Preparing citizens for a globalized world: The role of the social studies curriculum

Preparing citizens for a globalized world: The role of the social studies curriculum

Mehrunnisa A. Ali
Ryerson University

Abstract:

Youth in Toronto's ethnically diverse neighbourhoods are globally connected. They have multiple, complex, and evolving identities and affiliations, including strong links with the countries of their families' origins. They have the capacity to appreciate changing and conflicting perspectives. However, the Ontario social studies curriculum for high schools promotes nationalism by narrowly focusing on simplistic representations of Canada, particularly in the lower grades and less academic streams. A curriculum that promotes global citizenship by taking into account the students' multi-ethnic past, present, and future, and their well-developed cognitive and affective skills, is likely to serve them better in an increasingly globalized world.

Introduction

One impact of globalization is the rapid movement of people across national boundaries. In Canada, nearly half of the approximately 125,000 newcomers who arrive every year settle in the province of Ontario and most of them live in the Greater Toronto Area (Statistics Canada, 2008). Among students in the Toronto District School Board (TDSB), the largest in the country, about a quarter were born outside Canada, nearly half of them speak a language other than English at home, and 71% have parents who were born outside the country (http://www.tdsb.on.ca retrieved Dec.1, 2007).

Immigrant families with diverse ethno-racial backgrounds often maintain dual nationalities and strong ties to their countries of origin, along with their Canadian born children (Rockquemore, 2006). Many immigrant families maintain transnational links for economic, emotional and social reasons. Canada's policies on multiculturalism have encouraged these ties to promote both accommodation of difference and

social cohesion (Kymlicka, 2003). Meanwhile, schools try to integrate immigrant families into their system by providing orientation programs, translation facilities, settlement workers, and support for English language learners. However, all of these services are primarily geared towards helping the youth learn the official curriculum, which represents institutionally sanctioned knowledge, skills and dispositions that Ontarians want their younger generation to learn.

Using Toronto specific data from a three-city project in which data were collected from the same cohort of youth over three years, I claim that immigrant youth, and youth who are children of immigrants, not only maintain strong ties to countries where they or their parents were born, but also create new global connections in ethnically diverse schools and neighbourhoods. Their cultural identities encompass both a sense of 'being' as well as of 'becoming' (Hall, 1996) multicultural. They can shift perspectives and appreciate complexities in their material and ideological environments, and are remarkably self-confident in their sense of self. They do not

see their Canadian and international linkages in binary terms. Rather, they believe Canada is a good place to live precisely because it offers the possibility of multiple ways of being and becoming. They are concurrently loyal to their homes, schools and neighbourhoods, and to Canada, as well as to the countries in which they or their parents were born.

However, the Ontario Social Studies curriculum guidelines for high school largely ignore the identities, affiliations, and world-views of youth from non-European origins. Their focus is on promoting nationalism, and their approach towards global issues is to simply highlight Canada's role in world affairs. They pay little attention, especially in the earlier grades and less academic streams, to issues that profoundly affect the lives of immigrant youth and their families, such as international political and economic relations, reasons for major and ongoing conflicts among and within nation-states, and possibilities and limitations of international laws. I argue that the inclusion of such issues in the formal curriculum will not only validate the students' Canadian identity and affiliation, but will also open up generative possibilities for their multi-lingual, multi-cultural and multi-national identities and affiliations. The curriculum will become more engaging if it represents their diverse backgrounds and interests, and more effective if it helps them link their past with their present and their future as Canadian *and* as global citizens.

Conceptual framework

The term 'globalization' usually evokes contemporary extensions of international and transnational exchanges around the world, as a consequence of fast, readily available means of transportation and communication. Suarez- Orozco and Qin-

Hillard (2004) suggest that globalization is best characterized as the de-territorialization of important cultural, social and economic practices from their traditional boundaries in nation-states. Appadurai (1990) suggests that globalization can be conceptualized in terms of 'flows' of ideas, cultures, technology, finance, and media across nation-states, which influence people's perspectives about themselves and each other. Six aspects of globalization which specifically have an impact on education have been identified by Bottery (2006). These are: 1) environmental globalization, which includes the spread of pollution and disease across national boundaries; 2) cultural globalization, which can lead to new understandings of both the familiar and the strange; 3) demographic globalization, which has strained relationships between predominantly young and old populations; 4) political globalization, which has reduced the power of the nation-state and replaced it with supra-national as well as below national level institutions as the locus of primary affiliation and identification; 5) American globalization, which means the worldwide domination of American culture, economic influence, and military power; and, 6) economic globalization, which has widely spread free market capitalism through supra-national institutions such as the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank, and through multinational commercial enterprise. As a result, consumerism has become rampant, and public sector values, usually protected by the nation-state, have been replaced by private sector agendas. Since the impact of globalization on education has yet to be carefully studied, Bottery and other scholars have called for a re-visioning of educators' role and professional preparation to help future generations develop an ecological perspective on the world in which they live, a concern for public good, and a moral sense of social responsibility in a global society.

Osler and Starkey (2006) state that interest in education for democratic citizenship at the global level has increased as a result of a) concerns about global inequalities underscored by terrorist movements, b) efforts to balance diversity and unity within nation-states, c) the desire to encourage political engagement, particularly among the young, d) the need to curtail youth violence and anti-social behavior, e) the wish to introduce democratic ideology and practices to newly established nation-states, and f) efforts to discourage racism and supremacist thinking. Pointing out the limitations of current conceptions that guide school curricula in the United Kingdom, they recommend the inclusion of political/structural as well as cultural/personal dimensions of global citizenship. This should take into account local, national, and global perspectives, keeping in mind the four key principles identified by an international consensus panel (see Banks et al., 2005): complex relationships between unity and diversity in local communities, the nation and the world; interdependence of people at all three levels; teaching of human rights; and knowledge about democracy and democratic institutions.

In a more recent work, Banks (2008) acknowledges that balancing the imperatives of unity and diversity (see Parker, 2003) is not easy: individual and group rights may conflict; local, national and international interests may collide; and marginalized minority groups may develop strong ethnic ties but weak national ties. This is further complicated by the fact that individual and group identifications and affiliations are changing, overlapping, and contextual rather than fixed and static (Banks, 2004; Kymlicka, 2004; Ladson-Billings, 2004; Plaza, 2006). Furthermore, Sicakkan (2005) suggests that thinking about individuals or groups as "indivisible wholes" (p.2) blinds us to commonalities and differences among them. He claims that the movement of minds and bodies, a hallmark of globalization, allows for multiple, mobile, multi-dimensional identities and modes of belonging. Banks (2008) urges that each of these complex and evolving identifications and affiliations should be recognized, valued, publicly affirmed and thoughtfully examined in schools.

Banks (2008) proposes a typology of citizenship that includes: legal (having rights and obligations but not participating in political processes), minimal (exercising the right to vote), active (supporting existing structures, but may protest implementation) to transformative citizenship (challenging existing systems including laws, conventions and structures) to demand social justice. He sees education playing a role in making the shift from legal to transformative or 'deep citizenship' (Clark, 1996 cited in Banks, 2008).

Characterizing citizenship in his ideal of a genuinely multicultural state, Kymlicka (2003) suggests that in such a state the dominance of particular groups would be replaced with the equal treatment of all citizens; assimilation and exclusionary practices would be rejected in favour of recognition and accommodation; and past injustices would be acknowledged. Citizens of this state would be 'intercultural' and they would intrinsically value ethnic diversity. Such a state and such citizens would have a seamless symbiotic relationship. However, challenges to achieving this ideal may come from citizens' choice to embrace distant rather than local interculturalism, to resist intercultural engagement in order to preserve their own culture, or to get caught between tokenism and the impossibility of fully understanding a different culture.

For young people, especially those who are immigrants, or children of immigrants, globalization has opened up new spaces for actions, interactions, identifications and affiliations. In this new world, there is an ongoing interweaving of familial, popular, consumer, national, ancestral, transnational and diasporic elements in the fabric of transcultural lives (Hoerder, Hébert, & Schmitt, 2005). Transcultural identifications call for the creation of images that represent particular groups and individuals within those groups. In this process concepts such as gender, race, ethnicity and culture also get deconstructed (Hall, 1996), and new, multiple, shifting and hybrid identities emerge.

Identities are ascribed, claimed, contested, and modified. They are affected by self-perceptions, which are partially based on others' perception of oneself, and they are constantly affected by historical, cultural, social, political, and economic conditions (James, 2003). They are also social capital, serving as resource, goal orientation, and social control (Wall, Ferrazzi & Schryer 1998). Hébert, Sun and Kowch (2005) point to the individual and collective dimensions of identity, including the development of social relations and networks, adoption of social norms and responsibilities, and internalization of goals that orient people towards achieving that which is socially valued while refraining from that which is not.

Global citizenship education is an evolving and contested concept (see Pike, 2008a). For some it is associated with the preparation of cosmopolitan citizens who can successfully compete for profit in the global market. For others, it is associated with ethical stewardship of an increasingly interdependent and fragile world, with a focus on social justice and ecological sustainability (Noddings, 2005; Richardson, 2008). Some scholars (*e.g.* Pashby,

2008; Pike, 2008b; Wood, 2008) argue that the exercise of citizenship rights and duties is possible only within the political structures of nation-states and that this will continue to be so in the near future. It is therefore not useful to speak about citizenship in global terms. Wood (2008) further contends that citizenship is a mode of political domination. The notion of global citizenship will privilege already rich individuals and nations, and reinforce imperialist thinking and marginalization of minorities within nation-states. Nevertheless, several of these scholars also agree that an "ethos of global citizenship" (Pike, 2008b, p. 48) in education will promote a more critical stance towards both nationalism and globalism, an expansion of commitments to issues beyond the boundaries of nation-states, and acceptance of global responsibilities.

Deconstructing the phrase 'global citizenship education,' Davies (2006) suggests that educators could take different approaches to teaching it by first defining what it means to be a global citizen and then figuring out how to educate for that, or by expanding the notion of citizenship to encompass international issues. However, Davies, Evans, and Reid (2005) point out that the historical conflation of citizenship with nationalism can easily lead to a situation where the study of international issues from a primarily national lens can be mistaken for global education.

As in other parts of the world, citizenship education in Canada has fundamentally been designed to promote nationalism. Mitchell (2003) claims that in the recent past the inclusion of multiculturalism in curricula was used to promote the narrative of national unity in the face of large-scale immigration from non-European countries, Quebec's efforts towards separation, and unification of First Nations' voices demanding cultural and economic rights.

It is now being used to educate the 'the strategic cosmopolitan' to meet the new imperative for economic competitiveness in the global market. This is accompanied by a much stronger focus on individual patriotism, at the cost of teaching multilateralism and internationalism. Referring to Ontario's Civics curriculum in particular, Schweisfurth (2006) contends that "Canadian preoccupation with national identity, and Canada's place in the global arena suffuses all areas of the curriculum…" (p.44). She claims that teachers interested in promoting global citizenship find space within the curriculum "off the radar screen" (p.48), as well as support from each other for their agenda. However, they are largely unsupported by colleagues and administrators who do not see its relevance in their work. This is similar to Davies and his colleagues' (2005) report of the situation in the UK, where teachers have an apolitical view of citizenship, see it primarily in local terms, and avoid issues such as international socio-economic hegemony. Despite the fact that middle school and high school students want to learn about international issues such as reasons for war, human rights abuses, poverty in developing countries, and environmental problems, teachers avoid these topics partly because of an overcrowded outcomes-based curriculum, and partly because of their lack of confidence in dealing with complex and controversial issues (Davies, 2006).

Methodology

Data used in this article come from a larger, three-city project based in Calgary, Winnipeg and Toronto on how Canadian youth negotiate democracy, difference and identity. This paper is based only on the Toronto data, collected from thirty-nine youth in two schools located in low-income neighbourhoods, characterized by high-rise buildings and a high percentage of immigrant

and visible minority population. The principals of these two schools had responded to an invitation sent to eight schools identified by the TDSB for their high ethnically diverse student population. Students who participated in the project were 10th graders who responded to our invitation, all of whom happened to be immigrants or second generation youth. While acknowledging that both these terms are contested and variously defined (Portes & Rumbaut, 2005), our operational definition for 'immigrant' is individuals who were born outside of Canada but live here on a permanent basis, and for 'second generation' is children born in Canada of one or both immigrant parents.

Using a qualitative approach, data were collected over three years in a variety of narrative and graphic forms such as photograph collections, cultural collages, socio-grams, urban mapping, written responses to suggested topics, and interviews. The data used in this paper are from the students' demographic forms (which included their self-selected pseudonyms), interviews, cultural collages, and written responses to four given topics. The data collection was done mostly during class time, during which the participants worked on tasks assigned by the researchers while other students worked on teacher-assigned tasks. For individual interviews, students were pulled out from class. Photographs were taken over 2-3 weeks outside of class, and some students also chose to complete at home tasks they had started during class.

For the analysis of these data, we took a grounded theory approach, which began with open coding followed by axial and selective coding, and development of hierarchies of constructs and linkages among them. At the same time we made constant comparisons among the data collected through the various tools, and

between the data and emerging conceptual categories (Miles & Huberman, 1994; Neuman, 2005). For this paper, data for individual youth were compiled as cases and the selected themes were used for cross- case analysis.

Next, using a discourse analysis approach (Fairclough & Wodak, 1997) we systematically reviewed the two documents called Canadian and World Studies, which constitute the Ontario Social Studies Curriculum Guidelines for grades 9-10 and 11-12. We first reviewed the generic goals and objectives, which are common to both documents, looking for recommendations regarding information about global issues, skills that enable appropriate thinking and action, and attitudes that foster responsible global citizenship. We then looked at the detailed guidelines for each of the subjects (history, geography, law, economics, politics and civics), grade levels, and course types (applied and academic in grades 9-10; and university, college/university, college, open, or workplace for grades 11-12). This resulted in the construction of tables that helped us compare the courses across subject areas, grade levels, and types. For each course we also listed statements about the inclusion of global issues and perspectives in corresponding columns.

The Youth

Selected characteristics of the youth who participated in this study are described in this section to help assess the fit between them and their social studies curriculum.

Global Connections

As immigrants, or children of immigrants, the youth maintained strong ties with countries of their own or their parents' origin. Numerous symbols of the youth's cultural heritage were represented on the cultural collages they constructed, including pictures or drawings of national flags of countries they or their parents had come from, shirts of their national sports teams, food, dress, historical buildings, even insignia of political movements such as the Tamil Tigers. Several of them told us that they visited 'back home' with their families, where they felt much loved and welcomed. They maintained regular contact with their cousins, who had become their friends through e-mail, telephone and exchange of gifts. Shana said:

> [two or three times a year] we send barrels [of clothes and school supplies] back home. So we usually buy things for my cousins back home, or my aunts and uncles, and buy things, like, all of our family, and we ship it off to my country because things sometimes are expensive and they can't afford it… It makes me feel good that I am able to support my cousins, and families, even though they are so far away.

For the youth, contact with their cultural heritage was also reinforced through locally available artefacts associated with home countries, such as foods in ethnic restaurants and grocery stores, music and video films, and social interactions with individuals who spoke their language. Dev Joseph said:

> Gerard Street [in Toronto] is like an Indian street where you get a lot of Indian stuff and everything. It's just, cuz, I don't know, cuz it's [like] my own country, I feel safe there.

Silent & Snipe claimed he always went to a particular convenience store because the person at the counter spoke Chaldean. When asked why that was important to him, he said, "You can ask

him questions. [I go there] to be with my own people. Like you feel safe with them."

In their written responses, every one of the youth highlighted multiculturalism as Canada's most significant positive aspect. They emphasized that tolerance for diversity is a hallmark of Canada, and the primary reason for its status as the first choice destination for immigrants. Shana wrote:

> Canada is also a country that is multicultural. I like this because it allows people to learn and know about other countries, and this causes cooperation. The reason for that is because many people in Canada like trying new things, such as foods, etc. I know for a fact that when there is Caribana[1] in the summertime, not only people from the Caribbean, many people from other cultures come and they have a good time.

Similarly, Home Slice said he liked his multicultural neighbourhood because, "We have mosques, temples, churches here. We have everything."

The young people were also aware of and curious about the cultural heritage of others who were different from them. Their interactions with youth from other cultures did not seem to have instrumental purposes. Nor did they seem to want to fully understand another culture, or be worried about the loss of their own cultural heritage as a result of their intercultural engagement (Kymlicka, 2003). Vinyard, whose parents were from Portugal, went to an ethnic store with his Indian friend and became quite curious about its merchandise, "Because I couldn't read some of the things! And I was wondering, like, how the movies there are different from our movies, and

why my friend liked it so much." Ruby proudly claimed that every one of her good friends in Canada was from a different culture, and Dorissa stated that what she appreciated most about her life in Canada was the opportunity to learn new things about people all the time, and that it would be 'so boring' if everyone was the same.

Blue Flag Baron persuaded his parents to shift his younger brother to a more multicultural school because:

> …the Catholic school I went to wasn't really multicultural. It was a lot of Italian and Caucasian people, so I was brought up basically in a white society until I came here. So I kind of felt weird, like, it's not like I'm racist or anything, but… it was like they're brown and black and it was like cool, but what kind of people are they? Like I didn't have much exposure to them. But my little brother, I, you know, said why not send him there, where you know he's got that multicultural thing… that school is pretty well known for their multculturalism.

Cultural and personal identifications

As noted above, youth in this project were either immigrants or children of immigrants. Because of their phenotypic characteristics, it is very likely that they were ascribed ethnic identities by co-ethnics and/or by members of the dominant Caucasian group (Suarez-Orozco & Qin-Hillard, 2004). However, the table below, based on ten demographic surveys that represent all the variations in the ethnic labels the youth selected, shows that they clearly exercised choice in their self-proclaimed ethnicity.

Code name	Country of birth	Who am I?	Who would I like to be & why	Ethnicity	Father's ethnicity	Mother's ethnicity
Dorissa	Canada	A unique butterfly	Myself, because I am a unique butterfly and I like myself the way I am	Canadian	Canadian	Portuguese
Vinyard	Portugal	(Name)	Early Childhood Educator, because I like to work with kids	Portuguese	Portuguese	Portuguese
Dev Joseph	India	My name is Dev Joseph	Canadian, because when in Canada be a Canadian	Indo-Aryan	Indo-Aryan	Indo-Aryan
Shana	Canada	My name is (Name)	(Blank)	Guyanese	Guyanese	Guyanese
Blue Flag Baron	Canada	(Name) I am me.	Nobody, because I am me, I do not think I could live a life that isn't mine	Spanish	Chilean	Colombian
Wesos	Uganda	I am an African Canadian trying to make it in this world.	An engineer or a robot builder because it is amazing and there's money in it	Bantu	Bantu	Bantu
Olskool	Canada	I am a kid with big dreams	A man who fulfilled his dreams.	Black	Black	Black
JC	Philipines	(Name)	Like my father because he is my idol. I want to do what he does and did.	Catholic	Filipino	Filipina
Ruby	Zimbab-we	I am a very athletic young girl who likes sports	Myself, because I just love the way I am and I'm proud to be myself no matter what other people think of me.	None	(Blank)	(Blank)
Silent & Snipe	Iraq	I am a Chaldean Canadian living in a multicultural country	(Blank)	Chaldean	Chaldean	Chaldean

For these students ethnicity was obviously not a fixed attribute. Although they filled out the demographic form under the same or very similar conditions, they responded in many different ways. They chose their ethnic labels on their own terms, based on their own or one or both parents' national origins, religion, race, tribal name, sub-national ethnicity (Chaldean), supra-national ethnicity (e.g. Spanish), or they rejected ethnic labels altogether. Some of them also selected hybrid labels in making claims about who they were.

Several of the youth showed remarkable confidence in their self-identification and did not want to be anyone other than themselves. Most had clear goals and aspirations, related to careers, self-fulfillment, or desire to be like people they admired. Dev Joseph, who had recently migrated to Canada and selected a combination of an Indian and Western name as his code name, was the only person who seemed to feel he was not yet a Canadian and wanted to become one.

Awareness of multiple and shifting perspectives

In the interviews based on their photograph collections, the youth expressed strong attachments to their homes, schools and neighbourhoods, where they felt 'comfortable,' 'safe,' and 'included.' But they were also aware that their environments could change rapidly, as a result of real or imagined events. Dorissa said:

> Before, you could just walk in there, no problems, everything okay. But now the area that we are in, I don't feel it's really safe and as I told you before I heard a story that someone got shot there. So now, that kind of surprises me because I thought I was safe –that changes the way I look at it now.

Blue Flag Baron called his neighbourhood "a horrible community" where people had been "robbed, mugged, or beat up for no reason." Yet, when he spoke about what happened there within the larger context of the city, he implied that residents of his neighbourhood were only living up to their reputation. He added:

> I don't think it is the people. I think it is the bigger people, I mean the bigger picture… how people portray [Name of neighbourhood]… they totally get a different perspective of you. They think you're this gangster person and you are going to shoot everybody.

The youths' perceptions of Canada, as well as of other places they had lived in or visited, were similarly multifaceted. Shana wrote:

> I think that Canada is both a country of conflict and cooperation. The reason I feel this way is, because in this country there is both conflict and cooperation between people. For example, in this country there are many gangs within the country, and there are shootings, and people dieing [sic] within the country, making it a country of conflict. However, every country has there [sic] fair bit of share. However I feel that at an international level, Canada is a peaceful country, because Canada is at no war with other countries.

The youth talked about the warm friendliness of people in their parents' countries of origin, and the sense of community they had in a place where they shared a culture and language with everyone around them, but also mentioned the poverty and violent crime in

those countries, from which they were protected as residents of Canada. Recalling her visit to her country of origin, Shana said:

> I was scared to sleep because I was afraid that someone would come in the house and steal something. And, I remembered years before when my dad used to live there, they had a store and people came in the store and they shot my uncle and stole all the money.

Subjectivities and resistance

In their interviews the students demonstrate their understanding that becoming who they are is an ongoing process of resistance, conscious struggle, and negotiation (Hall, 1996; Hoerder, Hébert & Schmitt, 2005). Ruby, explaining how she gradually reduced the number of school activities she was involved in, and the people at school that she tried to engage with, said:

> When I just came here I was trying to make friends so I joined many things. Like right now, I kind of, like, know where I stand with my friends. Like many people, they just judge you because, like, where you come from. When I just arrived, everybody kept asking 'Where are you from?' I'm from Africa.' And they, like, 'Oh, do you have cars in your country? Do you use soap to bathe?' and I'm just like – we are the same as you guys because everyone just imagines Africa is just this poor country and we don't get the opportunity to do anything they want. So they just used to see me as a worthless person, or whatever. But when I just found my friends and we get together and they like the same things that I do, and whatever, so I'm like, okay, let me just back off some of the people who don't understand who I am, where I come from.

Recalling her experiences of trying to join groups she explains the process was not easy:

> Like when I'm trying to put effort to show that I'm doing this thing to help other people and … they just ignore it – like many people don't choose you because they know that you are always there struggling- you are trying to present yourself but it's hard because it's your first time, but like, they don't give you the chance… you are actually striving so that people can accept you.

Some of the youth acknowledged that their self-perceptions and futures may change as a result of external circumstances (James, 2003; Plaza, 2006). Blue Flag Baron, who worked part-time fixing computers and saw himself as a future computer forensics expert said, "My sister can die tomorrow of cancer and that can motivate me to becoming a cancer specialist. I think when you are young, anything can happen."

However, the youth were not just passive recipients of external influences but critical analyzers of their subjectivity, which also sometimes created angst. Vinyard said:

> Well, I worry about what people think. I worry about how I look because I believe nowadays people judge you on how you look and like if… looks matter now, and you don't look a certain way, people won't accept you so I believe you have to keep up. Especially clothing, if you don't have the *right clothing*, I think, people-people don't think you are cheap, but they just won't like you. It's I guess how now people are, and I don't really like that, but I try and keep up with what they think because at the same time I don't want to be left out…it makes me

feel like- it does not make me like feel appreciated. It makes me feel, I think, angry, because who are they to tell me what am I supposed to be, how am I supposed to look, or that's the way it is nowadays. I guess I just have to go along with it.

Blue Flag Baron was clearly aware of both the positive and negative influence of his various groups of friends on his conduct, as well as the moral vacuum that seemed to incapacitate him. He wrote:

My school friends in particular are fairly good people, academically and socially. Not everyone I associate with at school is a grade A student, but these people make decisions that I can either relate with or actually go through…These people influence me in a good way. They teach and help me communicate with people. I have a sense of belonging and a great sense of pride being committed to a [soccer] team such as the one I belong to. The "Plex People" aren't the greatest decision makers in the world. I know them because I grew up with them and I have lived in that common area of the [name of housing complex]. When I say they don't make the greatest decisions I also include myself with them. I often find during the later end of the week like Thursday all the way through to the Sunday we are smoking pot and drinking. Knowing that this is illegal, we continue to do it anyways. Why? Because there is no moral support from parents in this day and age. We have too much freedom and not enough moral. That is why I have moved areas and try to begin a new start. But even this doesn't seem to work.

In summary, the youth who participated in this project maintained their affiliations with countries they or their parents had come from. They valued Canada's multiculturalism for affording them opportunities to develop new global connections in their highly diverse schools and neighbourhoods. Eschewing ascribed labels, the youth claimed a wide variety of ethnic identities. They were aware that their environments were complex, changing, and viewed through multiple perspectives. They were also cognizant of their own subjectivities, as well as their desire to resist group expectations as they negotiated their evolving identities.

The Social Studies Curriculum

The Ontario Social Studies curriculum document for grades 9-10 is called Canadian and World Studies (Ministry of Education, 2005). Its four overarching goals are to help students learn basic concepts of the subjects, develop knowledge and values to become responsible, active, and informed Canadian citizens in the twenty-first century, develop practical skills (such as critical thinking, research and communication), and apply the knowledge and skills they learn to understanding natural, political, economic and technological environments, and "cultural interactions among groups of people" (p.3). The preparation of good *Canadian* citizens is clearly stated as a priority here. Although there is recognition that students need to learn to interact with different cultural groups, it is unclear whether this refers to cultural groups within or beyond Canada. The centrality of Canada as the substantive content area, as well as a particular ideological perspective (Mitchell, 2003; Davies, Evans & Reid, 2005) is indicated in the statement:

Students' learning in the various courses in this discipline will contribute

significantly to their understandings of Canada's heritage … It will also help them to perceive Canada in a global context and to understand its place and role in the world community. (p.3)

This focus is reinforced further along, where it is pointed out that this program will help students build upon what they have already learned in middle school about the geography and history of Canada.

The fundamental concepts around which the curriculum is built are systems and structures, interactions and interdependence, environments, change and continuity, culture, and power and governance. These and related concepts, such as civic rights and responsibilities, conflict and cooperation, migration, and diversity, are expected to be elaborated through various courses in the program.

In the section on teaching approaches, the guidelines emphasize that "these areas of study are not just school subjects but fields of knowledge that affect [the students'] lives, their communities, and the world," (p.21) and that, "The study of current events needs to be thought of not as a separate topic removed from the program but as an integral extension of the expectations found in the curriculum" (p.22). Drawing teachers' attention to students who do not use English as their first language, the guidelines suggest:

Students who come to Ontario from other countries will find the study of subjects within Canadian and world studies particularly useful. Through this study, they can develop an understanding of Canadian economics, geography, history, law, and politics that will help them to become well-informed Canadian citizens. (p. 23)

A sub-section entitled "Anti-discrimination Education in Canadian and World Studies" (p.24) is also included, which points out that students are expected to demonstrate respect and tolerance towards others, to take a stand against racism and discrimination, and to recognize bias and stereotypes. Diversity of perspectives is acknowledged in relation to Aboriginal people, but immigrants and their children are not specifically mentioned in the statement: "Learning activities and resources used to implement the curriculum should be inclusive in nature, reflecting diverse points of view and experiences, including Aboriginal perspectives" (p. 24).

In grade nine, students can select between two Canadian geography courses and in grade ten between two Canadian history courses (either academic or applied). The Canadian focus of these courses is consistent with the goal of teaching all students, including those who do not use English as their first language, about Canada.

Nonetheless, one of the five strands in the geography courses is called Global Connections and is designed to draw students' attention to the "flow of people, products, money, information, and ideas around the world" (p.27). In another strand entitled Understanding and Managing Change, it is suggested that "Geographers use local and global perspectives to identify trends …" (p. 28) The detailed descriptions of the courses, however, show that global connections are referred to only in terms of Canada's role in international organizations and agreements (with an emphasis on peace-keeping and humanitarian aid), location in natural systems, and economic and environmental interdependence. The strands on management of change refer to Canada's changing demographics, the impact of changes in the global environment on Canada, and the need to respect cultural differences [presumably

within Canada]. The impact of Canada's economic or environmental policies on other parts of the world (except perhaps indirectly, in comparing Canada's resource consumption and pollution with "global trends" [p.39]), or its combative role in Afghanistan -a topic of considerable public concern- are not mentioned.

The history courses also have a strand called Communities: Local, National, and Global, and another called Change and Continuity, in which some international connections are referred to. However, with the exception of a reference to Canada's immigration and refugee policies since the 1930s, and reasons for various groups' arrival in Canada (p.47- 48), the focus remains squarely on Canada's heroes and institutions, and its participation in European and American wars and treaties. The contributions of Aboriginal people and organizations are briefly acknowledged (p. 50), but other major groups, such as the Chinese who built the railway system, and the Sikhs who cultivated vast tracts of land, are subsumed under "local immigrant groups" (p. 55). Immigrants who achieved national or international fame (*e.g.* Michael Ondaatje, Oscar Peterson, Tom Bata, and David Suzuki) are represented exclusively as Canadian heroes, and not also as immigrants or children of immigrants who have made significant individual contributions to Canada and globally.

All students in grade ten take the required civics half-course. This course has three strands entitled Informed Citizenship, Purposeful Citizenship, and Active Citizenship. The course is constructed around questions such as how to include divergent voices in public affairs, and "what it means to be a 'responsible citizen' in the local, national, and global arenas" (p.63). One of the four expectations in the strand on Informed Citizenship is that upon completion of the course students will be able to "explain what it means to be a 'global citizen' and why it is important to be one" (p.65). The text that follows suggests that students are expected to "analyse contemporary crises or issues of international significance" (p.66) and demonstrate knowledge of international declarations and important international figures. In the two subsequent strands, comparisons of different values and beliefs of Canadian citizens on issues of public interest are called for, and mechanisms for gathering information and civic participation are recommended. However, the notion of global citizenship is not elaborated and no examples of how this may be interpreted are offered. All of the examples given are about local or national issues, regulations, or events, and ways in which students could contribute to them. There is no mention of international issues that students may be interested in, or guidance on how students could voice their opinions on those issues or to take actions to address them.

The curriculum guidelines for grades 11-12 have the same general principles, goals, and instructions for teachers as those for grades 9-10, but offer a larger array of courses that students can take. Students can choose among three courses in economics, ten in geography, nine in history, three in law, and two in politics. Each of these is designated a type, indicating a level of complexity, and is designed for students heading towards the workplace, college, or university. A small number are also listed as 'open' courses, indicating their suitability for all students. Two of the geography courses, five of the history courses, one law course, and one politics course have the word 'world' included in their titles. However, a detailed analysis of the course descriptions shows significant variations among subject areas, grade levels, and course types in whether, how, and how much the world is represented.

The emphasis given to global issues and relationships is unevenly distributed among the subject areas. For example, one of the strands in the three economics courses includes a section on "International Economic Interdependence" and another sub-section is called "International Economic Institutions." However, only Canada's international trade relations and its economic interests, and only international institutions in which Canada participates are listed here.

One of three courses in law is called "Canadian and International Law" but the only international aspect of this course is information about Canada's role in international legal bodies. There is no attention paid to legal systems in other, especially non-Western countries, and none to the impact of international treaties and agreements on people living in those countries.

While Canada's response to international conflicts in the role of 'peacekeepers' is emphasized in the history courses, there is no suggestion that the conflicts should be located in historical and current geo-political contexts. Implicit in this omission is a disregard for the identifications, affiliations and concerns of students who, in many cases, have come from the countries involved in those conflicts, or others in similar conditions.

The "World History since 1900" course has the most direct relevance to current issues emerging from recent historical events. This course includes a section on imperialism and decolonization, as well as a reference to consumerism and global capitalism, albeit without an explicit link between neocolonialism and the power of multinational corporations in the late twentieth and early twenty-first century. It also lists international movements, nationalism, racial consciousness, religion and

society, individualism, and American pop culture as areas of study. Two more courses, both called "World History: The West and the World," similarly include a variety of international references, and they focus on how people, ideas and structures from the Western and non-Western worlds have influenced each other. What is surprising, though, is the scant attention drawn to the events of 9/11 and its aftermath, or the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, or the ongoing conflict in Palestine, in any of the courses. Muslim and non-Muslim students' views about each other, indeed of the worlds inhabited by each other in other countries as well as within Canada, are being shaped by a cacophony of voices in homes, communities and the media, in reaction to these events. Yet the curriculum is almost silent on what is widely considered a defining issue of our times.

The guidelines for geography courses, however, offer an exemplary approach to demonstrating the connections between local and global matters. All of the courses (except physical geography, geographics, and geomatics) have two strands (among five) called "Global Connections" and "Understanding and Managing Change" that specifically direct students to seek and respond to information about global issues, on the premise that "a global perspective is particularly important for today's students" (p.53). The physical and political geography of many parts of the world are represented, and both human and natural causes of change are discussed in all of these courses.

A comparative review of the courses shows that students in grades 9-10 have far fewer opportunities to learn about global issues than students in grades 11-12. Although the curriculum guidelines for both groups are labeled "Canadian and World Studies," courses in the two lower grades focus almost exclusively on Canada, while in the higher grades several

courses include 'the world' in their titles as well as in their detailed descriptions.

Similarly, courses designated for workplace-bound students include very few topics on global issues, while advanced level college or university preparation courses offer many more possibilities for the study of world affairs. Significant emphasis to global issues is given in only one of the six courses designated for workplace bound students, two of the four open courses, the single college course, three of seven college/university courses, and five of eight university-only courses.

This pattern indicates an assumption that only older students, or those heading to colleges and universities are capable of understanding and/or are interested in global affairs.

Discussion

Social studies curricula everywhere are designed to help students learn about the past, so they can understand the present, and prepare for the future. This is most likely the intent of curriculum designers in Ontario, as well. However, this curriculum does not adequately take into account the histories and current interests of an increasing population of high school students, *i.e.* immigrants or children of immigrants. Nor does it adequately prepare students, irrespective of whether they are new to Canada or not, for a world that is becoming globalized at a very fast rate.

It seems that writers of this curriculum followed Kymlicka (2003) in thinking that challenges to the ideal multicultural state may come from its citizens' loyalty to distant rather than local cultures. To ensure the youths' loyalty to Canada, they focused primarily on providing them information about Canada's Euro-centric past and its contributions to and perspectives on world affairs. In doing so, however, they largely neglected bodies of knowledge and perspectives that immigrants and children of immigrants bring with them. Students who do not see themselves included in the curriculum are more likely to disengage from it. But more importantly, the focus of the official curriculum denies the existence of a different demographic reality in Ontario, the consideration of which could help students understand current social issues, and think about how they could shape their collective future. Without explicit recognition of their membership in the Canadian collectivity, they are less likely to engage in deep, transformative forms of citizenship (Banks, 2008)

Youth in this study did not see their identities and affiliations in the binary terms suggested by Kymlicka (2003). Their local intercultural engagement did not impede their concomitant loyalty to the geographically distant places where they or their parents had come from. Nor did their nostalgia for their 'home countries' diminish their appreciation of Canada as their new home. While they sought opportunities to engage with people and artifacts from their countries of origin, they also acknowledged the crime, violence and oppression associated with them. Similarly, most of them showed a nuanced understanding of both the positive as well as the negative aspects of Canadian society, demonstrating their ability to critically consider it (Banks *et al*., 2005). The youth clearly valued Canadian policies and practices that allowed them to maintain their own cultural heritage while also creating opportunities for them to learn about their peers' heritage. Like citizens of Kymlicka's ideal multicultural state (2003), they seemed to value cultural diversity for itself, not for instrumental purposes. They were interested in other cultures but did not expect to fully understand them; nor did this interest seem

like a threat to their own sense of cultural and personal identity. Cultural diversity, which was very much a part of their everyday life at school and in their neighbourhoods, enabled them to see their differences as 'normal' (Sicakkan, 2005) and gave them the confidence to ethnically self-identify in multiple ways, resisting simplistic essentialization.

The youth were aware that their cultural identities were not fixed attributes but a part of their evolving selves (Hall, 1996; Plaza, 2006) in constant engagement with families, peers, and social institutions, including the media (James, 2003). They knew how ignorance and misrepresentations (especially in the media) could shape others' perceptions of them and the places where they lived, and that they loved.

Communities were clearly very important to the youth. They were members of several groups concurrently, did not see their identifications with multiple groups at the local or international level as problematic, and did not feel the need to choose among them even when they noticed their differences. While they acknowledged their experiences of being excluded, oppressed, or negatively influenced by some groups, they also yearned for membership in those groups. Their schools, neighbourhoods, and ethnic communities within and beyond Canada, all seamlessly created their worlds (Sicakkan, 2005). To them, being Canadian did not mean giving up their ethnic, national, or other affiliations; rather, being Canadian was valued precisely because it allowed them to maintain their own multiple connections and explore others. A curriculum that recognizes their multiple modes of belonging (Sicakkan, 2005), and the complex, multiple, changing, and sometimes conflicting imperatives of citizenship (Banks, 2008), is much more likely to promote the kind of thinking that is required of global citizens. Students who participated in this study demonstrated that they were capable of handling such complexities, while they were in grade 10 or enrolled in lower level courses.

The curriculum recommends that students be encouraged to relate subject matter knowledge to their own lives. To do this, they need to learn about larger frameworks of historical and contemporary international relations that have shaped the various dimensions of global cultural flows (Appadurai, 1990), and to discuss their individual and collective subjectivities in relation to these. If they are helped to locate themselves in these flows and develop principled positions about them, their participation in civic actions are more likely to be based on a deeper level of understanding and commitment. Showing them how civic action is possible at the local, national, as well as international levels, while considering their commonalities and differences with other groups of people at all levels, is more likely to encourage local *and* global thinking.

Youth need to learn to imagine, commit themselves to, and work towards a just and more equitable world. Learning about economic, political, legal and cultural aspects of globalization will help them understand why their schools and neighbourhoods are the way they are, how and why they are similar to and different from other neighbourhoods in the Greater Toronto Area and beyond, and how and why Canada is similar to or different from their countries of origin. Learning about neo-colonial relations between Western and non-Western countries would help them understand why immigrants and their children are in Canada, and how they live in relation to other groups. Similarly, learning about immigrants' struggles for recognition in Canada, as well as their contributions to it, would help the youth see themselves as participants in the national future. Confronting these issues in their formal

curriculum will help all students, not just those who are immigrants or children of immigrants, identify their commonalities and differences, and create opportunities for them to change their minds, in order to build a better future in which they will have to live increasingly interdependent lives. Youth in this study have demonstrated that they have the capacity to deal with conflicts, tensions, dilemmas and conundrums related to their multiple identities and affiliations. The inclusion of these struggles in their formal curriculum will help normalize them, and will enable these youth hone their skills in navigating the complexities of the worlds they will occupy.

Notes

1   Annual celebration of Caribbean culture including a parade

References

Appadurai, Arun (1990) Disjuncture and difference in the global cultural economy. *Theory, Culture, & Society, 7*, 295-310.

Banks, James A. (2008). Diversity, group identity, and citizenship education in a global age. *Educational Researcher*, 37(3): 129-139.

Banks, James.A., Banks, Cherry A. McGee., Cortes, Carlos. E., Hahn, Carole., Merryfield, Merry., Moodley, Kogila.A., Murphy-Shigematsu, Stephen., Osler, Audrey., Park, Caryn. & Parker, Walter.C. (2005). *Democracy and diversity: principles and concepts for educating citizens in a global age*. Seattle, WA: Center for Multicultural Education, University of Washington.

Banks, James A. (Ed.). (2004). *Diversity and citizenship education: Global perspectives*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Bottery, Mike (2006). Education and globalization: Redefining the role of the educational professional. *Educational Review*, 52(1): 95-113.

Davies, Ian; Evans, Mark; & Reid, Alan. (2005). Globalising citizenship education? A critique of 'global education' and 'citizenship education'. *British Journal of Educational Studies,* 53(1): 66-89.

Davies, Lynn. (2006). Global citizenship: Abstraction or framework for action? *Educational Review,* 58(1), 5-25.

Fairclough, Norman & Wodak, Ruth. (1997). Critical discourse analysis. In T.A. van Dijk (Ed.) *Discourse studies: A multidisciplinary introduction: Vol. 2 Discourse as social interaction* (pp. 258 – 284). London: Sage.

Hall, Stuart. (1996). Introduction: Who needs 'identity'? In Stuart Hall, & Paul du Gay (Eds.), *Questions of cultural identity* (pp. 1-17). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Hébert, Yvonne; Sun, Shirley Xiahohong; & Kowch, Eugene. (2005). Focusing on children and youth: Social capital's role in educational outcomes in the context of immigration and diversity. In Dirk Hoerder, Yvonne Hébert & Irina Schmitt (Eds.) *Negotiating Transcultural Lives: Belongings and Social Capital among Youth in Comparative Perspective* (pp.167-188)*. Gottingen, Germany: V&R Unipress.

Hoerder, Dirk; Hébert, Yvonne; & Schmitt, Irina. (2005) (Eds.). *Negotiating Transcultural Lives: Belongings and Social Capital among Youth in Comparative Perspective.* Gottingen, Germany: V&R Unipress.

James, Carl. (2003). *Seeing ourselves: Exploring race, ethnicity and culture*. Toronto: Thompson Educational Press.

Kymlicka, Will. (2003). Multicultural states and intercultural citizens. *Theory and Research in Education, 1*(2): 147-169.

Kymlicka, Will. (2004). Foreword. In James, Banks (Ed.) *Diversity and citizenship education: Global perspectives* (xiii-xviii). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass

Ladson-Billing, Gloria. (2004). Culture versus citizenship: The challenge of racialized citizenship in the United States. In James Banks (Ed.) *Diversity and citizenship education: Global perspectives* (pp. 99-126) San Francisco: Jossey-Bass

Miles, Matthew. & Huberman, Michael. (1994). *Qualitative data analysis*. Thousand Oakes, CA: Sage

Mitchell, Katharyne. (2003). Educating the national citizen in neoliberal times: From the multicultural self to the strategic cosmopolitan. *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers NS*, 28:387-403.

Neuman, Lawrence (2005) *Social research methods: Quantitative and qualitative design.* Toronto: Allyn and Bacon

Noddings, Nel. (2005). Introduction. In Nel Noddings (Ed.) *Educating citizens for global awareness*(1-21). New York: Teachers College Press.

Osler, Audrey & Starkey, Hugh. (2006). Educating for democratic citizenship: A review of research, policy and practice 1995-2005. *Research Papers in Education* 21(4): 433-466.

Parker, Walter. (2003). *Teaching democracy: Unity and diversity in public life*. New York: Teachers College Press.

Pashby, Karen. (2008). Demands on and of citizenship and schooling: "Belonging" and "diversity" in the global imperative. In Michael O'Sullivan & Karen Pashby (Eds.) *Citizenship education in the era of globalization* (pp. 9-26). Rotterdam: Sense Publishers.

Pike, Graham. (2008a). Globalization. In Arthur, James., Davies, Ian., & Hahn, Carole (Eds.) *Handbook of education for citizenship and democracy* (pp. 80-94). New York: Sage Publishers.

Pike, Graham. (2008b). Citizenship education in global context. In Michael O'Sullivan and Karen Pashby (Eds.) *Citizenship education in the era of globalization* (pp. 41-51. Rotterdam: Sense Publishers.

Plaza, Dwaine. (2006). The construction of a segmented hybrid identity among one-and-a-half-generation and second-generation Indo-Caribbean and African Caribbean Canadians. *Identity: An International Journal of Theory and Research,* 6(3): 207–229.

Portes, Alejandro & Rumbaut, Rubén G. (2005). Introduction: The second generation and the children of immigrants' longitudinal study. *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 28(6): 983-999.

Reitz, Jeffrey & Banerjee, Rupa. (2007). Racial inequality, social cohesion and policy issues in Canada. In Keith Banting, Thomas J. Courchene, and F. Leslie Siedle, (Eds.) *Belonging, diversity, recognition and shared citizenship in Canada* (489-544). Montreal: Institute for Research on Public Policy.

Richardson, George. (2008). Conflicting imaginaries: Global citizenship education in Canada as a site of contestation. In Michael O'Sullivan and Karen Pashby (Eds.) *Citizenship education in the era of globalization* (pp.53-70). Rotterdam: Sense Publishers.

Rockquemore, Kerry Ann. (2006). Navigating interracial borders. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 68(2): 534-535.

Suárez-Orozco, Carola & Qin-Hillard, Desirée Baolin. (Eds.). (2004). *Globalization: Culture and education in the new millennium*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Sicakkan, Hakan G. (2005). *How is a diverse European society possible? An explorationinto new public spaces in six European countries* (AMID working paper series). Aalborg: AMID.

Statistics Canada. (2008). Retrieved September 18, 2008, from http://www.statscan.ca.

Schweisfurth, Michele. (2006). Education for global citizenship: Teacher agency and curricular structure in Ontario schools. *Education Review*, 58(1): 41-50.

Toronto District School Board (2008). Retrieved September 14, 2008, from https://www.tdsb.on.ca

Wall, Ellen, Ferrazi, Gabriel, & Schryer, Frans (1998) Getting the goods on social capital. *Rural Sociology* 63(2): 300-322

Wood, Patricia Burke. (2008). The impossibility of global citizenship. In Michael O'Sullivan and Karen Pashby (Eds.), *Citizenship education in the era of globalization* (pp. 27-40). Rotterdam: Sense Publishers.