many lackadaisical college students (Edwards & McCluskey, 2009), but that many university students seem to lack a healthy respect for authority and private property (see Kell, 2017; Center for College Health & Safety, n.d.). A lack of well-rounded, long-term, and opportunistic CE as children may not totally explain the above, but it is certainly a significant part of the picture.

Thus, there are several perspectives that help to demonstrate that the process and the results of Citizenship Education, as conceived of in this study, have a number of significant challenges in the 21st century regarding the societal development of socially aware, knowledgeable, and proactive citizens, in the world in general and in the US in particular.

2.8 Literature-supported conclusions

In summary of the above considerations, several general conclusions are drawn. These include that CE: a) has the power to equip students with the knowledge of their individual and group rights and responsibilities regarding both academic and inter-personal or social pursuits; b) has elements that can be leveraged in many academic and social learning experiences in elementary and secondary schooling; c) is important to the members of a culture as a general rule, but often takes an informal form in education, which tends to lead to a lack of awareness regarding the value of CE; d) when viewed as ‘engaged learning’, may lack adequate funding, especially in elementary schooling; e) is qualitatively dependent upon the degree to which K to 6 education is based in facts, critical thinking skills, hard work, respect, and reflection; f) is most effective when started in the elementary school years and continued through secondary schooling; and g) in order to be effective internationally needs the world’s educational systems to focus support for foundational academic and social learning and development early in the education lives of children, where it is the most efficient and effective.

2.9 Survey

In light of the above conclusions and the experiences of the author, four expectations were developed regarding the results of an exploratory citizenship education survey that was administered as part of this study. Specifically, it was expected that a survey of people of different ages, from different countries, would find that:

- 1) A significant number of respondents would report informal citizenship education (CE);
- 2) Respondents would have a variety of operational definitions of CE that focus on educating children

- to become responsible citizens;
- 3) Most respondents would tend to view CE as important in elementary and secondary school because it is better to teach culture or social values to people when they are young (& more teachable), and / or because CE makes children into better adults, and / or there is a need for more mature people in today's society; and
 - 4) Respondents from widely different age groups would support CE as being important.

3. Method

An anonymous, online survey was conducted that consisted for five questions, which asked respondents: a) to list their birth country; b) to define Citizenship Education (CE) in their own words; c) if they had been exposed to CE in their elementary or secondary education, and if so what form it took (formal or informal), and in what country they were educated if different than their birth country; d) if they felt CE is important at the elementary and secondary levels of schooling and why; and e) to select from one of five age ranges, from 18 to 60+ years (i.e. 18-30, 31-40, 41-50, 51-60, 60+). Respondents were adult males and females (not a focus of the study), from 10 different countries, both industrialized and developing. Respondents of different age ranges and from different countries were asked to participate in the survey to see if there was consistency in their answers, rather than to investigate possible patterns or correlations between age or education home country and responses. High school graduates were chosen to make sure that all respondents had had formal education, with the possibility of some form of citizenship education being included. The survey was based in Thailand and used an emailed survey link to target 103 college instructors, K-12 teachers, and graduate students who mostly live in Thailand, with a few living abroad. Responses were gathered over a 5-week period.

4. Results and Discussion

Twenty-eight survey responses (~ 27% response rate) were gathered from study participants who were educated in and citizens of China, Myanmar, Thailand, Egypt, England, Nigeria, Eritrea, India, the Philippines, and the United States. 'Education home country' was the same as 'birth country' except in the case of one respondent.

Table 1. Respondents' education home countries

Country	Number of Respondents
Myanmar	1
Egypt	1
Nigeria	1
Eritrea	1
United States	1
India	1
China	2
England	2
Philippines	8
Thailand	10
Total	28

Responses were gathered from educated citizens hailing from 10 different developed and developing nations. Since the survey was conducted from Thailand, it is logical that most responders came from Thailand and The Philippines (See Table 1).

Table 2. Respondents' age groups

Age Group	Number of Respondents
18 to 30	6
31 to 40	10
41 to 50	3
51 to 60	3
60+	5

There were at least 3 respondents from each of the five age ranges described in the survey, which was intended to cover high school graduates and above (see Table 2).

4.1 Survey Results versus Expectations

- 1) Twelve of 29 respondents reported having informal citizenship education (CE): Expectation 1 was supported;
- 2) All 28 respondents' operational definitions of CE contained 1 or more of these key terms: education, children, responsible citizens, rights, responsibilities, country: Thus, Expectation 2 was supported;
- 3) Twenty-six of 29 respondents reported experiencing CE in elementary or secondary school and felt that

it is important. The answers as to why CE should be taught in elementary and secondary school were very similar to question 2 responses, so these results were discarded. Thus, Expectation 3 was partially supported; and

- 4) Twenty-seven of 29 respondents, at least 1 from all age groups listed in the survey, supported CE as being important: Thus, Expectation 4 was supported.

It seems clear from the literature that the ‘all education is citizenship education’ view—a core tenet of this paper—is not common in today’s education systems. This was reflected in the survey responses, which revealed inconsistent experiences with CE as to its formality, depth, and age of exposure. Cognitive and emotional developmental literature also consistently suggests that CE integrated into every aspect of especially the K to 6 curriculum, as teachable moments, has the potential to improve children’s academic and social confidence and competence. This potential was reflected in survey results, as widely differing age groups, who probably had significantly different educational experiences, consistently thought that CE is important.

4.2 Limitations

The study was technically limited by the relatively small number of survey respondents from some age groups and from some countries, however, making inferences based on possible differences associated with age and / or education home country responses was not a goal of this exploratory survey. The design of survey question 3 specifically regarding why CE is important for elementary and secondary level students was meant to give respondents an opportunity to respond from different points of view. However, the broad nature of this part of question 3 combined with the fact that question 2 had asked for individual definitions of CE resulted in most respondents, more or less, repeating question 2 responses for question 3 as to ‘why’.

The concept of CE developed in this paper may have a subtle limitation in that citizenship values and actions that are woven into elementary and secondary schooling may tend to become second nature to children and young adults who then may not recognize the value of ‘citizenship’ per se. Thus, it is suggested that various CE-related principles discovered in the midst of academic and social learning be explicitly connected to the values of good citizenship in COLCE discussions.

5. Conclusion

If we teach all students not *what* to think but *how* to think, we equip them with the tools to advocate for their own views on citizenship and democracy. That is, when a nation’s people have a critically and socially-emotionally empowered grasp of math, science, English, history, government, and so on, they have the confidence to question what is right and what is wrong in a given situation, and thereby help to define their citizenship in society (Freire, 1989). If, on the other hand, the US or any other democratically-inclined country fails to empower its young minds through citizenship education over the entire course of their elementary and secondary educations, the all-powerful post-World War II government-military-industrial complex that President Dwight D. Eisenhower warned of (Eisenhower, 1961), whose ‘human capital’ (Friedman, 1962) goals depend on a distinct *lack* of critical evaluation skills, will produce more and more citizens who lack the power of self-determination, and who become indefatigable consumers through what could be characterized as ‘manufactured consent’ (Herman & Chomsky, 1994). The US continues to be ‘a nation at risk’ not because of a lack of potential, but because too many young adults have not been adequately trained in COLCE principles and thus lack the academic and interpersonal work ethic to be aware that there is a problem to begin with.

The contribution of this paper is two-fold: 1) the author-developed definition of Citizenship Education, which includes an *emphasis* on a continuous K to 6 process of CE, and on the results of CE, which include an emphasis on proto-citizens seeking self-determination through progressive awareness of their academic and social rights and responsibilities as individuals and as part of larger social units, rather than being limited to ‘civic’ responsibility and action; and 2) the contentions that Citizenship Education should not be limited to courses in citizenship or any other temporary format, but rather become the educationally imbued fabric of students’ everyday social and academic lives. As President John Fitzgerald Kennedy said in 1963, ‘a rising tide lifts all boats’ (John F. Kennedy Presidential, n.d.); education-long CE is just such a tide.

Not so ironically, US popular culture seems to be weighing in on the need for a return to long-term, step-by-step, opportunistic citizenship education for young students—a small school in Portland Maine (USA), circa May 2017, is offering college students webinars and live events in *becoming an adult*, or as the founders of the school call it ‘adulthood’ (Fox News, 2017). Obviously, these students missed out on something somewhere along the line.

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