

# Global citizenship education in school curricula: A Chinese perspective

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## **Abstract:**

Citizenship education in China has shifted from political-ideological orientations to competence-centered orientations since 2001. The concept of global citizenship was also included in the curricula. In order to explore how global citizenship education (GCED) is represented and what are the features of GCED in China, this study analyzed some of China's national curricula by employing a documentary analysis method. Nine national curricula were finally coded and analyzed by using a matrix of 22 coding categories with 4 domains: justification and general orientations, cognitive domains, social-emotional domains and behavioral domains. Findings from the analysis include: 1) General orientations of GCED exist in the curricula but are not explicitly stated in the curricula; 2) Both national identity and global identity are emphasized in China's national curricula; 3) GCED in China focuses more on cognitive domains than on behavioral domains, which indicates that GCED in China is characterized by education about citizenship rather than education through/for citizenship. Based on the findings, conclusions can be drawn as follows: 1) Although the concept of global citizenship is considered as important and has been incorporated into the curricula, systematic design, implementation and assessment are necessary; 2) China needs to further transform its citizenship education so that students not only know facts about global issues but are capable of acting upon them; 3) A balance between national identity and global identity should be considered. Limitations and further research suggestions were also given in the conclusion.

## **1. Introduction**

Citizenship in a traditional sense is defined as membership in a political and geographic community, which is composed of three dimensions or elements (Cohen 1999; Kymlicka and Norman 1994; Marshall 1964; O'byrne 2004; Osler and Starkey 2005). Firstly, citizenship is commonly considered as the legal status involving civil, political and social rights. A citizen, therefore, is a legal person who enjoys certain rights according to the law. The second dimension values an active participation of citizens in political life and in realizing the common good of societies (Honohan 2002). The third --- and the most pertinent to our discussion --- refers to citizenship as equal membership in one's community. The boundary of this community, however, has been stretched from "city-states" in ancient Greece to "nation-states" at the end of feudalism and again to "the world" at the dawn of 21<sup>st</sup> century. Changes in the present societies --- international migration, increased global mobility, more frequent transnational economic and social exchange, common global problems we are faced with, just to name a few --- has lifted the concept of citizenship to the global sphere instead of just within a sovereign state (Marchetti 2014). Global citizenship studies has therefore caught a lot of attention from the academia.

It is commonly held that global citizenship is more metaphorical than legal or institutional because, while citizens share a state, there is no global state which global citizens will share (Kwame Anthony Appiah 2007; Wood 2008). The final aim of global citizens, therefore, is not to pursue a world state but to focus on global issues such as social justice, international awareness, and well-rounded citizen (Davies 2008), and to take responsible actions as a member of the humankind. In other words, when we talk about global citizenship, we refer not only to a collection of rights and obligations, but the idea of practices "which define a person as a competent member of society, and which as a consequence shape the flow of resources to persons and social groups" (Turner 1993, p. 2). According to Lagos (2002, p. 5), "global citizenship remains the purview of individuals to live, work and play within trans-national norms and status that defy national boundaries and sovereignty since there is no global bureaucracy to give sanction and protect global citizens, and despite intriguing models suggested by the EU." Dower (2003, p. 7) suggests that global citizenship comprises three components, "a normative claim about how humans should act, an existential claim about what is the case in the world and an aspirational claim about the future".

The notion that global citizenship is not a legal but a metaphorical term doesn't change the fact that the focus of education, and civic education in particular, has in the past several decades shifted from mainly promoting nationalistic values and identity to a combination of national and transnational orientations, aimed at preparing students for global competition and global problem-solving (Goren and Yemini 2017). Termed as global citizenship education (GCED), the idea is actually not new but builds on preceding pedagogies such as intercultural learning, global education, cosmopolitan education, peace education or civic education, etc. (Wintersteiner et al. 2015). Thus as an umbrella term, GCED covers education for global perspectives, intercultural education, peace education, global problem solving, and so on. Therefore, it's no wonder that global citizenship and GCED are understood and practiced in different or even conflicting approaches (Schattle 2008; Shultz 2007).

Some would interpret global citizenship and GCED from the perspective of global competences. A global citizen, then, is someone who:

- Moves freely across the world accessing opportunities;
- Enjoys the benefits of a global community;
- Participates fully in global economic growth;
- Is able to compete with the best in the world;
- Is a marketable entrepreneur;
- Negotiates the cultural, political, and economic global environment.

Along this line of thought, the purposes of education for global citizenship are:

- To ensure students have adequate language skills;
- To provide students with the skills necessary for participation in the global market;
- To provide knowledge, skills and attitudes that promote cross-cultural competencies;
- To provide opportunities for international travel experiences. (L Shultz n.d.)

UNESCO(2015, p. 11) defines global citizenship from a different perspective as “a sense of belonging to a broader community and common humanity. It emphasizes political, economic, social and cultural interdependency and interconnectedness between the local, the national and the global.” GCED, according to UNESCO (2014, p. 9), refers to “a framing paradigm which encapsulates how education can develop the knowledge, skills, values and attitudes learners need for securing a world which is more just, peaceful, tolerant, inclusive, secure and sustainable.”

We are inclined to the latter perspective represented by UNESCO for the reason that, although educating competitive global citizens is a desirable purpose of schooling, the more noble aim of education is and has always been to cultivate a GOOD citizen. Living in a world troubled with terrorism, conflicts and regional wars, poverty, food shortage, etc., we cannot afford to focus our mind narrowly on competing with others in a global context. GCED should help students to develop clarified identifications and deep understanding of their roles in the world community(JA Banks 2004), so that they can help to solve the common problems faced by the entire human race and help to build a better world of greater justice, equity and human rights for all. That’s why GCED has been included as a key component of Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) 4.7: By 2030 ensure all learners acquire knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, including among others through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship, and appreciation of cultural diversity and of culture’s contribution to sustainable development’(UN 2015).

## **2. Research questions**

If we believe that GCED is of high importance to ensure quality education for all, we are then confronted with the following question inevitably: How well is GCED implemented in our education systems?

Of course, GCED can be realized at school level through a wide array of experiences and practices, ranging from either independent programs such as short-term study abroad programs or existing subjects like foreign languages and social studies(Aktas et al. 2017; Lutterman-Aguilar and

Gingerich 2002; Myers 2006; Sherman 2016). Our focus, however, would be on the national level. In other words, we are interested in to what extent is GCED reflected in national curriculums or policies.

By means of analyzing national (in the case of Hong Kong, regional) curriculum or educational frameworks, similar efforts have been accomplished in the past decade centering how GCED is implemented. Lee(2008) analyzed the tension between national identity and global citizenship in Hong Kong's citizenship education curriculum; Chong(2015a) studied global citizenship concepts in Hong Kong's secondary school curriculum guidelines by coding the GCED literature and categorizing the findings and found that there is a shift from learning about rights and responsibilities to challenging inequality; Leek(2016) studied Polish national curricula and other supporting documents and concluded that GCED in Poland is built on a framework of global perspectives within a national context; Myers(2006) drew a similar conclusion that the US educational system remains emphasizing national identity and patriotism over global perspectives; Malmsten's(2017) thesis revealed that GCED was perceived as a multidisciplinary subject in Finland aiming at increasing student's competences and promote equality and sustainable development; Cox(2017) and Browes(2017), working with UNESCO's International Education Bureau (IBO), studied the national curricula of ten countries and four countries<sup>1</sup> respectively and found that only two of these eleven countries (Colombia, Mongolia and Uganda were studied in both cases) consistently include global citizenship concepts while other countries include content related to GECE to a variable extent.

As for GCED in China, several researches can be found in the literature. Lee and Leung(2006) compared difference and similarities of GCED in Hong Kong and Shanghai concerning teacher's global citizenship competencies, implemented GCED in schools, difficulties in implementation and teachers' needs. Law(2006) noticed emerging global themes in Chinese national curricula, but global perspective is only one of the several topics that he addressed. Zhao(2013) noticed that there is a narrowing down of orthodox political-ideological education and a shift toward citizenship education in China, including some attention to global citizenship. Yu(2014) claimed that moral education in China is still characterized by heavy politicization and patriotism, and that world citizenship (a phrase more frequently used in Chinese context than global citizenship) will work toward solving the problem. Pan(2014) noticed there are signs of liberation in China's citizenship education and multi-leveled citizenship education was practiced in Beijing city. However, attention given to local and global components are much less than that given to personal and national components. Chen(2014) also noticed the shift in China's citizenship education from morality-oriented civic education to skill-centered global citizenship education and bilingual education is an important carrier of the latter. Song(Song 2016) investigated Chinese university students' perception of citizenship and global citizenship and concluded that global citizenship is supported by college students and GCED promotes national pride as well as global-mindedness. While these researches have addressed the recent transition of citizenship education in China to global perspectives, up to now there is no study focusing on a detailed analysis of national curricula in order to see how GCED is represented in China's curricula.

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<sup>1</sup> Those eleven counties are Colombia, Costa Rica, England, France, Indonesia, Iraq, Kenya, Mongolia, South Korea, Uganda, and Cambodia.

The purpose of the present study, therefore, is to fill this gap by analyzing global citizenship concepts in China's national curricula. Specifically, our research questions are:

- 1) How is GCED represented in China's curricula?
- 2) What are the features of GCED in China?

### **3. Methodology**

Since the purpose of the present study is to examine how GCED is reflected in China's school curricula --- which can be categorized as public documents --- we decided to use document analysis as our research method. Document analysis, or documentary research method, refers to a systematic procedure for reviewing or evaluating documents—both printed and electronic (computer-based and Internet-transmitted) material in order to elicit meaning, gain understanding, and develop empirical knowledge (Bowen 2009). To be specific, “documentary research methods are the techniques used to categories, investigate, interpret and identify the limitations of physical sources, most commonly written documents” (Geoff Payne & Payne, 2004: p. 60). Document analysis as a research method is just as good as other popular social science research methods like social surveys, in-depth interviews, participant observation, and so on (Mogalakwe 2006). By extracting rich information, document analysis throws light on the understanding of the issue under investigation. Document analysis research may employ any of the following specific techniques: semiotics, qualitative comparative analysis, constant comparison analysis, keywords-in-context, word count, secondary data analysis, classical content analysis and text mining (Leech and Onwuegbuzie 2008). Among those techniques, constant comparison, also referred to as “coding” (Morgan 1993; Ryan and Bernard 2000), is often used to generate themes from existing data and therefore is most appropriate for the purpose of the present study.

Reliable document analysis follows rigorous procedures and steps (Altheide 1996; O'Leary 2014). We conduct our analysis in accordance with the steps proposed by Altheide.

#### **3.1 Setting inclusion criteria for documents**

Criteria for selecting documents for analysis are listed as follows. First, only official documents are included. Second, since we are to examine how GCED is implemented across the country instead of individual schools, we narrow down our data source to national curriculum standards and benchmarks. Third, curriculum documents cover the entire school experience, i.e., from grade 1 to grade 12. Fourth, the subjects studied should contain the essential contents on GCED. Having applied those standards, we finally choose curricula of the following subjects as source of data: Morality and Life, Morality and the Society, History and the Society, English as Foreign Language, Geography, and Politics. Documents included in the study are listed in Table 1.

<i>Documents</i>	<i>Grades</i>	<i>Year</i>
<i>The National Morality and Life Curriculum (primary school)</i>	grades 1-2	2011
<i>The National Morality and the Society Curriculum (primary school)</i>	grades 3-5	2011
<i>The National History and the society Curriculum (middle school)</i>	grades 6-9	2011
<i>The National English Curriculum (Compulsory education period)</i>	grades 1-9	2011
<i>The National History Curriculum</i>	grades 10-12	2016
<i>The National Geography Curriculum</i>	grades 10-12	2016
<i>The National Chinese Curriculum</i>	grades 10-12	2016
<i>The National English Curriculum (High school period)</i>	grades 10-12	2016
<i>The National Politics Curriculum</i>	grades 10-12	2016

**Table 1 Documents included in the study**

### 3.2 Collecting documents

For the purpose of coding documents by means of qualitative analysis software, we downloaded all the documents via internet in PDF or Microsoft Word format. For documents that were not downloaded from official websites (i.e. Ministry of Education, PRC), we went over the electronic versions and compared them with printed versions in order to eliminate possible mistakes. All documents are in Chinese language.

### 3.3 Articulating key areas of analysis

Various frameworks for organizing global citizenship education domains can be found in the literature (Browes 2017; Chong 2015b; Cox 2017; CUEB 2017; Evans et al. 2010; Fricke et al. 2015; Oxfam 2015; Zahabioun et al. 2013). Though there exist some minor divergences, most of these frameworks categorize global citizenship education goals into cognitive (knowledge, understanding and skills), attitudinal (attitudes and values) and behavioral (participation and engagement) domains (Oxfam 2015; S Reysen and Katzarska-Miller 2013; UNESCO 2014, 2015). Themes or topics of GCED usually include global identity, intercultural diversity, world governance and systems, global interdependence, global issues, global peace, sustainable development, etc. (DfEE 2000; Rapoport 2013; Stephen Reysen et al. 2013; UNESCO 2015). Besides, Cox (Cox 2017) reminds that analyzing curricula content for GCED and content for traditional civic and citizenship concepts is very important since the latter, though referring to concepts beyond nation-states, doesn't embody a global context or vision as referents. We finally adopted the areas of analysis proposed by Cox (2017), which he and Browes (2017) used to analyze global citizenship concepts in the curricula of 11 countries. These areas for analysis are:

- 1) *Discourse of justification of global citizenship;*
- 2) *Definitions in the cognitive domain of the curriculum documents (in both the aims and/or content) which explicitly refer to global systems, structures and processes, and to global issues;*
- 3) *Definitions in the attitudinal (or socio-emotional) domain which explicitly refer to multiple identities, distinguishing their local, national and global levels, and that, in dealing with difference and diversity, refer to their intercultural and international level;*
- 4) *Definitions in the behavioral domain (that is, participation and actions that can be taken individually or collectively) which include or refer to global issues and context.*

### 3.4 Document coding

All documents listed above was analyzed to determine whether or the extent to which the national curricula contains the identified domains and themes related to GCED. Text relevant to each domain or theme was highlighted and coded via Nvivo 11, a qualitative data analysis software. The matrix for coding was adopted from Cox's recent work with UNESCO (see table 2).

<p><b>Justification and general orientations about GCED.</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Justification of GCED (socio-economic, political, cultural, moral).</li> <li>2. Global Citizenship (affirmation; characterization).</li> </ol>	<p><b>Attitudinal (socio-affective) domain categories.</b></p> <p><i>Multiple identities:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>14. Humanity as privileged referent of identity.</li> <li>15. Nation as privileged referent of identity.</li> <li>16. 'Embedded identities': local, national, regional (supra-national), and global.</li> </ol> <p><i>Difference and respect for diversity: multicultural and/or international contexts-levels:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>17. Intercultural empathy, dialogue, respect, solidarity (referred to intercultural or international, regional or worldwide contexts).</li> <li>18. Discrimination, racism. (Referred to intercultural or international, regional or worldwide contexts).</li> <li>19. Values and attitudes for Global Citizenship.</li> </ol>
<p><b>Cognitive domain categories.</b></p> <p><i>Global systems, structures and processes:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3. Global governance systems, structures (institutions) and processes.</li> <li>4. Humanitarian law, human rights, peace building, rule of international laws.</li> <li>5. Trans-national corporations.</li> <li>6. Other (global systems).</li> </ol> <p><i>Global issues:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>7. Globalization (socio-economic, political, cultural).</li> </ol>	<p><b>Behavioral domain categories.</b></p> <p><i>Engagement, participation, actions:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>20. Current and future participation in civic protest on global issues.</li> <li>21. Information and debates on socio-political issues of global reach.</li> <li>22. Direct action on issues of global reach.</li> </ol>

8. North-south relationships, developed developing interconnections, interdependence.	
9. Climate change, biodiversity, sustainable development.	
10. Global poverty, global inequality.	
11. Genocide, terrorism, war, refugees.	
12. Diseases (Ebola, HIV & AIDS).	
13. Other (global issues).	

**Table 2 Matrix for coding categories of curriculum contents on global citizenship and associated concepts. Adopted from Cox(Cox 2017)**

### 3.5 Verification

To ensure sufficient reliability and consistency, the analysis and coding of every document was conducted by the two researchers separately and all disagreements and doubts during the coding process were discussed until consensus was reached(Morse et al. 2002).

### 3.6 Analysis.

The first author then continued with the analysis. The findings and discussion are presented in the next section.

## 4. Findings

### 4.1 General description of coding and analysis results

The general information of coding and analysis results are presented in table 3.

Themes or topics to be coded	Number of documents coded	Number of references in the data set
<b>Justification and general orientations about GCED</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>7</b>
1. Justification of GCED (socio-economic, political, cultural, moral).	0	0
2. Global Citizenship (affirmation; characterization).	4	7
<b>Cognitive domain categories.</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>42</b>
3. Global governance systems, structures (institutions) and processes.	6	6
4. Humanitarian law, human rights, peace building, rule of international laws.	3	3
5. Trans-national corporations.	2	2
6. Other (global systems).	3	3
7. Globalization (socio-economic, political, cultural).	5	8
8. North-south relationships, developed developing interconnections, interdependence.	2	3



9. Climate change, biodiversity, sustainable development.	4	9
10. Global poverty, global inequality.	1	1
11. Genocide, terrorism, war, refugees.	3	5
12. Diseases (Ebola, HIV & AIDS).	1	1
13. Other (global issues).	0	0
<b>Attitudinal (socio-affective) domain categories.</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>26</b>
14. Humanity as privileged referent of identity.	0	0
15. Nation as privileged referent of identity.	4	7
16. 'Embedded identities': local, national, regional (supra-national), and global.	0	0
17. Intercultural empathy, dialogue, respect, solidarity (referred to intercultural or international, regional or worldwide contexts).	5	13
18. Discrimination, racism. (Referred to intercultural or international, regional or worldwide contexts).	0	0
19. Values and attitudes for Global Citizenship.	3	5
<b>Behavioral domain categories.</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>4</b>
20. Current and future participation in civic protest on global issues.	0	0
21. Information and debates on socio-political issues of global reach.	1	3
22. Direct action on issues of global reach.	1	1

**Table 3 General description of coding and analysis.**

#### 4.2 Justification and general orientations about GCED

Across all the curricula, global citizenship education is not explicitly stated either as purpose or as content of the disciplines. However, general orientations about GCED do exist in middle and high school disciplines like history and society (grades 7-9), geography (grades 10-12), history (grades 10-12) and English (grades 10-12). Those general orientations are usually about global perspectives, sustainable development and international understanding and so on.

*The subject of History and the Society (grades 7-9), as a comprehensive curriculum, is designed to help students to understand the relationship between life, time and space and the relationship between human beings and the nature; to cultivated students' national identity, global perspective and environmental awareness. (The National History and the Society Curriculum, grades 7-9, p.1)*

*[The basic philosophy underpinning the discipline of Geography (grades 10-12)] is to strengthen students' awareness of harmonious relationship between human beings and the nature, ... to provide students with both nationalistic spirit and a global perspective, and to direct students to care about geographic issues and sustainable development at local, national and global levels. (The National Geography Curriculum, grades 10-12, p. 1)*

*[The purpose of history education] is to cultivate students' proper national identity, ethnic identity, social awareness, civic awareness, and global awareness and perspectives. (The National*

*History Curriculum, grades 10-12, p. 2)*

*The overall purpose of high school English education is to ... cultivate qualified successors and promoters of socialist cause who possess nationalistic spirit, global perspective and intercultural communicative capacity. (The National English Curriculum, grades 10-12, p. 5)*

#### **4.3 Cognitive domain categories**

All the cognitive domain factors are represented in the curricula, especially in middle and high school curricula. Specific results are list below.

##### **Global governance systems, structures (institutions)**

*[Students will] know about some international organizations that China joined and international treaties that China ratified. Know the functions of these international organizations. (The National Morality and the Society Curriculum, grades 3-5, p.17)*

*[Students will] know about international organizations, international forums and multilateral talks, international cooperation and aids. (The National History and the Society Curriculum, grades 6-9, p. 36)*

*[Students will] learn about the roles that international organizations, regional organizations and transnational organizations play in global politics and economics. (The National Geography Curriculum, grades 10-12, p. 20)*

*[Students will] learn about the formation of modern world monetary system. (The National History Curriculum, grades 10-12, p. 18)*

*[Students will] learn about important international organizations and INGOs. (The National English Curriculum, grades 10-12, p. 14)*

*[Students can] explain the fundamental rules advocated by the UN Charter and make comments on the role of UN in international affairs. [Students can] analyze the roles played by international organizations and agencies like WTO, World Bank and IMF, etc. in international affairs. [Students can] identify major regional organizations and their roles in international affairs. (The National Politics Curriculum, grades 10-12, p. 18)*

##### **Humanitarian law, human rights, peace building, rule of international laws**

*[Students will] feel the wonderfulness of peace, know about the consequences brought about by wars on human beings. Love peace. (The National Morality and the Society Curriculum, grades 3-5, p.17)*

*[Students will] understand that peace, development, cooperation and win-win coalition are the major trends of our time. (The National History Curriculum, grades 10-12, p. 12)*

*[Students can] cite related materials to illustrate that peace and development are the major trends of our time. (The National Politics Curriculum, grades 10-12, p. 18)*

##### **Trans-national corporations**

*[Students can] identify the comparative advantages and competitive advantages in international economy, describe the major features and trends of international capital flow and analyze the opportunities and challenges of economic globalization. (The National Politics Curriculum, grades 10-12, p. 18)*

**Globalization (socio-economic, political, cultural)**

*[Students will] have a preliminary understanding of the interdependence between China and other countries around the world and its influence on people's life. (The National Morality and the Society Curriculum, grades 3-5, p.16)*

*[Students will] compare regional interactions and mutual influence during different historical period, understand the trend that the interconnection between regions has become closer. [Students will] know that by 20<sup>th</sup> century the world has become a whole and that developing from disunited segment to a united whole. (The National History and the Society Curriculum, grades 6-9, p. 25)*

*[Students can] use examples and phenomena to illustrate the manifestation of economic globalization. (The National History and the Society Curriculum, grades 6-9, p. 32)*

*[Students will] understand the present trend and change of economic globalization. (The National Geography Curriculum, grades 10-12, p. 20)*

*[Students will], by means of understanding the economic globalization and cultural diversity, realize the opportunities and challenges human beings face, and understand peace, development, cooperation and win-win coalition are the major trends of our time. (The National History Curriculum, grades 10-12, p. 12).*

*[Students will] recognize the implication of global market on business and trade(The National History Curriculum, grades 10-12, p. 20).*

*[Students will] explore the impact of regional exploitation on ecological environment under the trend of economic globalization. (The National History Curriculum, grades 10-12, p. 20).*

*[Students will] analyze the opportunities and challenges of economic globalization. (The National Politics Curriculum, grades 10-12, p. 18)*

**North-south relationships, developed-developing interconnections, interdependence**

*[Students will] understand that all nations are equal to each other as sovereign state although their territorial area, population, political systems and developing level vary. (The National History and the Society Curriculum, grades 6-9, p. 12)*

*[Students will] understand that we are faced with global problems such as the huge gap between the north and the south ... and that this gap is becoming even wider today. (The National History and the Society Curriculum, grades 6-9, p. 33)*

**Climate change, biodiversity, sustainable development**

*[Students will] have a preliminary understanding of interdependence between human and nature and the common problems that human beings face as a whole. Those problems include population, natural resources, environment etc. (The National Morality and the Society Curriculum, grades 3-5, p.6)*

*[Students will] understand the environmental problems that human beings face and the relationship among population, natural resources, environment and the social-economic development. (The National History and the Society Curriculum, grades 6-9, p. 5)*

*[Students will] know that sustainable development is the important choice we made for the development of the society. (The National History and the Society Curriculum, grades 6-9, p. 27)*

*[Students will] recognize the major global environmental problems such as global warming, land desertification and acid rain, etc. [Students will] understand that solutions to the global environmental problems need the cooperation of nations across the world. (The National History and the Society Curriculum, grades 6-9, p. 34)*

*[Students can] illustrate the relationship among population, resources and the environment and understand that only through coordinated development can sustainable social-economic development be realized. (The National History and the Society Curriculum, grades 6-9, p. 34)*

*[Students can] illustrate with data the major global environmental problems that human beings face. (The National Geography Curriculum, grades 10-12, p.9)*

*[Students will] explore the impact of regional exploitation on ecological environment under the trend of economic globalization. (The National History Curriculum, grades 10-12, p. 20).*

### **Global poverty, global inequality**

*[Students will] understand that we are faced with global problems such as the huge gap between the north and the south ... and that this gap is becoming even wider today. (The National History and the Society Curriculum, grades 6-9, p. 33)*

### **Genocide, terrorism, war, refugees**

*[Students will] understand the consequences brought about by wars on human beings and experience the wonderfulness of peace. (The National Morality and the Society Curriculum, grades 3-5, p.17)*

*[Students will] know the important figures and events that influenced the two world wars and explore the cause, nature and impacts of the two world wars. (The National History and the Society Curriculum, grades 6-9, p. 30)*

*[Students can] use examples such as 9-11 terrorist attack, conflicts in the Middle East area, etc. to illustrate the major problems faced by the present international society. (The National History and the Society Curriculum, grades 6-9, p. 33)*

*[Students will] understand, through the two world wars, the change of international order in the first half of 20<sup>th</sup> century.*

*[Students will] understand, by means of exploring famous wars in history, the destruction and cultural discontinuity brought about by wars. [Students will] understand that, objectively speaking, wars also provide opportunities for intercultural interaction. (The National History Curriculum, grades 10-12, p. 24).*

### **Diseases (Ebola, HIV & AIDS)**

*[Students will] understand that we are faced with global problems such as natural disasters, food crisis and urgent epidemics. (The National History and the Society Curriculum, grades 6-9, p. 33)*

## **4.4 Attitudinal (socio-affective) domain categories**

### **Nation as privileged referent of identity**

*[Students will] develop good morality and behavioral norms so as to lay a solid foundation for the students' growing up to be patriotic citizens. (The National Morality and Life Curriculum,*

grades 1-2, p.6)

*[Students ought to] love the motherland, show respect for the national flag and the national emblem, and learn to sing the national anthem. [Students will] be proud of being Chinese. (The National Morality and Life Curriculum, grades 1-2, p.10)*

*[Students ought to] know that he/she is a citizen of People's Republic of China and have a preliminary understanding of the fundamental rights and responsibilities that he/she owns. (The National Morality and the Society Curriculum, grades 3-5, p.6)*

*The purpose of history and the society course is to (...) promote national spirit centering on patriotism. (The National History and the Society Curriculum, grades 6-9, p. 5)*

*[Students will] gradually enhance their national identity, sense of belonging and national pride. (The National History and the Society Curriculum, grades 6-9, p. 6)*

*[Students will] enhance their national identity and patriotism through cultivation of cultural quality. (The National English Curriculum, grades 10-12, p.5)*

#### **4.5 Behavioral domain categories**

##### **Direct action on issues of global reach**

*[Students will] develop the habit of protecting the environment and treasuring natural resources. (The National Morality and Life Curriculum, grades 1-2, p.6)*

##### **Information and debates on socio-political issues of global reach**

*[Students can] deliver a speech on topic like "Constructing a Peaceful World". (The National History and the Society Curriculum, grades 6-9, p. 33)*

*[Students ought to] contribute to environmental governance through debates and actions. (The National History and the Society Curriculum, grades 6-9, p. 34)*

*[Students will] hold mock hearings on sustainable development, in which they will play the role of government officials, business owners or local residents and decide whether and how to carry out the project. (The National History and the Society Curriculum, grades 6-9, p. 35)*

## **5. Discussion**

According to the findings, GCED in China reveals several features.

### **5.1 Implicit instead of direct reference to GCED.**

Though GCED is not directly stated in any of the curriculum, reference to general global citizenship characteristics and to detailed cognitive, attitudinal and behavioral dimensions can be found across the curricula from grade 1 through grade 12, which indicates that GCED is indeed a very important dimension of China's education. Yet, despite the heavy emphasis on cognitive and attitudinal domains of global citizenship, GCED as a term does not appear in all Chinese curricula.

This reluctance to include GCED explicitly in curricula can be partly explained by China's reluctance to use the word "global" in many contexts. The recently released "Key Competencies of Chinese Students' Development"<sup>2</sup>(BNU PRC 2016), for example, groups global citizenship concepts

<sup>2</sup> Though the "Key Competencies of Chinese Students' Development" is released as a report of a research program, it is in fact a research funded and entrusted by MOE China and therefore can be regarded as representing official policy intention. China's national

such as “global perspective and open-mindedness, cultural diversity and difference, intercultural communication, global challenges and issues, and a community of shared future ” under the subtitle “international understanding”.

Although China in the past several decades have successfully integrated into the economic globalization process, it remains precautionary when it comes to globalization in the cultural or ideological sense. This reluctance partly results from the belief that globalization is not merely an economic agenda, it's also a political agenda, which indicates that some organizational forces, activists and agents are employing national and economic levels to transform the world into what they think as ideal (Szeman 2015). Globalization, therefore, becomes a concept that carries a lot of ideological implications (Rupert 2012), especially values originated from the Western civilization. Those core traditional Western values go together with economic globalization and spread to the East under the cover of modernization. Global education was therefore also considered by some as imposing West-centric agendas on other countries (Kuleta-Hulboj 2016a).

Take China's entry to the World Trade Organization (WTO) as an example. When China applied for accession to the WTO, the United States supported China's application because, as President Clinton convinced the US Congress, China's entry to WTO would exert a profound impact on China's democratic process (Chow 2013). This linkage between human rights or political reform and economic agenda was considered by opponents as imposition of the Western values on the other countries without taking different developing levels and ethical norms into consideration (Hees 2004). As a result, much of the world (China included) today tend to regard globalization as synonymous for “Americanization” and an instrument of US hegemony (Chua, 2004, cited in Myers, 2006). This tendency in China is reflected by the fact that in Chinese official documents and academic literature, world citizenship or international understanding are more preferred than global citizenship.

## **5.2 National identity and global identity**

Similar to previous studies of other countries (Browes 2017; Cox 2017), national curricula in China also promoted national identity to a large extent. However, we don't agree to the conclusion that this emphasis on nationalism “is at odds with GCED” (Browes 2017, p. 14). It is true that nationalism is emphasized in China's (and also in most of the 11 countries mentioned in previous studies) curricula, but the idea that national pride is totally at odds with global citizenship is a false and misleading narrative. It is a fact that at the age of globalization, the interconnectedness between people from every corner of the world is growing, but this does not entail a total rejection of all national political communities (Rosenboim 2017a, 2017b), and vice versa. In other words, global citizenship and national identity do not need to be mutually exclusive if we take a both/and perspective instead of an either/or perspective. In fact, Osler and others prefer to use education for cosmopolitan citizenship rather than global citizenship because the former concept links the local, the national and the global (Osler 2011; Osler and Starkey 2005). Nussbaum (1996) and Appiah (2006) also hold the idea that local identities remain important for cosmopolitans though they attach much emphasis to a

common humanity and human solidarity. We do not intend to call for a change of terminology from global citizenship to cosmopolitan citizenship, but we do agree with Massey(2014) and Pike(2008) among others that it is quite acceptable for a citizen to identify himself as a citizen of a specific nation and at the same time a global citizen. As in R. Robertson's (1995, p. 27) words, "it is not a question of either homogenization or heterogenization, but rather of the ways in which both of these two tendencies have become features of life across much of the late-twentieth-century world."

To say a person can be at the same time a national citizen and a global citizen doesn't mean that concept of global citizenship is sufficiently presented in China's curricula. There are at least two places where improvements can be made.

First, general orientations of global citizenship do exist in China's curricula, but these concepts all appear at higher grades (grades 7-12), which leaves an impression that global citizenship can only be taught at higher grades. This is not the case of course. Usually children are not considered as citizens constitutionally since they are not old enough to enjoy the right to vote or take responsibilities as adults do. However, children are social beings too, and as social actors they surely have the abilities to understand the notions of rights and responsibilities(Alanen 1994; Roche 1999). Proper citizenship education will ensure they grow up to be informed and responsible citizens. Global citizenship is not exclusive to older students. Younger children may just as well become better informed of global issues, respect and appreciate difference and diversity, understand the interconnectedness on a global scale, and even take part in discussions and even decision making processes(Collins 2008).

Second, none of the curricular provides justification for including global citizenship concepts in the curricula. This indicates that GCED is still in its very early stage in China. Considering that in China citizenship education is something relatively new, it is not surprising that GCED has not been systematically defined and designed. Before 2001, citizenship education in China put much emphasis on the promotion of "spiritual civilization" and morality cultivation, implemented in primary school as "Ideological and Moral Education" and in secondary schools as "Ideological and Political Education"(Chen and Reid 2002; Law 2006; Shuli 2014). Since the release of the Action Plan for the Development of Civic Morality(CPC Central Committee 2006) and the official launch of a new round of national curriculum change in 2001, citizenship education has officially come into China's curricula(Law 2006; Song 2016; Zhao 2013). A multi-layered and multi-dimensional citizenship education was for the first time explicitly expressed in China's primary and secondary curricular, which included global values such as justice, fairness, virtuousness and international understanding(Law 2006; Song 2016; Zhu 2002). Though this is a great step forward for China's citizenship education, more work concerning the justification of GCED need to be done in the next round of curriculum reform.

### **5.3 Education about global citizenship vs. education through/for global citizenship**

Compared with the cognitive domains (coded in 6 documents with 42 references) and social-emotional domains (coded in 7 documents with 26 references), GCED in behavioral domains are under-represented (coded only in 2 documents with 4 references). Because of the high pressure and fierce competition resulting from College Entrance Exam, China's school have laid salient emphasis

on the academic sides of education and have neglected “the dispositions, attitudes and capacities needed for modern citizenship”(Yu 2014, p. 85). The curriculum reform began from 2001, by including socio-emotional goals in nearly all disciplines(Zhu 2002), has changed this over-emphasis on cognitive knowledge to some extent, but the phenomenon of what Kerr(1999, p. 14) termed as “teaching *about* citizenship” remains unchanged.

Kerr proposed a tripartite division of about-through-for citizenship. Education *about* citizenship stresses knowledge and understanding of the history and the structures and processes of political systems and lives. Education *about* citizenship only provide students with “factual political knowledge” instead of opportunities to practice and challenge what they have learnt(Arthur et al. 2001, p. 76). Students in this approach are treated as citizens in preparation, they will not take actions until they grow up. Education *through* citizenship moves beyond a narrow provision of factual knowledge and engages students in active participation in the school or local community and beyond. Students will reinforce the knowledge they have learned through direct experiences. Education *for* citizenship combines factual knowledge, skills and values so that students can take an active and responsible part in adult life.

Shortage of references to behavioral domains indicates that global citizenship education in China is far from satisfactory. For example, simply being aware that we are faced with some global issues is not enough since these issues will remain unsolved if we don't take any action to tackle these issues. Richardson - as cited in Davies(2006) - points out that a global citizens is one who “knows how the world works, is outraged by injustice and who is both willing and enabled to take action to meet this global challenge”. GCED in this sense does not simply refers to cognitive domains. On the contrary, it has a deep concern for the reality and aims at making the world better by solving the existing problems. A global citizen should be an agent for change(Kuleta-Hulboj 2016b).

## 6. Conclusion

In this study, we explored GCED in China. In order to see how GCED is reflected in China's curricula and the features of GCED in China, we analyzed some national curricula that are commonly thought to be carriers of citizenship education. Findings from the analysis are that concept of global citizenship does exist in China's curricula but are indirectly expressed and that both national ethos and global awareness are considered as important. Besides, GCED in China is characterized by imbalanced emphasis on cognitive domains and on behavioral domains, which indicates that GCED in China needs a transition from education about global citizenship toward education through and for global citizenship.

By analyzing national curricula, this empirical study helps to understand how Chinese government thinks of and acts upon the opportunities and challenges we face in the more and more globalized and interconnected world and how these thoughts and actions are reflected in education. It also helps people from different cultures to understand how Chinese look at the paradoxical coexistence between national and global identities. As for policy makers and curriculum experts in China, the present study suggests that systematic design, implementation and assessment are necessary if global citizenship is to be successfully educated.



Of course, this study only illustrates how GCED is prescribed in national curricula. More researches need to be done to examine how GCED is actually implemented at schools and to assess Chinese students' global citizenship competencies. International comparisons between GCED in China and that in other countries is also a meaningful task for further research.

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