

Human rights and global citizenship in social studies standards in the United States

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Abstract: There is a synergetic complementary relationship between human rights education (HRE) and global citizenship education (GCE). Historically, however, HRE began to develop earlier than GCE. The purpose of this study is to investigate whether and to what degree a human rights narrative in the social studies standards of individual US states facilitates the introduction of the concept of global citizenship, and whether social studies standards connect human rights and global citizenship, contextually or thematically. The analysis demonstrates that despite an increased visibility of both concepts, state standards still fall short of demonstrating a clear connection between human rights and global citizenship or utilising a human rights discourse and paradigm to advocate for a broader exposure and acceptance of global citizenship

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Introduction

Human rights education (HRE) is a lifelong process aimed at promoting universal respect for and observance of human rights and fundamental freedoms. It contributes to the prevention of human rights violation and abuses by providing persons with knowledge and skills to develop behaviours that empower them to contribute to the building and promotion of a universal culture of human rights (United Nations, 2011). The growing interest in HRE is a positive sign of the gradual expansion of global civil society. Traditional views of globalisation as a predominantly economic, political, and cultural phenomenon are shifting and people understand that globalisation impacts their personal lives and wellbeing; it is no longer an abstract concept. Personalisation of the global gives an additional impulse to a growing understanding that membership in a community can no longer be limited to a province or a nation but now encompasses a broader and more diverse global community (Gaudelli, 2016). Thus, the millennia-old idea of global citizenship is now approaching universal acceptance and generating an understanding that equality is possible and human rights are universal, that an individual person, rather than a state, should be the centre of attention, and that education should play a role in the development of global civic society and intercultural dialogue (Ramirez, Suárez, & Meyer, 2007).

Literature review

One of the significant effects of globalisation on education has been a surge of several frameworks or models of inquiry (Banks, 2008; Fernekes, 2016; Suárez-Orozco, M. & Qin-Hilliard, D., 2004). Initially, inquiry into social constructs, such as rights or citizenship, focussed on their meaning. We now try to understand them in terms of their impact, or how they intersect with other social constructs. Many constructs, regardless of whether they were clearly defined (e.g. rights) or not (e.g. citizenship), have come to be viewed in broad global contexts rather than in narrow national milieu. The increased attention to human rights after World War II, and to global citizenship during the transition to a global infosphere in the 1980s, advanced new education frameworks, namely HRE and GCE (Bowden, 2003; Heater, 1990; Kingston, 2014; Osler, 2015; Pike, 2008). Since their emergence, the relation between these two frameworks has been symbiotic. All suggested typologies of GCE include HRE as its instrumental component, and all analyses of HRE outline various forms of education for supranational citizenship, including GCE, as its ultimate context or goal (Abdi & Shultz, 2008; Gaudelli, 2009; Osler, 2016; Oxley & Morris, 2013; Roman, 2003; Tibbitts, 2002).

Historically and institutionally, however, the concept of human rights came to the fore earlier than that of global citizenship (Meyer, Bromley, & Ramirez, 2010; Kingston, 2014). Although not legally binding, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (United Nations, 1948) identified and codified human rights and freedoms and created a solid foundation for incorporating those rights and freedoms in national legal systems. The Vienna Declaration, adopted by the World Conference on Human Rights in 1993, further advanced the institutionalisation of human rights by recommending that nations develop specific programmes and strategies for ensuring the widest human rights education and the dissemination of public information about human rights abuses (United Nations, 1993). Globalisation in all spheres of political, economic, social, and cultural life, technological progress, and ease of cross-border communication and movement have resulted in a growing interest and support for various areas of global education, including human rights education and global citizenship education. This interest has translated into a slow but steady incorporation of elements of HRE and GCE into school curricula on various levels (Cassidy, Brunner, & Webster 2014; United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization [UNESCO], 2018).

Unlike human rights, the codification and institutionalisation of global citizenship has taken a steeper road. Acknowledging that the definition of global citizenship is yet to be developed, UNESCO (2013) declared that transformative GCE 'aims to empower learners to engage and assume active roles both locally and globally to face and resolve global challenges and ... to become proactive contributors to a more just, peaceful, tolerant, inclusive, secure and sustainable world' (p. 4). The September 2013 UNESCO outcome document of the technical consultation on GCE was still calling GCE 'an emerging perspective' (UNESCO, 2013, p. 1), although a number of national and local curricula had already included recommendations to incorporate elements of GCE. In 2015, global citizenship was declared one of the most important targets of the 2030 sustainable development goals in education (UNESCO, 2015). GCE, as a process of educating informed and responsible members of the global community, is not, however, devoid of internal contradictions. Traditional 'soft' GCE (Andreotti, 2006) has been criticised for its West-centred epistemological rationale, emphasis on neoliberal values, and globalisation from above (Pashby,

2012; Pashby & de Oliveira Andreotti, 2015), elitism (Goren & Yemini, 2017), and indifference to 'new imperialism' (Pashby, 2012). A critical transformative GCE (Banks, 2008; Johnson & Morris, 2010; Rapoport, 2020), on the other hand, addresses the most urgent issues of social and economic inequality on a global level by promoting critical assessment and re-evaluation of knowledge, discourses, contexts, and experiences with the help of tools provided by critical and post-colonial theories. Critical transformative GCE problematizes global issues through deliberative inquiry and reflexivity and challenges globalisation as a proxy of unequal power relations. It should be noted that HRE is a key component of the critical GCE that challenges various forms of inequality and injustice.

Political and ideological contexts play an important role in defining the place of global education in national or local curricula. In southern Africa, GCE has the potential to become a critical component of the value-based democratic citizenship education that emerged from political and cultural exclusion and is grounded in part in local and regional philosophies and indigenous knowledge (Kubow, 2019; Quaynor, 2019; Waghid, 2018). Curricula in East Asian countries follow what Lo and Kingman-Chong (2015) have called 'globally-oriented nationalism/localism' (p. 157) in trying to preserve a fragile balance between the aspiration to become leaders on the global stage and adherence to deeply rooted national traditions (Alviar-Martin & Baildon, 2016; Kennedy & Fairbrother, 2004). The introduction of GCE and other global education frameworks in school curricula in Europe faces the rising tide of populist nationalism, isolationism, and anti-immigrant sentiments that threaten to interrupt and even reverse democratic processes in both established and new democratic states (Osler & Starkey, 2018). HRE, if used alongside with GCE or other global education frameworks, has a potential to strengthen a critical stance and serve as a link between the global and the national/local.

Although global citizenship and human rights are rooted in the respect for human nature and a belief in human beings, historically they developed differently. The concept of a global citizen has existed for centuries, even millennia, but as a framework for comprehensive public education, global citizenship has a much shorter history. Human rights, on the other hand, although historically newer, are conceptually clearer, better defined, and more visible, which makes them more acceptable for school curricula. Ironically, despite their relative novelty, ideas of human rights, their status, definitions, examples of violence, and the need for protection were institutionalized and codified much earlier than global or world citizenship (Carson, 2019; Toukan, 2018; United Nations, 1948; UNESCO 2015). The horrors of World War II and the Holocaust urged the world community to adopt the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which, along with other universally recognised documents, has served as a critical epistemological component of human rights education. All this, however, was not enough to develop lasting human rights curricula in the United States (Parker, 2017, 2018). Due to multiple obstacles that will be addressed below, HRE is still a 'curricular wannabe' (Parker, 2018, p. 16) that has failed to generate epistemological and pedagogical stability (Barton, 2019; Parker, 2017, 2018) or administrative interest (Tibbitts, 2015). In the virtual absence of human rights curricula in schools, the incorporation of human rights discourse in existing social studies curricula has become the only way for schools to advance the knowledge and practice of human rights.

In the United States, HRE and GCE face similar well-documented obstacles. First and foremost, there is the fear of the perceived biased political nature of HRE

and GCE (Gaudelli & Fernekes, 2004; Kingston 2014). American society, particularly its conservative part, is usually very suspicious of anything that either sounds or means global (Myers, 2006; Tibbitts, 2015). Political and, more rarely, ideological resistance to 'global' is nothing new. One of the education officials in Indiana who participated in the revision of state social studies standards and whom I interviewed several years ago, told me that he and his colleagues were strongly recommended to avoid the word 'global' in the revised standards because it reminded them of the tragic Black Hawk Down incident in October 1993 in Mogadishu, Somalia. State legislatures that approve state standards, the principal curricular documents, or State Boards of Education that control textbook adoption, are elected political agencies that have levers to control curricular content. The limits of this paper do not allow a deeper analysis of the impact of local, sometimes parochial, policies on curricula (Erekson, 2012; Howell, 2005; Myers, 2006). The remnants of the anti-globalist and isolationist tradition in American education can also be found in an opposition to including more non-US-centred content in many social studies or language arts curricula (Standish, 2012). HRE, however, is in a better position here than global studies or GCE because the HRE framework includes both international and domestic issues.

The second obstacle for both HRE and GCE is curricular insecurity or lack of 'disciplinary heritage' (Gaudelli, 2009). The result is the absence of a proper, adequate curriculum:

Like any curriculum (e.g., courses in biology, music, or history), a human rights curriculum needs to be based on a theory of knowledge (an idea of what is meant by knowledge). Further, it needs a pedagogical theory about how to organize that knowledge for learning by children and young people of different ages and stages. This will include, among other things, a framework explicating beginning, intermediate, and advanced understandings of human rights. (Parker, 2018, 12)

This is where all inter-and multidisciplinary areas stumble. Most curricula in US schools are designed on a disciplinary basis. Although the bases are broad and inclusive, they follow the idea of traditional disciplines: physics, chemistry, and biology in science; history, economics, geography, and civics in social studies. In this environment, interdisciplinary areas such as human rights education or citizenship education are not particularly welcome in any cluster, which, in turn, makes them unattractive for teacher education programmes.

Despite the obvious similarity in obstacles for HRE and GCE in US schools, each of these areas also experiences its own particular challenges. The unique challenge for a broader presentation of HRE is that the rights discourse has historically focused on civil rights (Carson, 2019; Parker, 2017). The civil rights discourse in the US is based on a long-run historical narrative placing civil rights in the chronological continuum spanning from the very foundation of the nation through all major steps in American history up to the most recent Black Lives Matter movement (Parker, 2017). Because of its unique nature and place, the civil rights narrative has been framed as a predominantly national narrative that eventually precluded the attention of global and cosmopolitan human rights (Stone, 2002; Parker, 2018). Coupled with sometimes hidden and sometimes open resistance from conservatives and anti-globalists to avoid as much global narrative as possible in

schools, the civil rights narrative conveniently filled in the spaces reserved for rights discourse in curricula, effectively pushing human rights and related topics to the content periphery.

GCE faces another more normative challenge: Its principal concept of global citizenship is elusive, ephemeral, and not easy to comprehend without real life examples (Koyama, 2015; Standish, 2012; Wood, 2008). Despite progress in the development of GCE and global education in general, many educators in the United States are still sceptical about global citizenship-related issues or oblivious to the concept and how to incorporate it in their curricula (Gallavan, 2008; Robbins, Francis, & Elliott, 2003). The principal reasons for scepticism are the absence of a global government, the perception of citizenship as a predominantly nation-related phenomenon, lack of exposure to global education courses in teacher education, and a false perception of patriotism (Osler & Starkey, 2010; Rapoport, 2010).

Human rights and global citizenship in state social studies standards

The third obstacle is the lack of centralised administrative support for HRE and GCE and the virtual absence of curricular mandate (Beltramo & Duncheon, 2013; Rapoport, 2015; Tibbitts, 2014). Classroom teachers, as curriculum gatekeepers, make curricular decisions based on multiple factors that include time, content, personal knowledge, and experience (Thornton, 1991). In the era of teacher and school accountability, without proper knowledge about or experience in teaching human rights or global citizenship, and in circumstances in which a lot of content must be covered in a limited amount of time, administrative mandates and support play a critical role (Rapoport, 2015; Stone, 2002; Tibbitts, 2014, 2015). Teachers must make hard choices, and if a certain concept is not required by curricular documents such as academic or content standards, US educators do not have a real incentive to include these concepts in their instruction (Bottery, 2006; Engler & Hunt, 2004). Thus, the inclusion of human rights and global citizenship and a specific vocabulary related to these concepts in regulatory documents such as standards is particularly important for the advancement of HRE and GCE.

In the US educational system, academic standards serve as rigorous goals for teaching and learning and specify what students should know and be able to do at each grade level. The idea to standardise education in the United States dates back to the early 1980s, when the National Commission for Excellence in Education (NCEE) issued a report that stated the nation was losing its competitive edge due to the erosion of its educational foundations (NCEE, 1983). One of the remedies suggested was a new content reform that included the introduction of a basic common curriculum, performance standards for students and teachers, and a set of shared values (Cogan, 1996/1997). The publication of national curriculum standards by the National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS), *Expectations of Excellence: Curriculum Standards for Social Studies* (NCSS, 1994) and their revised version (NCSS, 2010), encouraged individual states to follow suit and use them as a framework for curriculum alignment and development. This provided a blueprint for thematic conceptualisation of various areas of social studies.

State standards serve as a legal regulatory mechanism to control curricular content, and outline what students in individual states are expected to know and be able to do (Beltramo & Duncheon, 2013). Despite concern that standards can impact teachers' creativity through the enforcement of prescribed curricula, testing, and the notorious teacher accountability (Hyslop-Margison & Sears, 2006), state standards

are universally regarded as content guides that outline and emphasise the most important concepts and facts that construct a knowledge base for a given course. This is particularly important reference to concepts that are relatively new to social studies teachers. As research demonstrates, human rights, globalisation, global citizenship, or world citizenship are among such concepts (Gallavan, 2008; Osler & Starkey, 2010; Robbins, Francis, & Elliott, 2003; Schweisfurth, 2006).

Analysing the results of the 2000 national survey of human rights education in the U.S., Banks (2000) wrote that the concept of human rights was mentioned in the social studies standards of 17 states. In his updated results in 2007, he reported that human rights were mentioned in the standards of 36 states, but he also corrected his previous number: 14 states instead of 17 (Banks, 2007). Commending the progress that had been made in seven years, authors of the survey noted that with human rights language, concepts and topics being included in at least 36 state documents, 'the potential is there to increase HRE programming ... a wide range of options are available. We are no longer invisible and need to take full advantage of the momentum' (Banks, 2007, Updating section). In *Human Rights Education: A Necessity for Effective Social and Civic Learning*, the 2014 position statement of the National Council for the Social Studies, the largest organisation of social studies professionals in the United States, it was reported that 'at least 35 states include human rights content and/or references to human rights in their social studies standards' (NCSS, 2014). In the same year, the Human Rights Education Network (HRE USA) reported that 'only 39 states even mention HR in their Social Studies standards and among them only 22 contain the UDHR', and recommended that 'HRE should be incorporated within the curriculum standards of key subject areas such as Social Studies' (Tibbitts, 2014, p. 133). The Network's recommendation was not particularly effective because by 2019, only 36 states included some 100 references to human rights in their standards (Carson, 2019).

Due to the challenges described earlier, the term *global citizen*, unlike *human rights*, appeared in state social studies standards much later. In 2009, social studies standards of only two states, Maryland and Mississippi, mentioned the term *global citizen* (Rapoport, 2009). Some standards mentioned such terms and phrases as *informed, responsible, and participating citizens at the ... international level, responsible citizens and active participants in ... global society, global stewardship, members of the world community, citizen in an interdependent world, or citizens and participants in an increasingly connected world economy*. Most of these terms, although semantically close, failed to convey the idea of global citizenship. It is also noteworthy that even globalisation, which has been one of the most important defining phenomena for the last several decades, was mentioned in the social studies standards of only 15 states in 2009 (Rapoport, 2009). A recent study of the impact of the C3 Framework (National Commission for Excellence in Education, 2013), a new inquiry-based framework for state standards, found that the concept of global citizenship was directly referred to in the standards of eight of the nine states that applied the C3 Framework. The study found, however, that despite a growing number of states mentioning global citizenship in social studies standards, the alignment with the C3 Framework and use of the inquiry design model have had a limited impact on the advancement of GCE, particularly transformative critical GCE (Rapoport, 2020).

Considering that human rights is indisputably a critical component of the global citizenship paradigm and has a longer and more consistent representation in

state social studies standards, it would be logical to assume that human rights discourse could be used as a catalyst to increase and improve the visibility of global citizenship in state standards. Do standards developers use a more familiar and better defined concept of human rights as a vehicle to better introduce the concept of global citizenship? Do standards connect the two interconnected concepts? The purpose of this study was to investigate whether and to what degree the presence of a human rights narrative in state social studies standards facilitates the introduction of the concept of global citizenship, and whether social studies standards connect human rights and global citizenship contextually or thematically.

Methodology

Electronic versions of the social studies content standards (sometimes called frameworks) of 50 US states and the District of Columbia were downloaded from respective State Department of Education (SDE) websites. If separate content area/discipline (civics, economics, geography, and history) or grade (Kindergarten-12) standards were posted on SDEs, all these standards were also downloaded. All downloaded standards and frameworks were scanned to find phrases: human rights, global citizen(ship), world citizen(ship), citizen of the world, member of a global community. The segments that contained those phrases were then analysed using the conceptual content analysis technique (CCAT), a research technique for making replicable and valid inferences from texts and narratives (Krippendorf, 2004). CCAT is based on the assumption that if authors intend to deliver a specific message, idea, or concept, they introduce or display linguistic symbols of this concept more often. Thus, the frequency of word use in a text is employed as a technique to determine the importance of a specific content (Driscio & Maschi, 2015).

Two concepts are the focus of this study: human rights and global citizenship. Therefore, phrases like human rights, international human rights, or Universal Declaration of Human Rights were grouped into the category/code 'human rights', while phrases like global citizenship, global citizen, world citizen, or citizen of the world were grouped into the category/code 'global citizenship'. All instances of each category were counted.

Findings

Human rights

Although social studies content standards in all 50 states and Washington, D.C. mentioned, in one form or another, human rights as listed in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, 13 states do not use the term *human rights* in their social studies standards. Standards of the 38 states and D.C. that include the term mention it to different degrees. For example, unlike the California standards that mention human rights 81 times or the New Jersey standards that use the term 88 times, the state standards of Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Iowa, Missouri, Montana, New Mexico, Tennessee, Vermont, and Virginia only mention it once. Not only do the standards of these 10 states mention human rights only once, some standards do not require direct operationalisation of the term, using it instead in an auxiliary role. For example, Virginia standards mention the term once, as a part of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights: 'The student will apply social science skills to understand World War II and its worldwide impact by ...e) examining ...the creation of international cooperative organisations and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights' (Virginia, 2015, n/p, WH11.11). In the Georgia 2nd Grade Standards for

Excellence we find 'Describe the lives and contributions of historical figures in Georgia history ... Jimmy Carter (leadership and human rights)' (Georgia, 2016, p. 13, SS2H1). In the standards of three states, Alabama, Arizona, and Iowa, the term is mentioned in the introduction or glossary but no individual standard refers to human rights:

In seventh grade, students will explore global perspectives on contemporary issues and worldwide interdependence. The interconnected world we live in today requires that Iowa students be well-educated about worldwide issues to cultivate diplomacy, effective citizenship, and global competitiveness. Students could examine challenges facing the world community such as hunger, population, conflict, global environmental challenges, human rights, poverty, energy scarcity, global health, education, immigration, globalization, and other political, economic, social, and ecological concerns. (Iowa, n/d, p. 28)

State standards differ significantly not only in the number of times the term *human rights* is mentioned but also in the way social studies teachers are expected to use this concept. Some states' requirements are limited to very basic learning activities that aim to introduce human rights:

Describe the response of the world community to human rights violations, including the response to apartheid in South Africa. (The World After World War II: 1950-1989). For example: Cambodia, Rwanda, Darfur. (Minnesota, 2011, p. 135)

The student is expected to: ... (D) identify the influence of ideas such as separation of powers, checks and balances, liberty, equality, democracy, popular sovereignty, human rights, constitutionalism, and nationalism on political revolutions. (Texas, 2018 n/p)

Explain how international rules and laws protect individual rights and protect the common good, such as the U.N. Declaration of Human Rights, European Union membership, Geneva Convention. (Maryland, p. 2)

Most states, however, expect students to be engaged in learning activities that develop high-level thinking and critical thinking skills when they study human rights:

Global Human Rights: Content Standard-Analyse human rights violations and propose solutions to them: Human Rights Issues: child soldiers, forced migration, gender inequality, genocide, human trafficking, political refugees. (Hawaii, 2018, p. 10. SS.WH.8.7.2)

Assess human rights policies of the United States and other countries. (Florida, 2014, p. 48, SS.912.C.4.3)

Assess the state of human rights around the world as described in the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights. (Minnesota, 2011, p. 95)

Construct an argument to explain how the expansion of slavery violated human rights and contradicted American ideals. (New Jersey, 2020, p. 486, 1.8.CivicsHR.3.c)

Evaluate the impact of perspectives, civic virtues, democratic principles, constitutional rights, and human rights on addressing issues and problems in society. (Oklahoma, n/d, p, 731. A.9-12.2)

No standards identify the study of human rights as a separate discipline or curriculum. The most recent New Jersey standards of 2020, however, introduced the course that looks closest to a human rights curriculum. The multilevel multidisciplinary curriculum *Civic, Government and Human Rights* explains that:

Human rights are universal, inalienable, and interdependent claims that derive from the inherent worth of every individual. They are the birthright of every human being regardless of race, sex, nationality, ethnicity, language, religion, or any other status. Human rights include the right to life and liberty, freedom from slavery and torture, freedom of opinion and expression, the right to work and education, and many more. These universal rights are not granted by states or governments but are inherent to every person. (New Jersey, 2020, 8)

According to this curriculum, students are expected to demonstrate understandings that:

- Individuals may be different, but all have the same basic human rights-by the end of grade 2;
- It is the responsibility of individuals and institutions at the state, national, and international levels to promote human rights-by the end of grade 5;
- Social and political systems have protected and denied human rights (to varying degrees) throughout time-by the end of-by the end of grade 8;
- Human rights serve as a foundation for democratic beliefs and practices-by the end of grade 12.

At the time of the study, 19 states explicitly identified in the texts of their standards or in supplementary materials that they are applying the C3 Framework for Social Studies State Standards (2013). The most important innovative aspect of the Framework is the emphasis on informed disciplined inquiry as the primary approach in social studies instruction. Although limited, the obvious impact of the new framework on recommendations of how to teach about human rights is demonstrated in the South Carolina Social Studies College-and Career-Ready Standards (2019):

Global Interdependence

Compare the global movements that resulted in the advancement or limitation of human rights during the 20th and 21st centuries.

This indicator was developed to encourage inquiry into the changes in human rights and social hierarchies. This indicator also prompts inquiry into the Women's Suffrage Movement, the Civil Rights Movement, the independence movements in Africa, Asia, and India, and the end of Apartheid in South Africa. (p. 58. 6.5.CO.)

In 2000, researchers attributed the lack of exposure to human rights education in the United States to the fact that the concept of human rights was not culturally related to domestic issues: Human rights violations were thought of as something that occurred in other countries, not inside the US (Banks, 2000). Despite the increased coverage, state standards still refer to human rights issues, particularly human rights violations, as things that happened long ago and mostly outside of the United States. Sometimes, however, the specific context is blurred, and human rights are referred to as an abstract construct:

A. Analyze causes and patterns of human rights violations and genocide and suggest resolutions for current and future conflicts. (Missouri, n/d, p. 9, 9-12.WH.5.PC)

Evaluate standards, conflicts and issues related to universal human rights and their impact on public policy. (New Mexico, 2009, p. 8)

Human rights and global citizenship

I found references to the idea of global citizenship in the social studies standards of 15 states. The concept was expressed by the use of such phrases as *global citizen*, *global citizenship*, *world citizen*, *citizen of the world*, and *the member of the world community*.

Distinguish and apply the powers and responsibilities of global citizens, interest groups and the media in a variety of governmental and nongovernmental contexts. (21st century skills). (Iowa, n/d, p. 29, SS.7.15)

Analyze the importance of civic participation as a citizen of the world: ...b. Analyze the concept of a global citizen and how the awareness and responsibilities have changed during the information age. (Maryland, n/d, p. 2)

Educators want students to care deeply about the quality of life in their community, the nation, and their world. The desire of educators is to have students recognize their responsibility as members of the global community to participate ethically and with humanity in their interactions with various nations, cultures, and peoples. (California, 2016, p. 15)

In most cases when the phrase that conveys the idea of global citizenship was used, there was minimal or no explanation of the concept. The only example in which the standards developers made efforts to provide an explanation of the term was in the South Carolina Social Studies College-and Career-Ready Standards (2019) for 3rd Grade:

Enduring Understanding: Global citizenship begins with the initial understanding of Earth's major features and how geographic information is used to learn about those features. (p. 24)

Gr. 3. Global Citizenship–The Global Citizenship theme encourages the study of the roles and responsibilities of being an active member in a global society. Responsible global citizens understand global issues, understand perspectives of global interconnectedness, and advocate for cultural understanding to create international cooperation. (p. 97)

Only 10 states mention human rights and global citizenship (or related phrases) in their standards: Arizona, California, Connecticut, Iowa, Maryland, Mississippi, New Jersey, New York, South Carolina, and Vermont. Although there are attempts to connect global citizenship to discourses beyond economics, culture, or diversity (for example, the sociology section of the 2018 Mississippi standards asks students to formulate and explain the values associated with global citizenship in regard to political action), all reviewed standards except those in Maryland failed to demonstrate or encourage connections between human rights and global citizenship. No explanation, description or clarification of the term *human rights* includes or refers to global citizenship or related terms. By the same token, the term *global citizenship* is deprived of its human rights component. The only state whose standards demonstrate a clear connection between human rights and global citizenship is Maryland. In the 'Protecting Rights and Maintaining Order' subsection of the Maryland Social Studies Standards and Framework for Grades 6-8, students are tasked with the following:

1. Examine the rights and responsibilities of being a citizen of the world.
 - a. Justify the responsibilities associated with certain human rights in a global society such as a commitment to world peace and the elimination of poverty.
 - b. Explain how international rules and laws protect individual rights and protect the common good, such as the U.N. Declaration of Human Rights, European Union membership, Geneva Convention. (n/d, p. 2)

A formal connection between global citizenship and human rights can be observed in the Vermont standards, titled *Vermont Global Citizenship-College, Career and Civic Life (C3) Framework for Social Studies State Standards (2018)*; everything in the standards is formally connected to the idea of global citizenship, including a graduation indicator that says that by the end of grade 12, students will be able to 'analyze the impact and the appropriate roles of personal interests and perspectives on the application of civic virtues, democratic principles, constitutional rights, and human rights' (p. 5). It is also important to note that however formal this connection is, the fact that the concept of human rights is included in a graduation indicator means that this concept or its components in the form of various rights listed in the Universal Declaration must be studied to meet the requirements of this indicator.

Discussion

The purpose of this paper is to examine the connections between human rights and global citizenship in state social studies standards. More specifically, the study investigated whether and to what extent state standards used the human rights

framework and context to advance the idea of global citizenship in social studies curricula. In 2020, social studies standards of 38 states and D.C. mentioned the term *human rights* in their standards. This is disappointing, but an improvement on 2019, when human rights were mentioned in the standards of 36 states (Carson, 2019). Although the number of mentions does not necessarily correspond with the real exposure of social studies curricula to a human rights narrative in class, even this small amount of progress demonstrates the efforts that curriculum developers are making to advance a human rights framework in their states. New Jersey standards, which are aligned with the C3 Framework, mention human rights 88 times, introducing the concept in all disciplines and using it as a connecting theme throughout the text. Similarly, the California history social studies framework mentions human rights 81 times and dedicates several pages to an explanation of the importance of human rights and HRE in everyday life.

Although several states bring up human rights as a part of a curricular topic or a separate curricular topic in middle or high school social studies ('Diversity, human rights, and social justice' in Connecticut, 'Civil rights, human rights, and civil liberties' in Massachusetts, 'Human rights violations' in New York, 'Civil and human rights' in Ohio), only New Jersey mentions human rights in the title of its course: *Civics, Government, and Human Rights: Civic and Political Institutions* (New Jersey, 2018). This is the clearest indication of a potential human rights curriculum. Almost half of the states do not mention human rights or mention them only once. More substantial analysis is needed. Is it this lack of interest in a human rights paradigm that disincentivises the development of a HRE epistemology or pedagogy? Or is it a lack of knowledge and specific methodology that discourages education stakeholders from advancing robust, sustainable human rights curricula?

The analysis demonstrates a trend in using a human rights discourse to engage students in critical thinking and learning activities. This trend is particularly observable in social studies standards of the states that are applying the inquiry-based C3 Framework. This is a significant development not only for the advancement of a more robust transformative human rights education but also for the advancement of transformative critical global citizenship education. Research shows that teachers treat global citizenship as a controversial issue, using the inquiry approach, comparative techniques, discussions, and debates to teach about global citizenship in class (Kirkwood-Tucker, 2012; Kopish, 2017; Leduc, 2013; Merryfield, 2008; Rapoport, 2013). A broader use of inquiry, critical analysis and synthesis, evaluative comparison and other research-based techniques in teaching about human rights can potentially have a positive effect on teaching critical global citizenship.

The gradually increasing visibility of human rights and the expanding human rights discourse in standards also signal a shift toward an acceptance of the view that human rights violation is still a problem in the United States. It also signals a recognition of the need for a broader global perspective in teaching citizenship: This was observed and described in the 2019 study (Carson, 2019). This promising trend, however, did not produce a significant beneficial effect on the broader inclusion of global citizenship or global citizenship-related concepts in standards. Fifteen states include the concept of global citizenship (also termed *global citizen*, *world citizen*, or *citizen of the world*) in their social studies standards. Clear progress has been made since 2009, when only two states included this concept (Rapoport, 2009). Vermont social studies standards developers even included *global citizenship* in the title of

their standards (Vermont, 2018). Arizona (2018) and California (2016) standards expect students to recognise and practice their roles and responsibilities as both American and global citizens; this is a significant declaration, one that stands in contrast to one of the oldest prejudices against global citizenship as something un-American, unpatriotic, or part of the subversive agenda of international organisations (Myers, 2006). Some standards recommend using global citizenship to engage students in learning activities that focus on the development of critical thinking skills. South Carolina standards provide an explanation of who a global citizen is, a significant step in overcoming one of the major obstacles that many educators complained about: an unclear definition of global citizens (Koyama, 2015; Wood, 2008).

The analysis demonstrates, however, that standards still fall short of demonstrating a clear connection between human rights and global citizenship or utilizing a human rights discourse and paradigm to advocate for a broader exposure and acceptance of global citizenship. Out of 10 states that use both concepts in their standards, only Maryland social studies standards for grade 7 connect human rights and global citizenship, asking students to examine the rights and responsibilities of a citizen of the world by justifying the responsibilities associated with human rights in a global society (Maryland, n/d, p. 2). Why did other standards fail to demonstrate a connection between human rights and global citizenship? In some cases (Arizona, 2018; Iowa, 2015) these two terms were placed so close to each other that it seemed that any specialist in global education would seize the opportunity. The reason the opportunity has not yet been seized is probably the failure of standards developers to fully comprehend the nature and extent of global citizenship, and to provide not only an ethical but also a normative framework to apply human rights beyond national citizenship (Abdi & Shultz, 2008). In other words, human rights is seen as a relatively narrow topic that only applies to specific nations with dictatorial regimes or events (for example, the Holocaust) but does not transcend this. By the same token, global citizenship is not operationalised as a real citizenship that gives membership status to individuals, grants individuals an identity, encourages a degree of participation and provides an individual with rights and obligations (Abowitz & Harnish, 2006), but only as a construct that carries some emotional or ethical value. Even when standards expect students to recognise rights and responsibilities of a global citizen (New Jersey, 2020; South Carolina, 2019), rights are interpreted as something granted by a national government without reference to human rights or documents like the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

Conclusion

Historically, social studies remains an area that includes global education. Several states are introducing elective world/global studies courses, but the vast majority of US students learn about global issues in traditional social studies classes. Without connecting elements of global education, such as human rights education, peace education, or global citizenship education, social studies, curricula fail to develop students' global-mindedness or problematise local, regional, or national issues through the optics of the global. By not connecting human rights and global citizenship, standards decontextualise both. It is particularly harmful for GCE, a much less developed area than HRE in the country's social studies programmes.

Schools in the United States were late to introduce a global perspective in their curricula. The decentralised system of education makes it very difficult,

sometimes impossible, to coordinate any initiatives, let alone an initiative that looks politically and ideologically suspicious. Despite progress in incorporating a global perspective in school curricula over the last 10-15 years, a number of critical elements, such as the two discussed in this article, are still treated as separate entities that are rarely intertwined in the global education paradigm. Although we keep using the term 'framework' in relation to human rights and global citizenship, it is sometimes difficult to define these frameworks as combinations of specific content and pedagogies, particularly in the latter case.

Content standards remain principal curricular documents in individual states. School district curriculum developers and teachers use them for everyday instructions. What is not in the standards rarely finds its way to a classroom. Underrepresentation of a concept or failure to systematise several related concepts into a workable framework not only makes it harder to advance the framework itself but also minimises the effect of teaching individual concepts. Global education in the United States can only benefit if all its elements, including human rights education and global citizenship education, are adequately presented in state standards.

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