

Issues and challenges of educators in implementing global citizenship education in South Korea*

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Abstract

This study aims to explore the issues and challenges of implementation of global citizenship education (GCE) in South Korea. Through analyzing in-depth interviews with 19 educators who are in charge or who implement GCE, such as teachers, non-governmental organization (NGO) workers, and international organization (IO) staff, this study presents three major challenges: a partial understanding of GCE, contradictory values between GCE and social norms, and structural constraints regarding the government's top-down approach. Based on findings, this study argues that existing contextual restraints must be reviewed in developing and implementing GCE, because GCE is shaped by these contextual factors. With consideration of these conceptual and structural limitations in Korean society, GCE could truly contribute to actualizing individual and social transformation.

Keywords: global citizenship, global citizenship education, South Korea, global education, citizenship education

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Introduction

The purpose of my research is to explore issues and challenges that hinder implementation of global citizenship education (herein GCE) in South Korea. As globalization is perceived as a contemporary reality, educators need to reflect various global issues and problems into the education arena (Davies, Evans, & Reid, 2005; Mannion, Biesta, Priestley, & Ross, 2011). In recent years, GCE has received much attention worldwide among educators, policy makers, and organizations. GCE has entered into the international agenda as reflected by the Global Education First Initiative (GEFI), the Post-2015 education agenda, and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The UN included GCE as one of the three pillars of GEFI in 2012 and later at the World Education Forum (WEF) 2015, the Incheon Declaration proclaimed GCE as an important area within the Post-2015 education agenda. Most recently, the SDGs reaffirmed the commitment to the promotion of GCE as stated in goal 4.7.

Along with these international initiatives, there has been increasing attention to GCE in South Korea, especially after it has joined the GEFI as the 15th Champion Country in 2014. More notably, the WEF 2015 also facilitated more interests and discussions on GCE in South Korea (Korea Civil Society Forum on International Development Cooperation [KoFID], 2015; S. Lee et al., 2015). In this context, GCE has become an emerging issue among Korean educators. Various actors have become involved in GCE in different domains, such as the government, international organizations (IOs), non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and schools. Yet, the research that empirically shows how GCE is conceptualized and implemented in South Korea is scarce. While several studies show how GCE is implemented in practice, the majority of studies focus on analyzing curriculum or specific programs (H. Park & Cho, 2016). On the other hand, there is limited research that explores educators' perceptions and implementation of GCE (H. Park & Cho, 2016). However, in order to facilitate better comprehension of discursive practices, it seems useful to analyze how educators perceive GCE and its implementation in their educational settings.

In this sense, this study aims to explore educators' perceived issues and challenges of implementation of GCE by analyzing interviews with 19 educators in South Korea. In this research, I address three situational factors in South Korea that hinder the promotion of GCE in practice: a partial understanding of GCE, contradictory values in practice, and the government's top-down approach of GCE. Based on my analysis, I argue that current conceptually ambiguous and contextual restraints must be reviewed in developing and implementing GCE in order to challenge hegemonic ideas. This research also proposes practical recommendations to contribute to discursive practices towards the values of social justice.

Conceptual framework of GCE

Within the contemporary phenomenon of globalization, education is required to respond to globalization and prepare learners to engage more effectively and actively in the global community. GCE is perceived as the epitome of such a response (S. Park, 2013). The pervasive discourse of globalization has led educators to incorporate global challenges and issues into the field of education (Pashby, 2011). It is obvious that we are facing global

challenges that require collective awareness and action at the global level. Many global issues, such as poverty, war, environmental problems, sustainable development, and political instability are considered as pressing challenges confronting people in the global community and demanding a shared response. In order to solve global problems and promote sustainable development, importance has been given to education that teaches about various global issues and challenges that call for collective responsibility at the global level. In other words, GCE has emerged as a paradigm shift in the role of education from instilling national identity into people in a defined national territory to promoting a broader sense of belonging to a global community (S. Park, 2013).

Given the importance of GCE, the concept of GCE has been widely discussed. Despite varied definitions and interpretations, scholars and institutions seem to be in agreement about the concept of GCE serving a need to increase the understanding of global issues. One may argue that the main idea of GCE is an attempt to interweave the issues of global concern into existing formal or non-formal education programs. Indeed, Tawil (2013) argues that “global citizenship education is nothing more than an adaptation and enrichment of local and national citizenship education programs, whatever their approach, to the context of the intensified globalization” (p. 6). However, this idea considers GCE to be a simplified or limited concept. GCE is more than an international awareness; rather, its direct concern is empowering individuals to play a positive role in their lives in a globalized context in order to solve various problems regarding social justice.

UNESCO states the purpose of GCE is “to build the knowledge, skills, values and attitudes that learners need to be able to contribute to a more inclusive, just and peaceful world” (UNESCO, 2015, p. 15). Relying on various definitions, UNESCO (2015) identifies three common key conceptual dimensions: cognitive, socio-emotional, and behavioral dimensions as Table 1 shows. The cognitive dimension includes knowledge, understanding, and critical thinking about issues and trends ranging from global to local levels. The socio-emotional dimension embraces non-cognitive attitudes, such as a sense of belonging, sharing values, responsibility, empathy, and respect for differences and diversity. UNESCO sets apart the behavioral dimension from the cognitive and socio-emotional dimensions.

Table 1. Core conceptual dimensions of GCE

| | |
|-----------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Cognitive | To acquire knowledge, understanding and critical thinking about global, regional, national and local issues and the interconnectedness and interdependency of different countries and populations. |
| Socio-emotional | To have a sense of belonging to a common humanity, sharing values and responsibilities, empathy, solidarity and respect for differences and diversity. |
| Behavioral | To act effectively and responsibly at local, national and global levels for a more peaceful and sustainable world. |

Note. From “Global citizenship education: Topics and learning objectives,” by UNESCO, 2015, p. 15.

Similarly, Oxfam GB (2015) also categorizes GCE into three domains: knowledge and understanding; skills; and values and attitudes. Oxfam GB (2015) suggests various elements for GCE, particularly focusing on social justice, for example, knowledge “about social justice and equity” and attitudes of “commitment to social justice and equity” (Oxfam GB, 2015,

p. 8). These three domains show GCE includes not only knowledge, but also attitudes and behavioral aspects. As UNESCO's (2015) and Oxfam GB's (2015) classifications show, GCE emphasizes socio-emotional learning and behavioral changes. Davies (2006) posits that it is active participation that differentiates GCE from global education:

Citizenship clearly has implications both of rights and responsibilities, of duties and entitlements, concepts which are not necessarily explicit in global education. One can have the emotions and identities without having to do much about them. Citizenship implies a more active role (p. 6).

Accordingly, GCE is not just about international awareness; rather it entails change in one's values and attitudes, and one's involvement in proactive actions.

In line with Oxfam GB, Andreotti (2006) argues that social justice and reducing inequity are the main goals of GCE. Based on this argument, Andreotti (2006) points to the need for critical GCE, as a contrast with soft GCE, where individuals learn critical literacy which helps them analyze their situations and identities in a complex globalized structure. Critical literacy is defined as the ability to "read the word and the world" that entails critical engagement and reflexivity, that is "the analysis and critique of the relationships among perspectives, language, power, social groups and social practices by the learners" (Andreotti, 2006, p. 49). In contrast, soft GCE is grounded in humanitarian and moral obligations (Andreotti, 2006). This falls under the concept of what Cho (2016) calls the humanistic approach of GCE which focuses on moral responsibility to solve problems, such as poverty and helplessness (Andreotti, 2006). However, soft GCE, or the humanistic approach of GCE, is often criticized in that it neglects the structural problems that maintain and reinforce global poverty and inequality. Thus, the critical GCE approach argues that social justice and reducing global (and local) power imbalances is a key concern of GCE (Andreotti, 2006; Cho, 2016; Pashby, 2011). From this perspective, GCE aims for transformation of the hegemonic status quo by promoting individuals to critically analyze their positions, assumptions, and issues ranging from the local to the global context.

Drawing on a review of the literature, in this research I view GCE as a holistic and transformative educational paradigm, or in Andreotti's (2006) term, critical GCE, which empowers individuals to think about one's society and world critically based on universal values, such as respect, human rights, diversity, empathy, and the responsibility to pursue social justice. Through this conceptual framework of GCE, this research explores the primary issues and challenges hindering critical GCE in South Korea.

GCE in South Korea

South Korea has been actively involved in discussions about GCE. Indeed, two current international events, the Global Education First Initiative (GEFI) and the World Education Forum (WEF) 2015, have particularly led South Korea to become deeply involved in GCE issues (KoFID, 2015; S. Lee et al., 2015). After the UN included GCE as one of the three pillars of GEFI in 2012, the Korean government joined the GEFI as the 15th Champion Country in 2014 (S. Lee et al., 2015). Also, as Korea hosted the WEF in Incheon in May 2015, the government put forward GCE as an essential agenda (S. Kim & Kang, 2015). In

this context, the government has tried to promote GCE and expressed its intention publically. For example, at the opening of the World Education Forum (WEF) 2015, former Korean President Park Geun-hye stressed:

South Korea, as a champion country of the 2015 World Education Forum, will actively contribute to achieving and expanding education goals that will be adopted. In particular, South Korea will continue to spread global citizenship education to raise global citizens living together with understanding differences and respect (G. Park, 2015).

The Korean government has officially tried to promote GCE in its formal education system since the late 2000s. The Ministry of Education (MoE) set out the national curriculum that “outlines and specifically emphasizes the importance of being a global citizen, equipped with relevant competencies such as tolerance, empathy and cultural literacy” (UNESCO, 2015, p. 47). Through the 2007 curricular reform, global citizenship and international understanding of education-related contents have become imbedded in the regular school curriculum in elementary, middle, and high schools (T. J. Lee & Kim, 2010). Later, through the 2009 curriculum reform, notions of global citizenship and the global community were explicitly addressed in several subjects (Mo & Lim, 2014). Although there is no separate subject for GCE, much research shows that the current school curriculum in South Korea includes both explicit and implicit GCE components (Byeon, 2012; Choi & Cho, 2009; J. H. Kim, Cha, Park, & Lee, 2014; D. Lee & Goh, 2015; T. J. Lee & Kim, 2010; Ma, 2006; Mo & Lim, 2014). To be specific, globalization, cultural diversity, global problems, and the responsibilities of global citizens were addressed mainly through several subjects, such as moral education (Byeon, 2012), social studies (Ma, 2006; Mo & Lim, 2014), and geography education (T. J. Lee & Kim, 2010; D. Lee & Goh, 2015). More recently, the MoE includes GCE as one of the policies under the slogan of “promoting Korean education that leads the world” (MoE, 2016, p. 27). According to 2016 Education Policy Plans, the MoE (2016) plans to disseminate GCE throughout all educational levels ranging from primary, secondary to higher education by developing teaching materials and fostering GCE teachers. In this sense, GCE has been employed in schools by teachers either through official curricula or extra activities (S. Lee et al., 2015).

Along with the government’s efforts toward GCE, GCE has also been promoted and implemented through IOs. Since GCE was initiated by the UN, UN-associated IOs such as the Asia-Pacific Centre of Education for International Understanding under the auspices of UNESCO (APCEIU), the Korean National Commission for UNESCO (UNESCO Korea), and the Korean National Committee for UNICEF (UNICEF Korea), all in South Korea, have also been actively involved in promoting GCE. Briefly explaining, APCEIU is considered a key player of GCE by undertaking a great deal of programs, such as teacher training and developing educational materials for GCE. UNESCO Korea provides various activities for both teachers and students. One example is UNESCO’s Rainbow Youth Global Citizenship project started in 2010 where UNESCO-associated schools are selected to implement GCE. In 2004 UNICEF Korea started GCE titled Nakerna in order to train elementary school teachers in concert with the Seoul Metropolitan Office of Education, but stopped in 2008 (T. J. Lee, Kim, & Kim, 2009).

NGOs also play important roles in expanding GCE. GCE is often presented in schools in association with several NGOs as well as IOs. In particular, since the late 2000s, NGOs

have played key roles in implementing GCE (KoFID, 2015). In 2015, it is estimated that more than 25 NGOs are offering GCE (KoFID, 2015). NGOs offer GCE using mainly five different approaches: visiting schools and operating GCE classes for students; developing education materials; training GCE lecturers (for volunteers); providing teacher trainings; and holding camps. The principal way of implementing GCE by NGOs is offering GCE classes in schools (KoFID, 2015). Here, NGO staff or teachers trained by NGOs give classes to students ranging from elementary to high school. These classes can be either regular or extra-curricular. Depending on the requests of schools or the capacity of NGOs, the class is delivered as a one-time class or multiple sessions. Many NGOs have developed their own education materials for GCE lectures. In addition, to foster more trainers, NGOs often train volunteers or professional lecturers to dispatch to schools. Also, several NGOs provide teacher training targeting school teachers who are willing to apply GCE in their classrooms. Apart from school-based GCE, NGOs hold camps or workshops and support students' extra-curricular clubs related to GCE activities.

Thus far, I have outlined the brief current status of GCE in South Korea. This will provide the contextual foundation for the analysis to follow in this research. Keeping this recent trend in GCE in Korea in mind, I now turn to introduce the research methods of this study.

Research method

In order to gauge the educators' perceived challenges of implementing GCE, for this qualitative research study I employed interviews with education stakeholders. I targeted educators who implement GCE, such as teachers, NGO and IO officers. My viewpoint on the world as well as knowledge is situated within the constructivist paradigm. Mertens (2010) explains the fundamental assumptions of constructivism, adopting Schwandt's (2000) idea, that "knowledge is socially constructed by people active in the research process, and that researchers should attempt to understand the complex world of lived experience from the point of view of those who live it" (p. 16). Further, the constructivist approach stresses that "research is a product of the values of researchers and cannot be independent of them" (Mertens, 2010, p. 16). Consistent with constructivism, I view that knowledge can evolve, be interpreted, and be interactive depending on researchers, and that knowledge is one piece of the accumulated parts of information to understand the truth. While admitting multiple ways to explore complex social phenomena, I uphold knowledge and truth to be mainly socially constructed as constructivists argue. Given this assumption, this research employs qualitative methods to understand complex social phenomenon, namely the implementation of GCE in South Korea which may be also socially situated.

I conducted interviews tailoring my approach to deepen the understanding of educators' perceived issues and challenges in applying critical GCE. The interview method is useful to gather rich and in-depth understanding of participants' thinking and perspectives (Rossman & Rallis, 2012). The participants of my research were educators and education stakeholders involved in the delivery, design, and organizing of GCE in three different groups: teachers, IOs, and NGOs. This study interviewed 19 educators including eight teachers, eight NGO staff, and three IO officers. Table 2 shows brief details of the information for the participants in each group.

Table 2. Brief details of the participants

| Category (Number of participants) | Interviewee | Working experiences | Gender |
|--------------------------------------|--------------|---------------------|--------|
| Teachers (8) | Teacher A | 5 years | Female |
| | Teacher B | 7 years | Female |
| | Teacher C | 10 years | Male |
| | Teacher D | 6 years | Male |
| | Teacher E | 3 years | Female |
| | Teacher F | 7 years | Male |
| | Teacher G | 15 years | Female |
| | Teacher H | 23 years | Female |
| NGOs (8) | NGO worker A | 9 years | Female |
| | NGO worker B | 15 years | Female |
| | NGO worker C | 8 years | Female |
| | NGO worker D | 4 years | Female |
| | NGO worker E | 2 years | Female |
| | NGO worker F | 5 years | Female |
| | NGO worker G | N/A | Female |
| | NGO worker H | 1.5 years | Female |
| IOs (3) | IO staff A | 9 years | Female |
| | IO staff B | 20 years | Male |
| | IO staff C | 10 years | Male |
| Total number: 19 | | | |

To identify interview participants, a combination of a purposeful sampling strategy and snowball strategy were employed. More specifically, to comprehend the teachers’ voice, I approached a GCE-specialized teachers’ club, called Edujam, designated by the Seoul Metropolitan Office of Education. Edujam consists of 10-15 elementary teachers who are interested in GCE and have implemented it in their classrooms. They meet regularly, once a month, to discuss and share their experiences with GCE. I have chosen this group because they have a rich knowledge and experience related to GCE, which allowed me to collect in-depth data for my research. GCE is not mandatory in schools, thus the availability of GCE depends mainly on teachers’ autonomy. Consequently, most teachers may not be familiar with or interested in implementing GCE. Thus, this group of teachers provided an appropriate case for my study to examine the application of GCE, since they are already familiar with GCE and are currently trying to implement it in their classrooms. Through Edujam and snowball sampling strategy, eight teachers were identified.

To identify the participants in NGOs and IOs, based on a literature review, I selected a number of NGOs and UN organizations known to be active in engaging in GCE. To identify these participants, I first contacted each organization by e-mail and asked them to provide a list of individuals who are in charge of GCE work and would volunteer to participate in my study, explaining the purpose of the research. Similar to my experience with the teachers, I also used the snowball sampling strategy to increase the number of participants. Namely, I first started conducting interviews with several participants, and then asked them to suggest additional informants in other institutions who were able or willing to participate in my study. Through this process, I was able to interview 19

participants including eight school teachers, eight NGO staff, and three chiefs of the GCE-related teams at three IO institutions.

Each interview procedure was guided according to the interview protocol. The interview protocol mainly included the introduction, body, and closure of the interviews (Rossman & Rallis, 2012). In the introduction, I explained the purpose of the study and asked for informed consent. Then, I asked the interviewees for permission to record the conversations and recorded interviews based on their permission, except one interviewee who expressed discomfort with recording. In the body of the interview, the guiding questions were shared with follow-up questions. During the interviews, I took notes to capture not only key points but also nonverbal cues or facial expressions. Considering that the quality of an interview rests on “the relevancy of questions” and “the skills in asking follow-up questions” (Rossman & Rallis, 2012, p. 182), I carefully listened and interacted with the informants. The guiding questions were sent to participants prior to the interviews via e-mail. The guiding questions included queries such as: ‘How do you describe the concept of a global citizen?’ ‘What do you teach in your GCE classrooms/programs?’ ‘How do you view the importance/relevance of GCE in Korean educational practice?’ ‘What are the challenges and issues when you are implementing GCE?’ Each interview was designed to be face-to-face and lasted about 60 minutes. Interviews took place between October and December 2015, and all interviews were conducted in Korean.

All of the interviews, except one, were recorded with the participants’ permission. All transcription and analytic memos were typed in Korean, and later selectively translated into English according to their relevancy to the study. After organizing the interview data, I carefully read through transcriptions and analytic memos to obtain a general understanding of the information (Creswell, 2009). With a general sense of the information, all the data was then coded drawing on the conceptual framework. The preliminary coding categories consisted of perceptions of GCE, difficulties and contextual issues of implementing GCE. The data was also coded based on the emerging themes from the interviews with participants. To make a code, I used the qualitative software NVIVO to aid in categorizing the data. Utilizing NVIVO was useful in managing a great deal of data. As my coding progressed, I clustered together codes that shared similarities and threaded them into groups. During this iterative process, I identified themes separating evidence and also patterns within and between the categories. I also searched for direct quotes that would capture and elaborate on the findings effectively. Based on the themes and quotes, the findings from the interview data were described with interpretations in relation to the conceptual framework.

Barriers to critical GCE in South Korea

Through an analysis of interviews with educators in South Korea, it became evident there are primary constraints that need attention in order to seek transformative values of GCE in the context of South Korea. In this section, I present three challenges provided by the practitioners themselves for the gap between intention and practice in achieving critical GCE in South Korea. First, I discuss a partial understanding of GCE in practice. Second, this study explores contradictory values between GCE in theory and in practice. Third, I present educators’ skeptical perceptions of the government-centered GCE approach. In doing so, I

reveal both the rhetoric and practices around GCE in South Korea as being rooted in conceptual and contextual restraints within a critical rhetoric.

A partial understanding of GCE: Emphasis on affective response

As GCE continues to receive increasing attention in South Korea, the terms GCE or global citizenship are frequently mentioned. However, while the components of global citizenship have been frequently addressed in educational areas, the understanding and perception of global citizenship seems to be limited in practical applications. While GCE entails not only knowledge but also non-cognitive aspects including socio-emotional and behavioural skills that individuals can employ to participate in global issues, educators tend to place a premium on affective responses, such as empathy and respect for diversity, whereas behavioural aspects are only somewhat represented.

Educators tend to believe socio-emotional aspects of GCE including empathy, care for others, and respect are the most crucial aspect of GCE. When teachers were asked about the core values of GCE, they cited respect, care for others, and learning empathy. One teacher stated that GCE is not something grandiose, but something that can be part of any type of class or topic that includes values, such as care for others, empathy (Teacher F). Another example shared by a different teacher told how the values of care for others were incorporated into a science subject using a power of words experiment with two groups of onions. The first group's onions listened to students' negative words, whereas the second group of onions listened to only positive words. Students claimed that the second group of onions would be healthier and live longer. From this experiment, this teacher intended to teach students thoughtful words and behaviours for others. As this example implies, teachers attempted to teach GCE in a broader way by incorporating and highlighting affective aspects.

In this regard, there is a tendency to emphasize the affective response and limited representation of the behavioural domain in South Korea. This is not surprising since the Character Education Law was enacted in July 2015. In this context, several participants perceived that character education and GCE are overlapping to some extent. One NGO member put it:

GCE is not just about developing countries or others, but character education would be considered within the GCE domain. (NGO worker B)

Another respondent mentioned:

In South Korea, it seems character education and GCE are going together. Since students are very tired of cramming education and exam-focused competitive education, character education has [also] received great attention. GCE and character education are not the same, but they seem to complement each other. (NGO worker E)

Admittedly, a couple of interviewees pointed out that character education and GCE are different concepts, for example, in that the first one is larger than the other, and vice versa. Although character education is not considered as an interchangeable notion, the perception

that character education and GCE share some commonalities makes affective values, such as respect and empathy, noteworthy for educators in South Korea. Additionally, Andreotti (2006) points out that the limited representation of behaviours which focus on merely donation or sharing are consistent with 'soft' GCE that she argues characterise educators' perceptions about philanthropic education. Many interviewees, particularly NGO staff, mentioned that although they started using the term GCE fairly recently, they began implementing GCE several years ago in the area of sharing. For example, one NGO staff stated:

Although it has been recently that we have named GCE, we have had sharing education since 2002, which means we started a previous form of GCE 10 years ago. (NGO worker B)

However, another interviewee differentiated between philanthropic education and GCE in that whereas philanthropic education mainly focuses on sharing, GCE considers sharing as just one of the contents and also includes global issues and cases (interview with NGO worker F). In general, however, the educators tended to minimize the potentials of GCE as a transformative curriculum capable of significantly contributing to social justice. On the one hand, recognizing its correlation with existing curricula in South Korea, they indicate sympathy with GCE's overall aims. But on the other hand, they diminish the differences and thus the need for GCE in addition to reducing GCE to saviour/saved (we share with them) binaries that reproduce hegemonic power structures. That is, despite a slightly different emphasis, sharing is considered as important and the most frequently described action. This general perception appears to be related to the fact that most behavioural participants end up sharing their resources including time. Giving donations is also a meaningful and significant way of engagement. However, this overlooks the critical point that students themselves may be contributing to many of these global issues.

In addition, three interviewees raised the lack of reference about political engagement in Korean GCE:

Actually, it is global citizenship education, not global citizen education. It is about citizenship (or civil rights). I believe GCE is the process to make people become aware of their rights to be involved in decision-making processes at the global level about global problems and issues. But I think the [Korean] government or APCEIU has a different understanding. (NGO worker A)

As the above statement implies, GCE in South Korea appears to ignore the component of citizenship, unlike in the United Kingdom, for example, where citizenship education is regarded as one of the main educational goals within GCE (Mannion et al., 2011). Considering the importance of civic engagement in GCE, it is surprising to note the lack of reference to civic engagement in South Korea. Regarding this point, one interviewee explained that it is unpopular to teach political education, such as voting rights and adolescents' rights, since they are not comfortable discussing political matters as they are considered left-wing issues (IO staff B). However, given that citizenship is one of the core underpinning notions of GCE, it is consistent with transformative social action to suggest a variety of active ways of civic involvement besides donating and volunteering. Indeed, as Morais and Ogden (2011) point out, GCE aims to help students "construct their political

voice by synthesizing global knowledge and experiences in the public domain” and “engage in purposeful local behaviours than advance a global agendas” (p. 4). Ibrahim (2005) also calls attention to the importance of developing political literacy through GCE, where students learn how to become involved in the political decision-making process at different levels. By diminishing action to sharing through donations and so on, students are thus rendered passive with soft actions and affective behavioural changes.

Contradictory values in educational practices

Since GCE is undertaken within specific social and educational contexts, it inevitably reflects broader social and cultural aspects of the country (Alviar-Martin & Baidon, 2016; Andreotti, 2011; Wang & Hoffman, 2016). That is, GCE needs to be experienced in a society by students to internalize the values of GCE (Banks, 2004; H. Kim, 2002). However, several contradictory values in educational and social practices that hinder GCE became evident from the data. Educators identified contradictory educational systems and cultures in South Korea that hamper GCE, such as competitive exam-focused education and authoritarian classroom atmospheres.

Korean education is recognized as competitive and exam-oriented, thus it's often called examination hell (M. Lee, 2003; M. Lee & Larson, 2000). Many educators in this research also pointed out that Korean education is restricted and geared too much toward exams, which contrasts with the values of GCE. For example, one NGO member articulated this problem clearly by criticizing the current competitive educational system:

I wonder what the Ministry of Education is thinking about GCE... I think in order to bring up children to become global citizens. I believe that the competitive educational system first should be changed fundamentally. But what they are doing now is that they are sticking to the competitive system focused on national entrance examination. And adding GCE on top of this does not make children grow up into global citizens. I think the children are also probably confused. When I talked to the kids deeply about this matter while I am doing GCE, I found that students felt value conflict. (NGO worker A)

As indicated in this commentary, this interviewee explained that students often face value conflicts between what they are taught under GCE and what schools teach. For example, when the NGO where she works organized GCE camps, she was often told by students, ‘Why are the messages from the school and from our camp teachers about how to live so different?’ More specifically, this NGO worker presented her experience:

They also ask that, “Up until now, the school and the parents have been telling us that the concept of success in this society is based on the salary and background specifications (spec, in Korean).¹⁾ In other words, the standard of happiness should be the salary and going to good universities. But why do camp teachers tell us that those things do not define happiness?” The children are clearly going through confusion regarding these values. And we did witness these students got emotionally healed by going through the process of realizing what kind of a person a real global citizen should be and what

kind of life they could be living. But then, when they go back to their everyday life and to their schools, their value-confusions start again. I have been seeing this for a long time. (NGO worker A)

As this statement shows, although GCE provides students with critical reflection on the society and themselves as advocated by the critical approach of GCE (Andreotti, 2006), what they in fact learn from society including schools and family, is contradicted by the values of GCE. What they learn from society focuses on individual success in terms of social and economic status which is generally believed to be achieved through entering a good university. This contradiction creates value-confusion within students.

This paradox may be intensified by how schooling is taught. One participant posed a question about how an unequal educational system is geared toward a few top students:

In my opinion, our education system is focusing on the few upper ranks. I doubt that school would realize everyone's potential and try to develop all of them. Isn't this discrimination? When we talk about discrimination [in GCE], we talk about other countries' cases. [But] I think the discrimination issue is the elephant in the room. We should discuss the discrimination that is happening in South Korea. (IO staff C)

This interviewee raised the issue about discrimination existing in the education system because of student rankings. In fact, M. Lee (2003) also argues that many Korean students tend to experience alienation at schools, because class contents are focused on the top one-fourth group of students who are likely to pass the university entrance examinations. The hidden curriculum of invisible discrimination depending on students' ranks defies the ideals of GCE, such as equity or respect, and thus may reinforce students' value-conflicts and social stratification.

Furthermore, the educational culture, especially authoritarian education, is criticized by educators. Authoritarian education undermines the values of GCE. For example, in an authoritarian classroom culture, students are expected to obey teachers' or parents' direction and become docile, not critical individuals capable of questioning what they are told. However, the circumstances of current educational practice conflict with the ideals of GCE which highlights critical literacy. A teacher explains:

What struck me was the authoritarian classroom mood and students who follow what teachers direct. They are used to doing it. . . . I think there is a lack of communication between teachers and students. So I try to communicate with students and encourage them to decide and take responsibility for their decisions. In order to enable GCE, teachers need to change. (Teacher C)

As another example of authoritarian education that disregards the values of GCE, the recently adopted educational policy of history education was brought up by an anonymous interviewee:

Global citizenship? Well, I don't know. . . . Basically thinking, it is common sense that global citizens should be able to see history in critical and diverse manner. (NGO worker D)

In 2015, President Park's administration issued the requirement for government state-authored history textbooks by criticizing some of the current history textbooks as ideologically biased. With this decision, eight different published history textbooks now in use were supposed to be replaced with a textbook issued by the national government.²⁾ As these two interviewees imply, the Korean government-authored single textbook seems to contradict the value of respect for diversity which GCE promotes. Another interviewee criticized the government's attitude that implements a contradictory educational policy while it simultaneously promotes GCE:

Since when has this country participated in GCE so much? It had not. Moreover, the educational policies that they are carrying out currently actually go against the value of GCE. I think that is highly contradictory. (NGO worker A)

In this regard, my analysis shows that the essential values of GCE such as equity, respect for diversity, and critical literacy are overshadowed by contradictory educational practices. Banks (2004) posits that "experiencing democratic living is more significant in helping students to internalize democratic values than reading and hearing about them from teachers" (p. 10). However, social climates that defy the beliefs of GCE create a dilemma wherein individuals confront contradictory ideas between GCE and reality. Therefore, it is vitally important to address the contradictory social and educational contexts to achieve the ideals of GCE. Without consideration of these contradictions in South Korean society, GCE may remain as a well-intentioned but perfunctory initiative.

Government's top-down approach

In accordance with the increasing attention to GCE in South Korea, the Korean government through advertisements or official notices encourages teachers to incorporate GCE in their classroom. One teacher's comment illustrates this situation:

Since last year, I have started hearing about GCE. I was told to incorporate GCE into creative-experience classes. Since last year, I have received these official reminders frequently [from the Seoul Metropolitan Office of Education]. (Teacher B)

However, educators appear to be skeptical about this government-centered GCE approach. Many interviewees are worried whether GCE is a one-time political event by the current administration or several superintendents of education. A common criticism is that Korean educational policy tends to fluctuate according to the current administration. Considering previously emphasized educational policies that faded away such as multicultural education and development education, educators expressed concern GCE may too disappear like previous policies. For example, one teacher commented:

Actually, many teachers are quite skeptical about GCE. I mean, it's not something has not existed before. It has. But the Ministry of Education treats this like a new thing by giving scores (to schools), or designating special schools, or giving money. . . like a new issue. . . . So far, there have been many things that appear like events and

disappear. All of a sudden, the government pushes it [GCE] as a top-down approach. (Teacher C)

As such, teachers tend to perceive these government directives as an additional or a separate task from the curriculum assigned by the government. Thus, although the government provides supplemental resources for GCE, teachers are unlikely to explore them.

Moreover, most teachers paid particular attention to the critical role of the superintendent of education in implementing GCE. When teachers were asked about the sustainability of GCE, they answered it would depend on the superintendent. For example, one teacher mentioned:

It would last until the current superintendent of education leaves. Korean education is under a superintendent's thumb. In fact, although GCE can last a long time, teachers tend to think like that because they have experienced many cases that turn over and over like character education. (Teacher A)

In this sense, although educators have become increasingly exposed to the concept of GCE, they tend to consider GCE as merely a catchy slogan of several superintendents of education. In other words, some regard GCE to be addressed only by progressive or left-wing superintendents of education.

Furthermore, NGOs are often isolated from the government's systemic support and compete with each other for fundraising. In this context, some NGOs wrap their existing programs with or without even slight modifications to fit GCE, as two of the interviewees stressed:

Frankly speaking, GCE sounds really cool; however, if you look closely, it may create a lot of side effects. I think we are overlooking these side effects. Most people or organizations see GCE from their own perspectives and consider it as an opportunity to develop their pet projects or strategies. (NGO worker D)

As NGOs have paid attention to GCE, they have fit their existing activities such as sharing education or development education into the domain of GCE, regardless of their projects' identity with regard to GCE. Anyway these institutes need funding. So, in many cases they go with their convenience. It is competitive. It is important for them to attract more funding. (NGO worker E)

Interviews with several NGO staff confirmed this observation. For example, one NGO worker explained that after the Character Education Promotion Law was enacted in July 2015 in Korea³⁾, many current NGOs' curricula began to "dress up in the clothing of character education" (Interview with NGO worker B). Likewise, GCE can be another name of clothing for existing NGOs' programs. As the Korean government's interest in GCE has been increasing, education stakeholders, particularly NGOs, tend to view the notion of GCE as an opportunity to develop their programs and to obtain more funding. This competitive environment misdirects NGOs from focusing on their mission of delivering GCE to soliciting donations in schools when implementing GCE.

This seems to be attributed to the limited financial support. Indeed, most NGOs expressed frustration about the challenges of limited financial or human resources. Although

there is a great demand for GCE from schools and students, NGOs are unable to meet all demand due to their financial and resource restraints. Several NGO staff pointed out that the government's support is merely focused on UN-associated institutes but takes less account of the NGO sector. In fact, while the MoE allocated a budget for promotion of GCE amounting to 2.2 billion won (about 2.2 million USD) in 2016, more than 50 percent of the portion (2 billion won, about 1.2 million USD) was issued only to APCEIU (MoE, 2015a; MoE, 2015b).⁴⁾ In this sense, NGOs tend to be isolated politically and financially from the government's support for GCE.

Consequently, despite the support for the values of GCE, educators have skeptical views that are derived from perceptions about the government's top-down, fluctuating, and limited approach. However, educators argue that GCE should be promoted as a bottom-up and consistent approach. For example, teachers suggest the support and space for a teacher learning community where teachers can explore GCE further and share with each other, which will lead to the expansion of teachers' support and a shared understanding of GCE. Furthermore, considering NGOs' active role in promoting GCE, it is necessary to reflect on NGOs' perceptions, struggles, and necessities regarding the government's political and financial support of GCE.

Conclusion: Remaining challenges toward realizing the ideals of GCE

GCE positions itself as a transformative education providing learners with the opportunities and competencies necessary to become active contributors to a more just, inclusive, and equitable world (Oxfam GB, 2015; Reilly & Niens, 2014; UNESCO, 2013). Although GCE itself highlights social justice, sustainable development, and personal fulfillment, it faces challenges that impede attaining the values of critical GCE in practice. Through analyzing the interviews with educators, this study presented major challenges: a partial understanding of GCE, contradictory values between GCE and social norms, and structural constraints regarding the government's approach. First, despite recent heightened interests in GCE, the understanding of GCE remains limited with emphasis on affective response rather than civic engagement. GCE is often understood to be a form of character education focusing on empathy and sharing without sufficient consideration of active civic engagement, the core value of GCE. Second, in spite of efforts toward GCE, contradictory social values in practice such as competitive exam-focused education and authoritarian classroom atmospheres create a dilemma where learners face value-conflicts between GCE and social norms. Lastly, this study shows that educators express skeptical views of GCE due to the government's inconsistent and top-down approach. In conclusion, the findings of this research highlight the conceptual and structural restraints that diminish the values of critical GCE in Korea. Accordingly, I argue that recognition of these existing contextual constraints in practice is important because GCE is shaped by these contextual factors. With consideration of these conceptual and structural limitations in South Korean society, I believe GCE could truly contribute to actualizing individual and social transformation.

Considering the findings, I draw attention to three recommendations that educational policy makers and educators could consider for promoting critical GCE in practice. First, more diverse and active engagement should be considered for GCE by educators and curriculum developers. While the concept of GCE places a high value on the behavioral

dimension, there seems to be little evidence for concern about taking actions as global citizens in implementation. For example, as Morais and Ogden (2011) introduce, students can raise their voice in constructing global agendas or becoming involved in local actions by synthesizing global issues and knowledge. Second, it is especially crucial to take a more holistic approach to GCE by creating educational and social cultures that support the values of GCE such as equity, justice, and respect for diversity, since GCE operates within a social system. GCE can be employed not only through curricula, but also through a supportive learning environment (Education Above All, 2012). For instance, creating a culture of respect within the classroom, providing service activities in schools and communities are all suggested for a GCE-friendly school and classroom climate (Education Above All, 2012). With this approach, students would be able to internalize and experience the values of GCE in social and educational contexts. Third, it is necessary to deepen the values of GCE and the concepts of GCE through public discourse, such as public conferences and the media. As the analysis of this study represents, the pervasive understanding of what constitutes a global citizen and GCE is limited and preoccupied with humanistic values. Since GCE operates within a social system shaped by its values and norms, the promotion of GCE should be accompanied by reflection on values that counteract the emphasis on social justice in South Korea. Accordingly, it is required to encourage critical reflection on the notion of GCE and contradictory values in South Korea.

As an extension to this study, further research with a larger number of participants such as teachers, NGO workers, and IO staff would be necessary to generalize the findings to the South Korean educational context. Although this research intended to include a variety of groups of educators such as teachers and NGO/IO officers, it is not appropriate to generalize the findings of this research to the whole of the South Korean educational context. Since participants were recruited based on their experience with GCE, this study reflects only educators who are relatively familiar with GCE. In addition, there is a need for analyzing the more recent policies of GCE. As I mentioned earlier, a new policy for GCE was established in 2016. Considering that the World Education Forum (WEF) 2015 provoked great interest and discussions regarding GCE in South Korea (KoFID, 2015; S. Lee et al., 2015), it could prove insightful to examine how the new policies of GCE reflect the values of GCE and are perceived by educators in practice.

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Footnotes

1. “Spec” is a social term in Korea which means competencies and performance of job applicants. This includes “educational background, grades, English score, studying abroad, certificates, experience of winning a contest, internships, volunteer work and perhaps even plastic surgery to give a better impression” (G. Lee, 2014).

2. For more information, see news articles, BBC News (<http://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-34960878>) or the New York Times (http://www.nytimes.com/2015/10/13/world/asia/south-korea-to-issue-state-history-textbooks-rejecting-private-publishers.html?_r=0).

3. According to the Character Education Promotion Law, character education became mandatory in all schools in Korea.

4. The rest of the budget was set aside for international cooperation: a) development of country-specific GCE curriculum and teaching materials (about 18%, 4 million won, 0.4 million USD); b) provision for training teachers and government officials of ODA recipient countries to foster GCE experts (about 14%, 3 million won, 0.3 million USD); and c) GCE promotion using information and communications technology (ICT) (about 14%, 3 million won, 0.3 million USD).

