

Global Education in the United States: A Retrospective, 1976-2000

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"The flattening of the world...has presented us with new opportunities, new challenges, new partners but also, alas, new dangers, particularly as Americans...It is imperative that we be the best global citizens we can be..." (p. 468).

Thomas L. Friedman (2005)

Introduction

The subject of "global education" has ebbed and flowed in the United States over the past thirty years even though the movement's roots date back to the 1960s. This manuscript offers a look at various notions and definitions of global education, then identifies advocates for global education, and—in the process—reviews the literature of the movement from 1976-2000.

According to Kniep (1985a), increased interest in global education first began in the United States in the 1960s. Popular thinkers as well as scholarly writers raised the issue of globalization. Events such as the consideration of North American free trade caused people to consider the international environment. Fuller (1970) used the metaphor "spaceship Earth" to convey a vision of the planet and its inhabitants as a closed system requiring all working together for survival and maintenance. Earlier McLuhan (1964) detailed how the media have transformed the world into a "global village." Reischauer (1974) and others told of the world in the process of becoming a single great mass of humanity—"a global community" (p. 3). Technology and progress were encouraged and desired until Carson (1962) wrote her best seller detailing the negative effects of pesticides. Ehrlich (1968) talked extensively about unmanageable world population growth. Toffler (1970) recounted the unsettling way that change occurs before its impact can be absorbed. So, as writers penned their warnings and as world events occurred and changed public awareness and opinion, global education began to take form. As a result, some states and professional organizations developed position statements on global education.

Definitions of Global Education

In the literature there are many definitions of global or international education. In fact the *Encyclopedia of Educational Research* (1982) indicated global and international education are often interchanged and (either one) is "the purposeful movement of ideas and scholars across cultural and geographic boundaries..." (p. 946). There is not a precise and meaningful definition of global education for every situation. Goodlad (1979) wrote there are no "readily available, comprehensive, self-contained definitions, descriptions, and analyses of what global education is" (p. 3). According to Smith (1994) in his "brief history" of the field:

During the past four decades global and international studies education moved from the periphery into the

mainstream of American elementary and secondary education. Hundreds of global and international studies projects launched teacher education programs and published thousands of articles, books and supplemental materials....Rationales, frameworks, and lists of goals and objectives abound which take on the task of defining what is meant by global education. (p.16)

The literature includes the following terms related to global education: global awareness, international awareness, worldly-minded, global perspective, global understanding, global knowledge, international education, global or world studies, and cross-cultural studies. Earlier, Lamy (1983) reported that:

Global or international education has been defined, in general terms, as all education which has anything to do with the interactions between sovereign states or non-state actors (e.g., transnational enterprises, international organizations) with international concerns. A more specific definition is dependent upon the goals, priorities, values, and purposes of the defining party. (p. 10)

In spite of the variety of definitions, however, the key term is global education.

One can approach a working definition of global education for use here in this paper by looking across some other offerings. The Michigan Department of Education (1978), an early pioneer and major proponent of global education, focused on two aspects of the subject and defined global education as:

...the lifelong growth in understanding through study and participation, of the world community and the interdependency of its people and systems—social, cultural, racial, economic, linguistic, technological, and ecological. Global education requires an understanding of the values and the priorities of the many cultures of the world as well as the acquisition of basic concepts and principles related to the world community. Global education leads to implementation and application of the global perspective in striving for just and peaceful solutions to world problems. (p. 3)

In this definition global perspective and global understanding or knowledge are stressed. Other writers emphasized the same components of global education. The following paragraphs will highlight "global perspective," the first of two major parts of global education.

Global Perspective

The literature includes a number of studies in which the global perspectives of educators have been examined (for example, Findlay, 1988; Kolo, 1993; Meeks, 1992; O'Malley, 1983; Richards, 1979; Stamp, 1994; Wieber, 1982).

O'Malley's work (1983) emphasized educators' (specifically administrators') global perspectives in focusing on a related term, "worldmindedness." She defined this "as a value orientation toward the human race rather than knowledge or interest in international relations" (p. 2). She summarized who the world-minded person is by writing

I submit the following: This person has become or is becoming an integrated individual, skilled in the art of human relations and conscious of the wide variety of behaviors in the world, rooted in family, country and culture but, at the same time, able to identify with people of other countries and cultures. Informed about the contemporary world scene, the world-minded individual is concerned about improving the conditions of the human family. Buttressed by a positive faith or philosophy of life whose basic tenets can be seen in a universal sense, the world-minded person believes that global cooperation and education are desirable as well as possible and wants to promote them. (pp. 23-24)

Later, Meeks (1992) in his Texas study attempted to show the relationship between educators' global perspectives and their willingness to adopt components of global education. He concluded that these educators "see the value of including elements of global education into the curriculum to meet the demands of a changing world" (p. 63). Furthermore, he found global perspective is "an attitude which educators possess in varying degrees" (p. 63). Finally, he offered a list of suggestions to enhance educators' global perspectives.

A.H. Wilson (1994) stated: "Teaching toward a global future, then...requires teachers who will teach toward openmindedness. To do that, teachers require...perceptual understanding...(p. 54). Other researchers, Bruce, Podemski, and Anderson (1991) have recommended including a "global perspective" or perceptual understanding in teacher education programs. However, they noted the possible confusion of global perspective, global education and international education. "Teacher educators may be unaware of what global education means and how it differs from similar educational topics, such as international education. Moreover, definitions of the terms *international education* and *global education* overlap" (p. 22). Indeed Kobus (1983) acknowledged some confusion over the three terms, international, global education, and global perspective, which were being employed interchangeably. She, as referenced by Meeks (1992), identified some discrepancies in the meanings of the terms:

This choice of designation is a significant one because it is the point of divergence in defining the field and therefore in planning curriculum, programs and teacher inservice training. Both international and global education imply a specifically delineated structured

discipline typically assigned to social studies. International education is based on the study of various geographical and cultural areas of the world; global education incorporates this content but views world areas as parts of larger, interacting, interdependent systems expressed and studied through global issues. A global perspectives approach, on the other hand, is based not on implementing new courses or extensively redesigning curricular content, but on the infusion and integration into the curriculum at all levels of an awareness of emerging global concepts such as those of change, conflict, communication, and interdependency. Furthermore, global perspective implies dealing with affective content and stresses student acquisition of competencies which incorporate essential knowledge, skills, and attitudes. (pp.10-11)

According to Tucker and Cistone (1991), a global perspective transcends courses on world geography and world history; "it requires a holistic approach that gives students an understanding of themselves and their relationship to the world community" (p. 3).

As noted by Merryfield (1991) in a status report involving American teachers, the National Council for the Social Studies in 1982 called for global perspectives in all social studies education, defining "global perspectives as developing the knowledge, skills, and attitudes needed to live effectively in a world possessing limited natural resources and characterized by ethnic diversity, cultural pluralism, and increasing interdependence" (p. 11).

Indeed promoting a "global perspective" is a key goal of global education according to numerous researchers (Alladin, 1989; L.F. Anderson, 1992; Case, 1993; Iglitzin, 1984; Kniep, 1985b; K.A. Tye, 1990). Hanvey (1976, reprinted 1979) authored the classic work to date: *An Attainable Global Perspective*. In it he offered the landmark five dimensions of the global perspective paradigm:

1. Perspective consciousness—the "recognition or awareness on the part of the individual that he or she has a view of the world that is not universally shared...and that others have views of the world that are profoundly different from one's own" (p. 4).
2. "State of the Planet"—the "awareness of prevailing world conditions and developments, including emergent conditions and trends, e.g., population growth, migrations, economic conditions, resources and physical environment, political developments, science and technology, etc." (p. 6).
3. Cross-cultural—the "awareness of the diversity of ideas and practices to be found in human societies around the world, of how such ideas and practices compare, and including some limited recognition of how the ideas and ways of one's own society might be viewed from other vantage points" (p. 8).

4. Knowledge of global dynamics—"some modest comprehension of key traits and mechanisms of the world system, with emphasis on theories and concepts that may increase intelligent consciousness of global change" (p. 13).
5. Awareness of human choices—"some awareness of the problems of choice confronting individuals, nations, and the human species as consciousness and knowledge of how the global system expands" (p. 22).

Significantly, and certainly with a large measure of humility, Hanvey described his account as: "a beginning effort to define some elements of what we call a global perspective—to flesh out some of the things that we need to know and understand if we are to cope with the challenges of an increasingly interdependent world" (p. 1).

Case (1993) assumed Hanvey's model and identified the perceptual aspect that "describes an orientation or outlook...global perspective refers to the capacity to see the 'whole picture' whether focusing on a local or an international matter" (p. 318). Furthermore, according to Case (1993), the perceptual serves as the basis of the observation that global education is a way of looking at the world.

Earlier Tye (1990) in his introduction to the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development's *Global Education: From Thought to Action*, said global education "involves perspective taking—seeing things through the eyes and minds of others—and it means the realization that while individuals and groups may view life differently, they also have common needs and wants" (p. 5).

Integration of Understanding with Global Education

Although "perspective" is a major dimension of global education and one which has filled the literature, another aspect is understanding or substantive knowledge. In a statement issued by the Michigan Department of Education in 1978, both perspective and understanding of knowledge were included.

Hanvey (1979) offered a definition that includes both perspective and knowledge. This statement has had a significant influence on the field of global education. In it he stated:

Education for a global perspective is that learning which enhances the individual's ability to understand his or her condition in the community and the world and improves the ability to make effective judgments [author's italics]. It includes the study of nations, cultures, and civilizations, including our own pluralistic society and the societies of other peoples, with a focus on understanding how these are all interconnected and how they change, and on the individual's responsibility in this process. It provides the individual with a realistic perspective on world issues, problems and prospects, and an awareness of the relationships between an individual's enlightened

self-interest and the concerns of people elsewhere in the world. (p. i)

A decade later, Tye (1990) said global education also "involves learning about those problems and issues that cut across national boundaries, and about the interconnectedness of systems—ecological, cultural, economic, political, and technological" (p. 5). Wilson (1994) and Case (1991) indicated global education can be divided into four sub-areas, two of which are perceptual [or global perspective] and substantive knowledge. Wilson (1994) noted that "a knowledge base is critical for teachers, beginning with what is going on wherein the world, the locations of places on a world map and a familiarity with current events" (p. 54).

Kniep's (1986) account of global education primarily reflected the substantive dimension as well, although he referenced the perceptual dimension at several points. For example, he mentioned that global education will change students' perspectives on their own worldview and contribute to a sense of interconnectedness (pp. 438-439). However, the title of his article revealed his major point of emphasis: "Defining a Global Education by Its Content." He identified four elements that serve as the core of global education: Human values, global system, global issues and problems, and global history.

Likewise Wieber (1982) emphasized the knowledge component as he assessed the global knowledge of sixty-two teachers in a study of an American-sponsored overseas school. He identified a group of thirteen global issues (energy, food, health, population, race and ethnicity, arts and culture, distribution of natural characteristics, international monetary and trade arrangements, human rights, wars and armaments, environment, relations among states, religious issues), defined each one, and surveyed the teachers regarding what they knew about each issue.

Tye and Tye (1992) offered another and current definition of global education which closely resembles earlier attempts. In fact, the first part of the definition is the same as what was included in Tye's (1990) work; namely: it "involves learning about those problems and issues that cut across national boundaries, and about the interconnectedness of systems—ecological, cultural, economic, political, technological" (p. 5). Indeed the knowledge component of global education is equally important to the perceptual or perspective component reviewed earlier from the literature.

Rationale for Global Education

The field of global education is popular in the literature; and, global knowledge is an important dimension of global education. Researchers have advanced reasons why global education is timely and why it should be taught at all levels in schools in the United States.

C.M Anderson (1979) submitted that global education was important for the following reasons:

1. The U.S. is rapidly being drawn into a complex global society with an even greater interdependence among nations and peoples.

2. There is an urgent need to educate citizens in this country to global understandings [knowledge] and responsibilities.
3. There is little or no evidence to indicate that Americans are becoming more internationally minded. Indeed many observers seem to think that Americans are becoming more provincial.
4. The schools are the most logical place to begin preparing Americans to function successfully as citizens of a country that must provide world leadership.
5. The educational enterprise, from the U.S. Office of Education [now the Department of Education] to state departments of education, to the colleges and universities, to secondary and elementary schools, to preschools are, with few notable exceptions, almost totally provincial in outlook and programs.
6. There is a need for a dramatic shift in emphasis, so that students at all levels and in all disciplines will have an opportunity to develop the understandings [knowledge] and skills required to be literate in a global society. (p. 111)

The President's Commission on Foreign Language and International Studies (1979) stated: "International content should be a part of the teaching of all subjects, and within the capabilities of all teachers. This requires priority in both curriculum development and the professional development of teachers" (pp. 2-3).

Since Anderson and others' pleas, some educational entities have attempted to promote global education at various levels at selected institutions.

L.F. Anderson (1990) also went beyond a definition in his research. He set forth a rationale that includes a three-fold argument in support of global education:

- (1) in the past two decades three basic historical changes in the social structure of the world have converged;
- (2) because of this conjuncture of historical trends, American society became more globalized in the 1970s and 1980s and will likely become even more so in the 1990s and beyond; and,
- (3) education mirrors society in the sense that social change generates educational change. (p. 14)

In other words, Anderson emphasized that global interdependence is rapidly increasing, American society (especially the economy and culture) is more globalized, and education must change and become more globalized. To not make education more global would be "intellectually stupid and socially irresponsible because we would be putting at risk the children we love, the students we teach, and the nation we cherish" (p. 33). In his discussion, he noted the global interdependence in economics:

The world's once largely separated local, national and regional economies have been progressively incorporated into a single global economy....A rapidly growing portion of humankind has become dependent

as both workers and consumers on these world markets....International organizations have developed that make and shape trade, monetary, and credit policy at the global level, for example, the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade [GATT], the International Monetary Fund, and the World Bank. (p. 15)

The world's nations are growing increasingly interdependent as evidenced by the European Community, the North American Free Trade Agreements, and Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries. For the United States, according to Reich (1992), "the global economy is tightly linking our citizens to the citizens of other nations—linkages as strong as, if not stronger than, the economic connections binding us to one another within our borders" (p. 320).

Global education, according to Osunde (1984), emphasized the idea of "global society and the interdependence of nations and peoples" (p. 149). Indeed the present generation lives in a world society marked by a plethora of interdependent activities. Consequently, the reality is the United States is becoming more globalized, and the world is becoming more interconnected and interdependent.

Global Education in the United States

The United States has no real choice in deciding whether or not to globalize education. As C.C. Anderson (1982) stated, "The only real issues are how, and with what degree of quality, and how rapidly will American education become more globalized" (p. 161).

Today more and more colleges seem to be demanding or encouraging that students opt for global education-related courses in the undergraduate programs. According to Pickert (1992),

colleges and universities in the U.S. are incorporating their goals for international education into campus-wide strategic plans and enriching academic disciplines with a comparative and international view. Institutions are revising curricula to alert all students to the languages and cultures of other countries, while creating faculty development opportunities that stress an international outlook. (p. 61)

According to Swift (1980), global education is a natural, holistic, interdisciplinary way or relating the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and experiences young people will need to live in tomorrow's global community. Global education aims to increase student awareness of cultural, political, and economic interdependence in the world of the past, present, and the future. Gilliom (1981) maintained that global education must be designed to cultivate a worldview and to develop knowledge, skills and attitudes needed to live effectively in a culturally diverse world characterized by increasing economic and social interdependency.

Moreover, students need to learn that there is more to the United States than being a part of a family, state, and nation. Since nations are functioning much more interdependently today than ever before—as exemplified by

the Iraqi Freedom Coalition Force, the G-7 or 8 group of nations, the European Community, GATT, the expansion of NATO—it is time students learn about these group as fellow participants in shaping a larger human culture. Turner (1974) accurately foresaw this phenomenon in an earlier work. Students should be given the opportunity to explore the realm of other ideals and values by being exposed to various thought patterns and philosophies (C.C. Anderson, 1982). Global education should be given an important place in colleges and universities, particularly teachers' colleges and schools of education. Since much of educational policy has been based on public expectations, the public—through state legislatures and other law-or policy-making bodies—should expect the colleges and universities to teach global concepts to students; and these same legislative bodies should require a more global citizen as a result of public schooling experiences. According to L.F. Anderson (1992), as the world becomes more interconnected and as society in the United States becomes more deeply integrated into the world system, pressure will be brought to bear on education in the U.S. to globalize its curriculum. The President's Commission on Foreign Language and International Studies (1979) had recommended that if America's children are to function successfully as adults in the twenty-first century, they must grow up "with more knowledge about our interdependent world, keener awareness of other peoples, and greater sensitivity to those people's attitudes and customs" (p. 48). Private Initiatives Promoting Global Education

There is a need for global education as evidenced in the literature as well as from contributions offered by two private groups, the National Council for the Social Studies and The American Forum for Global Education. Both groups put forth major efforts to help educators and policymakers determine what should be in a viable global education program.

The National Council for the Social Studies (1994) prepared a major source document, *Curriculum Standards for Social Studies*, that impacts the aims and purposes of social studies and global education programs. These standards define what students should learn in social studies programs in grades K-12. The standards are noted in the following ten general strands or themes (see p. 15):

- I Culture
- II Time, Continuity, and Change
- III People, Places, and Environment
- IV Individual Development and Identity
- V Individuals, Groups, and Institutions
- VI Power, Authority, and Governance
- VII Production, Distribution, and Consumption
- VIII Science, Technology, and Society
- IX Global Connections
- X Civic Ideals and Practices

Indeed some of these strands relate directly (for example, "global connections") and others indirectly to global education. "Global connections" are defined below.

The realities of global interdependence require understanding the increasingly important and diverse global connections among world societies and the frequent tension between national interests and global priorities. Students will need to be able to address such international issues as health care, the environment, human rights, economic competition and interdependence, age-old ethnic enmities, and political and military alliances. (p.xii)

All ten strands are interrelated, and they draw from all the social science disciplines and other related fields of scholarly study. In other words, "global connections" is related to: culture; time, continuity, and change; power, authority, and governance; production, distribution, and consumption; and, civic ideals and practices. To fully understand one strand, one has to understand the other related strands.

The other major contributor to setting standards was The American Forum for Global Education whose authors, Collins, Czarra, and Smith (1996), presented *Guidelines for Global and International Studies Education*. This document was intended for a national audience who—even though academic standards for global and international studies had previously been identified and noted in some disciplines [social studies]—still did not know "which global issues should be included or what U.S. students should be expected to know and understand about the world" (p. 1).

Furthermore, these authors were concerned with other key issues:

What skills and attitudes will our students need to confront future problems, which most assuredly will be global in scope? How are global and international dimensions of learning being addressed by the new [discipline-based] academic standards? What do scholars from the international relations disciplines and experienced practitioners of global education believe students should know, and how can these insights best be incorporated into existing standards? What global and international education guidelines are appropriate for pre-collegiate education? How will schools implement these guidelines when confronted with so many other problems? What should students know about the United States and its connections to the world? (pp.1-6)

Conclusion

Today, as evidenced in the literature, it is generally agreed that global education is relevant and necessary. Recall Boyer (1983) said:

If education cannot help students see beyond themselves and better understand the interdependent nature of our world, each new generation will remain ignorant and its capacity to live comfortably and responsibly will be dangerously diminished. (p. 4)

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