Mobilizing the voices of youth: Some of what is needed for Global Citizenship Education

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Introduction

• Background
• Two faces of education
• In many ways education has contributed to a model of development that:
  • is not sustainable
  • may ignore or even work against social justice and environmental leadership, and
  • fails to balance economic growth with these larger demands of global citizenship
Complex effects

• Education is both institution and process
• Not denying importance of getting process right, I would argue importance of institution of education in addressing these issues
• Education as an institution is important
  • Because of its scale, reach, and certifying authority
  • Because of
    • What it teaches
  • Also because of
    • How it is organized
    • Who gets it and who doesn’t
    • What it doesn’t teach and what it permits
    • Roles it sets up for student
Education and the role of students

• Education as an institution is also important for the roles it sets up between student and:
  • knowledge
    • e.g., Is knowledge fixed, something to be learned as received, or something that is constructed, and which students also take part?
  • history and future
    • e.g., Is student a passive recipient or an active agent?
  • his/her local and larger communities
    • e.g., Is student to fit in to existing order or to improve it, to take what we have now and bring it closer to ideals?
  • people and communities beyond the student’s communities
    • e.g., Does student have loyalty beyond her/his birth and affiliative communities, including future generations?
  • the earth
    • e.g., Does student have obligation to earth and its creatures?
Way we have educated

So far institutionalized education has tended to

- Failed to educate for citizenship beyond nation-state
- Both over-valorize and under-valorize the individual in relation to larger communities
  - Education has mostly failed to inspire action (or even point out) implications/consequences of way we live on sustainability, social justice, environmental, future generations
  - Education has failed to imbue students with agency
- Instead education has often imbued Passivity or Substitutes (e.g., nationalism or consumerism) or to Exclude
- Be uncharismatic
- Not deal well with need for meaning, belonging and affiliation with something bigger
- Not deal or deal badly with apparent human need for an “other”
What is needed

- Educational institutions & processes that are:
  - Inclusive
  - Reflexive & critical
  - Agentic
  - Charismatic

- That promote
  - Empathy and broader identifications
  - Development of economic capabilities
  - Balance
Discussion