

Global Citizenship and Deliberative Democratic Education: Focusing on the Controversy in Political Philosophy and the Philosophy of Education

By: Dr. Yusuke Hirai
Assistant Professor
Faculty of Human Sciences
University of Tsukuba

Abstract

Global citizenship is “a contested concept in scholarly discourse, and there are multiple interpretations of what it means to be a global citizen” (UNESCO 2014:15). This article aims to clarify features of the educational-philosophical controversy on global citizenship and consider how students are taught about global justice and the value of deliberative democracy. That intends to articulate the challenges that must be overcome in developing citizens who can live fully in the global world. For these aims, John Rawls, Thomas Pogge, Onora O’Neill, Martha Nussbaum, Anthony Appiah, and Amy Gutmann are mainly focused.

This article has four parts. The contents are as following: the trends of citizenship education in Japan; the controversy on global justice in political philosophy; global (cosmopolitanism) citizenship and national identity; and the needs for deliberative democratic education.

Introduction

The purposes of this article are to clarify features of the educational-philosophical controversy on global citizenship and to consider how we teach students global justice and the values of deliberative democracy.

Since 1998, when the course of study was revised, we have aimed to foster in students a zest for life (*ikiru chikara*) in Japan. A zest for life is a comprehensive ability that consists of solidly acquired basic and fundamental knowledge and skills, morality, and sound body. It is necessary for future citizens to live a good life and to use acquired knowledge and skills to solve many problems in this complicated and rapidly changing world. One such problem might relate to globalisation.

In parallel with these educational trends, citizenship education has been receiving considerable attention in educational studies and practices. In response to the realisation of the voting rights for 18-year-olds accompanying the revision of the “Public Offices Election Law” in 2015, citizenship education in schooling has been considered as a subject of ideal educational studies. However, there is a gap between these studies and educational practices. It seems that the study of citizenship education in Japan is still in the developing stage.

Thus, this article aims to explore the ideal direction of citizenship education in response to globalisation, based mainly on political philosophy and the philosophy of education on global justice and citizenship education. Through this examination, I would like to answer the question: “What is global citizenship and how do we nurture it in our students?”

The Trend of Citizenship Education in Japan

The next school curriculum guidelines at the high-school level was announced in March 2018. During the planning process for the revision of the next school curriculum guidelines, contents of the new subject, the public (civic education named “kokyo”) had been explored. As the summary report indicates, in the next course of study at the high-school level, the purpose of civic education is described as follows (MEXT, 2016:4):

“To cultivate the dispositions and abilities needed for a citizen who can be a significant creator of a peaceful and democratic nation and society, and subjectively live in the global society.”

The present guidelines of social studies, geography and history, and civics show the direction of emphasising further development of students’ social views and thinking. The next guidelines clarify the specific desired characteristics of social perspective and manner of thinking. “The social perspective and manner of thinking refer to the viewpoints and methods that are needed in activities to pursue social issues and solve social problems, to consider the meaning and significance of social events and their characteristics or mutual relationships, and to understand the problems seen in society and to conceive of solutions.” This social perspective and way of thinking are “indispensable to cultivate thought and judgment skills for the realisation of deep learning, as well as to acquire effective working knowledge.” To foster these talents in the new subject of the public, it is desirable that teachers teach students through activities that help them gain an understanding of social issues, focusing on diverse perspectives of multiple concepts or theories related to ethics, politics, law, and economy. In addition, in order to deepen students’ awareness about the ideal of a better society and the role of human beings within it, they will be required to teach students how to live and associate with ideas and theories that contribute to judgment for problem solving (MEXT, 2016:3).

The summary report also indicates the educational goals of the public. It is specified that teachers need to nurture dispositions and abilities related to sovereignty in the global world as follows. First, to nurture an attitude for thinking about society, human beings, events, and tasks related to the students' way of life, and to help them pursue ambitious tasks to discover the appropriate paths. Second, to nurture a willingness to form a better society through their activities for finding various problems that exist in society and prevent the realisation of a better society, to actively consider and conceive solutions to the problems in collaboration with others, and to participate in society by explaining and discussing the problems based on logic and reasoning. And third, to cultivate an awareness about how to live in modern society or how to live as a human being, to foster an inclination to love our own nation-state and to pursue its peace and prosperity, and to develop an awareness of the importance that all nations mutually respect each other's sovereignty and all citizens cooperate with each other, through multi-faceted and multi-lateral considerations and a deep mutual understanding (MEXT, 2014:16). In this, it is suggested that students will be asked to think first about their nation in the global era. Thus, our present tendency to educate global citizens might restrict the development of global thinking in students.

Asian countries, similarly to Japan, are promoting curriculum reform, introducing new views on academic ability and new forms of teaching and learning, and are also promoting citizenship education. However, as Yuto Kitamura insists, there is an implicit political intention that the state keep the social order and educate citizens to submit to the state in Singapore and Hong Kong (and, it follows, in Japan) (Kitamura, 2016:105). In this sense, our present intention to educate global citizens might restrict the development of global thinking in students.

Facing the rapid progress of globalisation, we Japanese taught students about the way of life in the global world under the name "education for international understanding (EIU)" until the 1990s. Multicultural education has also been introduced in educational practices. Multicultural education is "an educational ideal aimed at the coexistence and mutual prosperity of diverse racial, ethnic, and cultural groups from the viewpoint of minorities and the standpoint of social justice, accompanied by educational practice and the educational reform movement" (Matsuo, 2010:158). Ideally, what is sought is that multicultural education will be developed in the context of social justice. Unfortunately, this ideal has not yet been achieved. Here, I would like to consider social justice in the global society, that is, global justice.

The Controversy on Global Justice in Political Philosophy

In modern political philosophy, philosophers have argued about global justice over John Rawls's theory of justice. Rawls derived two principles of justice (principle 1: the liberty principle; 2-a: the different principle; and 2-b: the fair equality of opportunity principle) for forming a fair or cooperative and just society in ***A Theory of Justice*** (1976).

Rawls describes these principles as follows (1999a:226):

FIRST PRINCIPLE

Each person is to have an equal right to the most extensive total system of equal basic liberties compatible with a similar system of liberty for all.

SECOND PRINCIPLE

Social and economic inequalities are to be arranged so that they are both: (a) to the greatest benefit of the least advantaged, consistent with the just savings principle and (b) attached to offices and positions open to all under conditions of fair equality of opportunity.

His claim for universal principles shrank in his later work as described in *Political Liberalism* (1993) but he tried to expand liberal principles to global justice in *The Law of Peoples* (1999).

In *The Law of Peoples*, Rawls formulates eight principles that regulate the international interactions of people as follows (1999b:37):

1. Peoples are free and independent and their freedom and independence are to be respected by other peoples.
2. Peoples are to observe treaties and undertakings.
3. Peoples are equal and are parties to the agreements that bind them.
4. Peoples are to observe a duty of non-intervention.
5. Peoples have the right of self-defense but no right to instigate war for reasons other than self-defense.
6. Peoples are to honour human rights.
7. Peoples are to observe certain specified restrictions in the conduct of war.
8. Peoples have a duty to assist other people living under unfavourable conditions that prevent their having a just or decent political and social regime.

Amongst these principles, the sixth is about respect for human rights and the eighth is about the duty for assistance. Rawls referred to the duty for assistance in other parts as well saying (199b:106), "The long-term goal of (relatively) well-ordered societies should be to bring burdened societies, like outlaw states, into the society of well-ordered peoples. Well-ordered peoples have a duty to assist burdened societies." It can be said that Rawls assumes that the subjects of global society are well-ordered, just governance and morally characterised people (Rawls 1999b: 25–27 and Kamishima, 2015:60).

Though Rawls's *The Law of Peoples* has been both supported and criticised, Thomas Pogge, who is a critical successor of Rawls, developed a theory of global justice from a stand of resourcism. Pogge criticises that Rawls thinks international injustice is attributable to different levels of cultural politics in each state rather than to differences in the amount of resources held. His awareness of global injustice is based on a global economic system that unjustly creates persistent global poverty. Pogge (2008:177) claims an institutional concept of moral cosmopolitanism and the justification of "the duty towards every other not to cooperate in imposing an unjust institutional order." Opposing the notion that a shared responsibility for the justice of social institution cannot extend beyond national institutional order, Pogge (2008:178–179) clearly stated:

“The existing global institutional order is neither natural nor God-given, but shaped and upheld by the more powerful governments and by other actors they control (such as the EU, North Atlantic Treaty Organization [NATO], the United Nations [UN], the World Trade Organization [WTO], OECD, the World Bank [WB], and the International Monetary Fund [IMF]). At least the more privileged and influential citizens of the more powerful and approximately democratic countries then bear a collective responsibility for their governments’ role in designing and imposing this global order, and for their governments’ failure to reform it towards greater human rights fulfillment.”

Onora O'Neill also criticises Rawls, claiming that his "account of global justice remains an account of 'international' justice, in which the supposed legitimacy of assigning control of bounded territories to 'peoples' is presupposed, and limits and perhaps undermine his arguments for justice beyond borders." For O'Neill (2016:164–165), Rawlsian global justice is insufficient because the primary agents of justice are assumed to be the states. She claims that there are "many bad states, many weak states, and many states too weak to prevent or regulate the activities of supposedly external bodies within their borders" (2016:162); it is not enough to view states as primary agents of justice. Thus, she supposes that a non-state institution and non-state actors (e.g., trans-national corporations [TNCs] and non-government organisations [NGOs]) are agents of justice.

Through examination of the political-philosophical controversy on global justice, recent philosophical trends might reflect that when we consider the essence of global justice, it is necessary to think about relativising the states, and to position individuals as agents of global justice. We can also say that global justice aspires to override the global issues that stem from states, depending on the individual power or forming fair institutions, and that global citizenship is the ideal goal for a citizen who can think about global justice without being held back by their own state's interests.

Global (Cosmopolitan) Citizenship and National Identity

Within the philosophy of education, philosophers discussed global citizenship in the late 1990s. This discussion consisted of Martha Nussbaum's claim of cosmopolitan education as well as its critiques.

Nussbaum, who is famous as a cosmopolitan philosopher, questioned (Nussbaum 1996:6), “Most important, should they (students) be taught that they are, above all, citizens of the U.S., or should they instead be taught that they are, above all, citizens of a world of human beings, and that, while they happen to be situated in the U.S., they have to share this world with the citizens of other countries?” She supports the latter, “cosmopolitan education” as she called it, and indicates four reasons for her support. Through cosmopolitan education, (1) we learn more about ourselves; (2) we make headway solving problems that require international cooperation; (3) we recognise moral obligations to the rest of the world that are real and that otherwise would go unrecognised; and (4) we make a consistent and coherent argument based on distinctions we are prepared to defend (Nussbaum, 1996:11–15).

Nussbaum does not reject nationalism in education because she thinks its proponents make a weak concession to cosmopolitanism. For example, Nussbaum (1996:5–6) says they argue that “a commitment to basic human rights should be part of any national education system and this commitment will, in a sense, hold many nations together.” However, she claims that that is not enough.

As a critic of Nussbaum's cosmopolitan thought, Anthony Appiah (1996) claims the notion of cosmopolitan patriot. Appiah considers citizens of the world (cosmopolitan citizens) to face a danger of unification of cultural differences and supports cosmopolitan patriots from the standpoint that global thinking is possible while respecting differences.

From a different standpoint, Amy Gutmann (1996:68) criticises Nussbaum's claim that our “allegiance is to the worldwide community of human beings,” saying:

“We have duties to respect the rights of individual human beings the world over, and schools the world over should teach children (not indoctrinate them) to appreciate these duties. But it does not follow that we are ‘citizens of the world’ or that our ‘fundamental allegiance’ is to the community of human beings in the entire world. This cosmopolitan position might be attractive, were our only alternative to give our primary allegiance to the U.S.A. or to some other politically sovereign community. But we have another alternative, which Nussbaum neglects (and does not recognise as the position defended by democratic humanism)—to reject the idea that our primary allegiance is to any actual community, and to recognise the moral importance of being empowered as free and equal citizens of a genuinely democratic polity.”

The reason Gutmann claims we should teach children “to recognise the moral importance of being empowered as free and equal citizens of a genuinely democratic polity” is that there is not a world polity. She believes a world polity could only exist in tyrannical form. For Gutmann, instead of tyranny, a truly democratic political regime is right for justice reasons, and therefore it does not need to be given priority in order to cultivate loyalty to a particular community.

As Appiah's and Gutmann's critics imply, global justice in the context of education are inevitably considered alongside states because, in actuality, a fair global system has not been affirmed, and ideal educational theory has to be constructed starting with that assumption. Here we can see that the types of thinking in political philosophy and in philosophy of education have some minor deviations from each other.

The Need for Deliberative Democratic Education

Why does Gutmann adhere to democracy? Gutmann (1996:69) indicates that:

“A philosophy of democratic education rejects the idea that national boundaries are morally salient. If they are politically salient, however, then public education ought to cultivate in all students the skills and virtues of democratic citizenship, including the capacity to deliberate about the demands of justice for all individuals, not only for present-day citizens of the U.S. Deliberating about the demands of justice is a central virtue of democratic citizenship because it is primarily (not exclusively) through our empowerment as democratic citizens that we can further the cause of justice around the world.”

In *Democratic Education*, Gutmann claimed that the ideal educational goal is conscious social reproduction, and that education is limited by the principles of non-repression and non-discrimination (Gutmann 1999:44–45). The former principle “prevents the state, and any group within it, from using education to restrict rational deliberation of competing conceptions of the good life and the good society,” and the latter “prevents the state, and all groups within it, from denying anyone an educational good on grounds irrelevant to the legitimate social purpose of that good.”

Her theory of democratic education was complimented by the concept of deliberative democracy in 2000s. There are two reasons for extending her theory in this way. First, because preference-aggregated democracy runs the risk of not being just (e.g., majority members do not take the voices of those in the minority group seriously in their decision making) and, second, because there is a possibility that the participants will change their own beliefs through deliberation (Hirai, 2017).

Gutmann emphasise the second aspect as the principle of the economy of moral disagreement (Gutmann and Thompson, 2004:7), saying:

“In giving reasons for their decisions, citizens and their representatives should try to find justifications that minimise their differences with their opponents. ... Practicing the economy of moral disagreement promotes the value of mutual respect (which is at the core of deliberative democracy). By economising on their disagreements, citizens and their representatives can continue to work together to find common ground, if not on the policies that produced the disagreement, then on related policies about which they stand a greater chance of finding agreement.”

Such an assertion can be applied to the method of nurturing citizens who can pursue justice across national boundaries while recognising the nation-states. It is essential to develop the ability to relate the interests of others and think comprehensively while limiting their interests through deliberative or interactive education.

Conclusion: Towards a Fair Global World

UNESCO (2014:15) describes GCED as education that “aims to empower learners to engage and assume active roles, both locally and globally, to face and resolve global challenges, and ultimately to become proactive contributors to a more just, peaceful, tolerant, inclusive, secure, and sustainable world.” UNESCO (2014:16) also indicates, in particular, that GCED aims to “encourage learners to analyse real-life issues critically and to identify possible solutions creatively and innovatively; support learners to revisit assumptions, world views, and power relations in mainstream discourses and consider people or groups that are systematically under-represented or marginalised; focus on engagement in individual and collective action to bring about desired changes; and involve multiple stakeholders, including those outside the learning environment, in the community and in wider society.” These aims are appropriate to this global era as an ideal. However, it is more necessary to consider the related challenges that include, for example, “the question of how to simultaneously promote global solidarity and individual competitiveness” or the method of “the reconciliation of local and global identities and interests” (UNESCO 2016:19). Moreover, UNESCO (2015:65 and 81–82) indicates that the role of the state in the definition and formation of citizenship is increasingly challenged by the emergence of trans-national forms of citizenship (e.g., trans-national social and political communities, civil society, and activism) and that it is necessary to strengthen the role of intergovernmental agencies in the regulation of global common goods. In this article, I explore issues related to these challenges.

Educational goals have two general aspects—to develop the individual and to develop the social responsibility (sociality) within the individual. As long as education is governed by nation-states, its national contents inevitably take priority to those of the global world. But this educational thinking, counter-posed by political philosophy, must now be questioned and reconsidered. What should be emphasised in the global society is not to educate citizens who participate in the global society but primarily contribute to their own state, but to educate citizens who can relativise their state, sometimes be critical of it, and pursue global justice. To fully meet that end, the right disposition and the ability to overcome the desire to give priority to self-interests are necessary; this is consistent with the ideal pursued by deliberative democracy. As UNESCO (2014:21) indicates that transformative pedagogy leads to educative and social innovations that bring about change for the better, it is thought that deliberative democratic education has the same features as transformative pedagogy. In the motion towards a just global world, it is hoped that deliberative ideals are broadly accepted, and deliberation on controversial issues is adopted as a method used in GCED.

References

1. Amy Gutmann. (1996). “Democratic Citizenship.” Joshua Cohen, Ed. *For Love of Country?* Beacon Press.
2. Amy Gutmann. (1999). *Democratic Education (New Edition)*. Princeton University Press.

3. Amy Gutmann and Dennis Thompson. (2004). ***Why Deliberative Democracy?*** Princeton University Press.
4. John Rawls. (1999a). ***A Theory of Justice*** (Revised Edition). Oxford University Press.
5. John Rawls. (1999b). ***The Law of Peoples***. Harvard University Press.
6. K. Anthony Appiah. (1996). "Cosmopolitan Patriot." ***For Love of Country?*** Beacon Press.
7. Martha. C. Nussbaum. (1996). "Patriotism and Cosmopolitanism." ***For Love of Country?*** Beacon Press.
8. MEXT. (2016). "Summary Report of Deliberations in the Working Group About Social Studies, Geography and History, and Civics." Retrieved from <http://www.mext.go.jp/>.
9. Onora O'Neill. (2016). ***Justice Across Boundaries***. Cambridge University Press.
10. Thomas Pogge. (2008). ***World Poverty and Human Rights Second Edition***. Polity Press.
11. Tomoaki Matsuo. (2010). "Multicultural Education." ***Handbook of Modern American Education***. Toshindo Publishers.
12. UNESCO. (2014). "Global Citizenship Education: Preparing Learners for the Challenges of the 21st Century." Retrieved from <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0022/002277/227729E.pdf>.
13. UNESCO. (2015). "Rethinking Education: Towards a Global Common Good?" Retrieved from <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0023/002325/232555e.pdf>.
14. Yuko Kamishima. (2015). ***Rawls and His Critics in a Globalising World***. Minerva Publishing.
15. Yusuke Hirai. (2017). ***The Educational Theory of Amy Gutmann***. Seorishobo Publishers.
16. Yuto Kitamura. (2016). "Education for Global Citizen in Multiple Asia." ***Citizenship Education in Global Era***. Iwanami Publication.