

Frames and Factors Influencing the Development of Citizenship Education in the Philippines

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Rationale for citizenship education

In a country where citizens have a strong aspiration to live abroad, where it is normal for households to have relatives working overseas; and where citizens' rational decision-making, is clouded by their vulnerabilities to disinformation, as seen in recent election results (Arugay & Baquisal, 2022; Eusebio, 2022); citizenship education remains a challenge.

The country is never short of policies on citizenship education. The 1987 Philippine Constitution explicitly mandates all schools to "inculcate patriotism and nationalism and teach the rights and duties of citizenship to students." (Article 14, Sections 3). Previous versions of the Philippine Constitution were also explicit of this mandate to schools to teach students civic conscience, love of country, civic responsibilities, and moral character (Article 14 Section 5- 1935 Constitution; Article 15 Section 8-1973 Constitution).

Historical contexts and the development of citizenship education

Citizenship education and related concepts such as national identity, love of country, and rights and responsibilities, have been shaped by historical and socio-political factors (Baildon, Sim, & Pacudlar, 2014; Delos Reyes, 2014; Maca & Morris, 2015). The succeeding discussion shows how the development of citizenship education evolved in terms of its scope, as:

- Citizenship education as a tool for colonization
- Citizenship education as development of national identity and character
- Citizenship education as development of a disciplined citizenry
- Citizenship education as national and global citizenship
- Citizenship education as development of resilient citizens with Filipino and [Southeast] Asian identities

The Philippines has a long history of colonization by various foreign powers, more than three hundred years under the Spaniards, 48 years under Americans, and three (3) years under the Japanese. During the Spanish colonial rule, education was utilized as a tool to Christianize Filipinos (Delos Reyes, 2014; Maca & Morris, 2015). As colonized citizens, Filipinos were trained to become religious, passive, and obedient to Spanish rule. In the late 19th century, the Filipino revolutionary leaders attempted to Filipinize the education system by creating reforms and curriculum aimed to separate Filipino identity from Spain and to promote awareness of their origins (Delos Reyes, 2014). However, these reforms were never implemented due to the outbreak of the Filipino-American War in 1899.

During the American colonial rule, education was used as a tool to subjugate the Filipinos, with English as the medium of instruction. This led to the miseducation of Filipinos (Constantino, 1970), as American culture was presented as superior to their own. Consequently, Filipinos were left with a distorted sense of their own identity and history, with long-lasting effects on the country's development and people.

During the Japanese occupation, the Japanese used education as a tool for indoctrination (Duka, 2006). Their primary goal was to create a Co-Prosperity Sphere in Asia, which involved replacing Western influence with Japanese influence. They sought to make Filipinos more Asian and less American; and schools prioritized the development of Filipino and Japanese culture over American democratic ideals (Agoncillo, 1965).

In the aftermath of years of colonization, post-war leaders have consistently acknowledged the significance of citizenship formation programs to nurture a strong sense of national identity and achieve moral renewal, as our values were damaged by war. It is important to note that citizenship education at this point was focused on nation-building and linked to character education. However, these programs have failed to bring about significant changes within the education system because of the enduring influence of American colonialism and self-interest. In 1972, Ferdinand Marcos Sr. declared Martial Law, and his New Society Movement (Kilusang Bagong Lipunan) placed emphasis on creating a disciplined citizenry deceptively for the purpose of economic development, and for the extension of his term as president. Specifically, the education policies focused on three fundamental goals, (1) to foster love of country, (2) teach the duties of citizenship and develop moral character and self-discipline, and (3) develop scientific, vocational and technological efficiency. The ideals of the New Society were incorporated into social studies, particularly history and civics education (Maca & Morris, 2015). True to the movement's slogan, *Sa ikauunlad ng bayan, disiplina ang kailangan* (For the development of the country, discipline is necessary), discipline was given emphasis in Social Studies textbooks rather than freedom (Baildon, Sim, & Paculdar, 2014).

In 1986, the Filipinos staged a peaceful revolution which resulted in the ousting of Marcos Sr. from power. It paved the way for the inauguration of Corazon Aquino as the new President of the Philippines and the end of Marcos dictatorship. Under her administration, citizenship education included the following: pride in one's cultural heritage, and moral and spiritual values. Learning about the 1987 Constitution was also compulsory. During the presidency of Fidel Ramos, the 1993-1998 Medium Term Philippine Development Plan was crafted and introduced concepts such as transnational identity, migrant labor, and global citizenship, among others (Maca & Morris, 2015). The concept of citizenship, as explained in the document was no longer confined within the boundaries of the nation but was expanded across countries, i.e., the world. Moreover, the celebration of migrant labor as a solution to economic recession found its way in basic education textbooks where Overseas Filipino Workers (OFWs) were hailed as modern-day heroes.

During the administration of Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, the 2002 Basic Education Curriculum was implemented in all elementary and secondary schools in the Philippines. It aimed to promote three key objectives: (1) the development of higher and more complex learning competencies for Filipino learners, (2) the streamlining of the curriculum and integration of learning areas, and (3) the use of creative and innovative teaching approaches (Bernardo & Mendoza, 2006). The curriculum comprised five learning areas, namely English, Mathematics, Science, Filipino, and Makabayan. Makabayan was a major component of Social Studies, which integrated different subjects such as home economics, music, art, health education, and values education. In general, the curriculum aimed to promote nationalism and pride in national identity, awareness of the rights and duties of citizens, a positive attitude towards the changing world, environmental consciousness, critical thinking, and the development of a global perspective (DepEd, 2002). Makabayan emerged as a promising Filipino social studies education. However, it faced challenges due to lack of concrete steps to articulate the framework and curricular confusions in the implementation of the learning area (Agcaoili, 2015).

When the K to 12 Basic Education Program was introduced in 2012, during the administration of Benigno Aquino Jr., it aimed to develop holistic Filipino graduates who possess 21st century skills, and prepared either for higher education, middle-level skills development, employment, and entrepreneurship (SEAMEO INNOTECH (2012). The K to 12 program featured compulsory kindergarten education and two additional years of schooling in basic education. This brought about significant changes in the curriculum and pedagogy of Social Studies, and in

effect, to the citizenship education of the Philippines (Agcaoili, 2015). The program also aims to cultivate citizens with a global and local perspective, reflecting the Filipino core values of godliness (makadiyos), mindful of humanity (makatao), patriotic (makabansa), and respectful of nature (makakalikasan).

In September 2023, the Department of Education launched the revised basic education curriculum called the Matatag Curriculum (Matatag literally means strong or stable). The revision was intended for levels- Kindergarten to Grade 10 and will be implemented starting AY 2024-2025. One of its features was the implementation of a new learning area in Grade 1- 3 called Makabansa, which integrates Social Studies, Health, Physical Education and Music. Citizenship education under the Matatag curriculum is reflected in the goals of Makabansa learning area. It focuses on developing students who are “healthy, resilient, and patriotic; have awareness of and pride in their identity, as well as of their country’s history, arts and culture; and have the knowledge and skills in fulfilling their duties as responsible citizens, having the ability to contribute to the progress of their community, and country as a whole.” It is expected that good health and resilience are added ideals to patriotism, as the country and the world experienced the pandemic including other environmental or political crisis. Responsible citizenship is also directed at the goal of contributing to the progress of the community and nation. Moreover, identity is not only confined to being Filipino, but also being (Southeast)Asian and being a citizen of the world. Values education as a separate learning area in the elementary (Good Manners and Right Conduct) and high school (Values Education) is intensified and focused on socio-emotional skills such as empathy and resilience. It is believed that these values will build a strong character that will lead to social responsibility and active community participation. Peace education is also a feature of the Matatag curriculum and integrated in various learning areas across grade levels. Topics in Social Studies such as culture and intercultural relations, environmental stewardship, local, national and global processes advance peace education to live harmoniously with others. (DepEd Philippines, 2023)

It can be concluded that historical, social, political, and economic factors shape the kind of citizenship education programs the schools are expected to implement. The concept of Filipino identity is transformed and amended such that being Filipino as a constant attribute is redefined to include being Asian and being a global citizen. Qualities that describe the Filipino citizen were also modified from being disciplined to being resilient. This implies that societal demands of the time may dictate the conceptualization and scope of citizenship education.

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