

GLOBAL THEMES IN THE SOCIAL STUDIES CURRICULUM OF GREEK PRIMARY EDUCATION: THE CASE OF THE 1982 AND 2000 REFORMS

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Abstract – *This study features a content analysis of the Greek primary school social studies curriculum of two consecutive educational reforms—those of 1982 and of 2000—both of which are used in schools today. The purpose of the study is to determine if there are global themes in the curricula of both reforms, and to compare which of the reforms includes the most references regarding global themes. The analysis revealed that even though the majority of references address national orientations, both of the reforms contain references to global themes; however, the 1982 reform has more references than that of the year 2000. It is recommended that countries in the European Union and beyond revisit their curricula in order to enhance global orientations and international perspectives, especially in the area of social studies, so that students are better able to make the leap from being national citizens to becoming ‘cosmo-citizens’.*

Conceptualizing globalization and global education

Globalization has recently received a great deal of emphasis even though remarkable attention to international matters has been given after World War II. Various recent developments, however, have brought about a new consciousness that individuals, nations, and societies constitute an integral part of the planet. Such developments include: universalization of education, realization that humanity lives on a single planet Earth and that we all constitute an extended family, concern about the ecology of the planet, tremendous development in information and communication technologies, the advent of ‘global village’ and the fact that there has been a world wide growth of economic, political, cultural, technological, and ecological systems (Billeh, 1999; Flouris, 2001).

Globalization means different things to different groups of people depending on whether they are governmental officials, business leaders, teachers, unemployed groups, human rights activists, environmentalists, and so on. Different groups view globalization as good or bad, positive or negative, a form of exploitation or freedom. Thus, values are key to assessing the impact of globalization on people, cultures and societies. Among the varieties of definitions

we list below some of the most common ones with the intent to differentiate the term globalization from the term global education, which is of most importance in the framework of this study.

The term globalization refers to the concepts of ‘the compression of the world and the intensification of the consciousness of the world as a whole’ (Featherstone et al., 1995, p. 50). Another definition of globalization makes reference to ‘the acceleration and intensification of interaction and integration among the people, companies, and governments of different nations’ (Rothenberg, 2003, p.1). Globalization is also viewed as ‘a multi-facet set of processes which include not only the changes which have flowed from the new information technologies and opening up of markets, but also new concepts which mean that shrinking space, shrinking time and disappearing borders are linking people’s lives more deeply, more intensely and more immediately than ever before (Power, 2000, p. 152). Thus, globalization’s ever growing and opposing parameters, as motivated by economic forces and directed by communications, seems to link individuals, societies and cultures across the globe with close interconnection and closeness. In some ways it accentuates interdependence among institutions and societies and in other ways it causes reaction and rejection. Globalization seems to potentially promise—even guarantee—international relatedness, higher standards of living as well as forms of freedom but at the same time it potentially threatens the world with a conformist economy and culture rooted in North American and western ideas and interests. Despite the mixed feelings it generates, globalization seems to be spread as a centralist economic and cultural force for the near future.

Global education on the other hand refers to the process of developing in student’s awareness of world perspectives in order to understand the complexities of international events, the diversities of world cultures and commonalities of human values, and interests, as well as students’ perception of the globe (Tucker & Evans, 1996). Given that globalization is a worldwide phenomenon and that interdependence of nations and countries is a reality and will stay with us, we have inaugurated an era of providing global education to students of the various nations. In this manner global education purports to expand and enrich students’ awareness of the world by connecting them with the diverse cultural and technological heritage and human actions by highlighting such issues as literature, cultures, economic systems, human conflicts, social justice and human rights. As some writers note ‘global education seeks to weaken the boundaries between the disciplines and encourages emphasis on what interdisciplinarity and multidisciplinary studies can bring to the understanding and solution of human problems’ (<http://globaleducation.edu/ge/vsglobalization.html>).

These views of global education call for the development of a common intercontinental and world consciousness that all peoples, nations, and societies,

regardless of their particular beliefs (i.e. religious, political or ethnic/national, etc.) or ideology, are members of a single planetary community. This orientation aims not only at understanding international affairs and world systems but also at learning how to function responsibly, as 'cosmo-citizens'. Thus, it is required that empathetic orientations and/or attitudes towards fellow 'cosmo-citizens' are acquired and a propensity for world actions be developed. These orientations will assist individuals to transform from national citizens in order to reach a cosmopolitan plateau dismantling of their parochial and provincial attitudes. This supranational orientation will enhance people's cosmopolitanism and will gradually increase their socio-political and individual global efficacy so that they 'think globally and act locally' and be in position to affect their life destiny (Diaz et al., 1999).

These notions of global education seem to uplift it as an antidote to globalization since its purposes place a premium to the students' abilities in order to effectively access, analyze, scrutinize human thoughts and actions and to intervene when necessary as ethical and responsible members of an ecumenical community.

In sum, globalization is an international movement driven mainly by economic forces of companies, institutions, governments and groups of different nations, while global education is a teaching-learning paradigm that aims at enlightening students, future citizens, to be aware of human thoughts and actions and motivate them to think critically and ethically for the common good of the entire humanity. Of all the subjects in the school curriculum social studies have the potential to enlighten students' minds and broaden their horizons regarding the peoples of the world, their basic needs, desires, problems, hopes and aspirations. Concurrently, social studies can contribute in equipping future citizens to think reflectively and in decisive ways to all world events, matters and issues. This assumption prompted us to analyze the social studies curriculum presently used in Greece.

The nature of social studies curriculum

Social studies, more than any other subject, is advantageous in offering global literacy due to the interdisciplinary nature of its content. Its content draws ideas, concepts, issues, and values from social sciences such as history, geography, psychology, sociology, economics, demography, and other related fields. Furthermore, a vital goal of social studies is usually associated with preparing good citizens (Engle, 1964). Education for citizenship has been a prevailing conception for social studies since the 1960's as several discipline based scholars have noted (Massialas, 1999). The National Commission on Social Studies in the

schools emphasize that the social studies curriculum ought to ‘instill a clear understanding of the roles of citizens in a democracy and provide opportunities for active engaged participation in civic, cultural, and volunteer activities’ (National Commission on Social Studies in the Schools, 1989, p.3). According to the above Commission the five main goals for social studies curriculum must enable students to develop:

1. civic responsibility and active civic participation
2. perspectives on their own life experiences so they see themselves as part of the larger human adventure in time and place
3. a critical understanding of the history, geography, economic, political and social institutions, traditions and values...
4. an understanding of other peoples and the unity and diversity of the world...
5. critical attitudes and analytical perspectives appropriate to analysis of the human condition. (Op.cit, p. 6).

In a similar fashion the National Council for Social Studies Task Force has recently linked character development to citizenship. It states that even though character formation is a complex process, adults may model good character so that children have opportunities to live out the ideals of character and citizenship. Children are to be provided with proper knowledge and understanding of their responsibilities as citizens and acquire the disposition to act virtuously in their private and public lives (Task Force on Character Education in Social Studies, 1997).

There have been several approaches to social studies in the last half a century. According to Reinhartz & Beach (1997) there are four main streams of social studies curricula that have appeared since the 1960’s. These are: ‘social studies as citizenship’ which aims at developing values for forming the good citizen mainly, through the transmission of concepts and values via lecturing, questioning, and readings. The second is ‘social studies as part of social sciences’ which purports to instill learning of concepts, processes and problems of social sciences; the main methods used are discovery learning, collecting and verifying of data for each of the social sciences. The areas of social sciences generate the problems studied or analyzed. The third concerns ‘the social studies as a reflective inquiry’ which intends to generate knowledge for decision-making and problem solving; the sound methods for this approach are reflective inquiry, analyzing, and solving problem areas. The fourth is ‘social studies as integrated inquiry’; its purpose is the interdisciplinary approach involving a multiplicity of skills and integrated ways rather than isolated areas. Proper methods are cooperative learning and action, the use of multiple interdisciplinary sources, etc. (see also Flouris & Pasiias, 2003).

In a similar fashion Massialas (1999) summarizes respective patterns for social studies education which are predominant in certain parts of the world which he

summarizes as follows: The first pattern, which is prevalent mostly in North America, emphasizes social studies as ‘education for citizenship’. Its main objective is to ‘provide decision making skills and knowledge to students so that they may be enlightened and become participating citizens’ (p. 468). The second pattern, which is mostly applied in Europe and the rest of the formerly colonial world, stresses the teaching of history and geography as a core of offerings in the field. This pattern adheres to the traditional curriculum, which includes teaching in history, geography and to a lesser degree the rest of the social sciences. Given the history of Europe many elements of nationalism have entered the curriculum. This pattern is now under change since the creation of the European Union (EU) has come about and calls for a new ‘supra-national’ intercontinental European identity which has been reflected in the curriculum as European dimension in education (Flouris & Ivrideli, 2000, 2002). The third pattern is entitled ‘civic education for democratic citizenship’ which emerged primarily in East Central Europe in order to transform society from a totalitarian system to a democratic one. Its main goal is to use social studies as an instrument for training in the principles of democracy (Massialas, 1999).

From the above patterns Massialas (1999) evaluates the first one as the most sound in order to meet the challenges of the new century. This is because this pattern of social studies directly prepares for citizenship since it emphasizes skills and school processes for decision-making and social participation. This type of preparation enables students to take actions on their local, national, and international environments and develop affinity for humanity and the global community.

These traditional or nation oriented focus was connected to nation building concept and philosophy which had been a key goal or factor of the school curriculum in the last two centuries. This practice, however, must be discontinued and countries as well as societies ought to uplift the concept of nation to a state of global community. To this end, social studies have an important role to play due to the interdisciplinarity of the subjects that constitute the social sciences. What is actually needed is to apply an integrated approach to school knowledge and skill development as well as the issues based approach to curriculum. These changes to curriculum do not cancel the essence of the disciplines but they signal their revitalization.

The teaching of social studies

The challenges of the 21st century and the new consciousness that emerged after September 11, 2001 call for a shift from the traditional ethnocentric and eurocentric way of developing and implementing the social studies curriculum around the world.

There is a consensus in the literature about changing the educational focus of teaching social studies. Among the most essential views about reorienting the teaching of social studies is those of Diem (2002, p.147) who supports that we ought to: Teach beyond borders, provide instruction in cultural understanding, help students understand the effects of propaganda, develop historical perspective, show the effects of changes in interpreting the concept of civil liberties, and develop critical thinking skills.

A fundamental principle in viewing social studies from a global focus is to approach them from multiple perspectives and horizons. There exist several such approaches that provide structure to this task. Several models have been developed that generate global perspectives and information. Kniep (1989) proposed a model for global education in which he stresses the following concepts: interdependence, change, conflict, scarcity and culture. Harvey's (1976) model consists of five dimensions to attain global awareness. These include perspective consciousness, state-of-the planet- awareness, cross-cultural awareness, knowledge of global dynamics and awareness of human choices. *Perspective consciousness* refers to an awareness of and appreciation for other images of the world- or to see a phenomenon from different perspectives-. *State of-the-planet awareness* includes an awareness of world conditions, issues and problems. *Cross-cultural awareness* calls for an awareness of diverse ideas and practices embedded in human societies around the globe. *Knowledge of global dynamics* requires a multi level understanding of the world as an interconnected system with unanticipated consequences. *Awareness of human choices* refers to responsible decision-making processes by an individual having a tolerance towards the views of others and how his/her choices will affect future generations (Diaz, et al., 1999).

In a similar vein, The Charles County-University of Maryland model was structured to permeate the entire curriculum of social studies instead of being part of it. To this end, the materials focus on the following eight concepts: individuality, cultural pattern, subsistence, social structure, interdependence, communication, exploitation and pluralism. It must be noted that all eight concepts were infused through all curriculum areas including social studies, language, science, the arts, mathematics, physical education, literature and vocational education, k-12 (Weaver, 1988, p.108). This cross curricular approach to global education is more holistic and substantive.

The nature of the Greek social studies curricula of 1982 and 2000

Given Reinhartz & Beach's (1997) four main streams of social studies curricula and Massialas' (1999) three patterns for social studies education with the corresponding curricula, we attempted to examine the nature of the Greek social

studies curricula (the 1982 and 2000 reforms presently used in schools). Our analysis, among other things, indicated that both of the 1982 and 2000 curricula rely heavily on the first stream ‘social studies as citizenship’ and less on the second ‘social studies as part of social sciences’, in Reinhartz & Beach’s typology. This is because on a theoretical basis the Greek curricula stress the making of a citizen via the transmission of concepts and values expecting students to commit to memory these concepts and values for citizenship, although there exist several opportunities for the students to enhance their political culture throughout their everyday school life.

In a similar vein, Greek curricula coincide with the second pattern in Massialas’ description since they adhere to the traditional perspective, that is to teach separately and independently subjects such as history, geography, and civics and to a lesser degree the rest of social sciences. Furthermore, lots of nationalistic perspectives were identified, both in this study and in previous studies we have conducted (Flouris & Ivrinteli, 2000, 2002; Flouris & Kalogiannakis, 1996), which indicated a national oriented approach to the various disciplines of social sciences, at the elementary level.

As other writers support this curriculum practice is similar to many countries since ‘educational curricula show dramatic similarities across convergent changes...Studies of specific subject curricula across countries and over time show the same patterns of relative isomorphism and convergent change’ (Myer, 1999, p.5). This situation calls for a shift from the present nationally or continent oriented approach to a global perspective for the teaching of social studies.

Collecting the research evidence: methods and procedures

The discussion above supports that nation states have a conflicting role to perform. They seek to build a ‘distinctive national identity’ among their members and to support a ‘transnational multiculturalism’ (both European and global), which is expected to lead to cooperation, solidarity and peace. The increasing globalizing interdependence of the world, (economics, technology, mass media, transportation, etc.), as well as common global problems (ecological, population explosion, etc.) create a growing need for nation states to rely heavily on the second role mentioned above. They need to promote a supranational continental structure or cosmosystem over and beyond their own ethnoculture, such as the European Union and the World Community.

Given the commitments of governments of states throughout the world the problem for the present study, then, was to probe to what degree global themes

are portrayed in the 1982 and 2000 social studies curriculum guides of Primary Education in Greece. The task, thus, was to examine the above-mentioned national curricula by conducting a content analysis in order to ascertain if and to what degree global themes are presented in them. The reader must bear in mind that Greece has a highly centralized educational system and operates under a national curriculum.

In order to assess the degree to which the global themes are portrayed, both of the curriculum guides (1982 and 2000) of social studies subjects of Primary Education in Greece, grades one through six, were analyzed. Those subjects are: history, geography, social and political education (civics), environmental studies as well as religion. Each curriculum guide was examined to determine the quantity and quality of information related to global themes and issues. In the framework of this study global themes were defined the problems or issues of supranational nature or interest, which are shared by all and each one of today's existing cultures, and affect or could affect one or more continents, and lead humanity to a common destiny.

The analytic categories that were used to record the content of the Greek curriculum were: *protection of the environment, climatic conditions, energy, economy, technology, wars, human rights, nutrition, arts-symbols*.

Content, regardless of category, was classified as positive, neutral or negative. Positive are those references that promote world peace and reflect friendly sentiments. Negative we considered those that cause or create aggressiveness, xenophobia and violent emotions. Finally, neutral references were considered those, which do not carry out neither negative nor positive feelings, or those, which do not trigger positive or negative evaluative judgments.

Findings of the content analysis

Analysis of the year 1982 social studies curriculum

The analysis of the year 1982 curriculum subjects revealed that the greatest percentage of references on global themes exists in the subject of Environmental Studies entitled 'we and the world'. Table 1 shows that the sum total of references was recorded to be 7.2% for all grades in this subject. The greatest percentage was concentrated in the category 'protection of the environment', followed by the category 'human rights'.

TABLE 1: References on global themes by subject

SUBJECT	Environmental Studies		History		Geography		Social and Political Education		Religion	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Protection of Environment	74	3.9	7	0.4	20	1.1	-	-	-	-
Human Rights	25	1.3	19	1	12	0.6	23	1.2	10	0.5
Climatic Conditions	15	0.8	9	0.5	21	1.1	-	-	-	-
Technology	19	1	24	1.3	-	-	-	-	2	0.1
Arts-Symbols	-	-	31	1.7	7	0.4	1	0.1	-	-
Wars	-	-	12	0.6	-	-	-	-	-	-
Economy	3	0.2	1	0.1	-	-	-	-	-	-
Energy	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Nutrition	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
TOTAL	136	7.2	103	5.5	60	3.2	24	1.3	12	0.6

The second largest percentage of references on global themes – a sum total of 5.5% – was concentrated in the subject of History, while the category ‘arts-symbols’ received the highest percentage.

The next highest percentage resulted in the subject of Geography with a sum total of 3.2%. Of this, the largest percentage deals with ‘climatic conditions’ followed by the category ‘protection of the environment’.

The subject of Social & Political Education concentrated the next largest percentage with a sum total of 1.3% references, while the category ‘human rights’ received the highest percentage.

Finally, the smallest percentage of references on global themes 0.6% exists in the subject of Religion. Most of these references were concentrated in the category ‘human rights’.

Table 2 reveals that most of references on specific categories, regardless of curriculum subject, concerned ‘protection of the environment’ 5.4%, followed by the category of ‘human rights’ 4.7%. The category ‘economy’, concentrated the least amount of references 0.2%, while no references were recorded in the categories ‘energy’ and ‘nutrition’.

Lastly, most of the references, regardless of curriculum subject and category, were neutral 17.7%, followed by positive ones 0.1%, while no negative references were recorded.

TABLE 2: Aspects of global themes in the social studies curriculum

REFERENCES CATEGORY	POSITIVE		NEUTRAL		NEGATIVE		TOTAL	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Protection of Environment	-	-	101	5.4	-	-	101	5.4
Human Rights	2	0.1	87	4.6	-	-	89	4.7
Climatic Conditions	-	-	45	2.4	-	-	45	2.4
Technology	-	-	43	2.3	-	-	43	2.3
Arts- Symbols	-	-	41	2.2	-	-	41	2.2
Wars	-	-	12	0.6	-	-	12	0.6
Economy	-	-	4	0.2	-	-	4	0.2
Energy	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Nutrition	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
TOTAL	2	0.1	333	17.7	-	-	335	17.8

Analysis of the year 2000 social studies curriculum

The analysis of the year 2000 curriculum subjects revealed that the greatest percentage of references on global themes also exists in the subject of Environmental Studies. Table 3 shows that the sum total of references was 12.3% for all grades in this subject. The greatest percentage was concentrated again, in the category ‘protection of the environment’, followed by the category ‘human rights’.

TABLE 3: References on global themes by subject

SUBJECT CATEGORY	Environmental Studies		Geography		Civics		History		Religion	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Human Rights	44	3.1	13	0.9	41	3	4	0.3	14	1
Protection of Environment	60	4.3	38	2.7	-	-	1	0.07	1	0.07
Technology	28	2	16	1.2	-	-	6	0.4	-	-
Arts- Symbols	5	0.3	16	1.2	3	0.2	4	0.3	1	0.07
Economy	12	0.9	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Nutrition	6	0.4	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	0.2
Wars	-	-	-	-	-	-	7	0.5	-	-
Climatic Conditions	17	1.2	5	0.4	-	-	-	-	-	-
Energy	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
TOTAL	172	12.3	92	6.6	44	3.2	22	1.6	19	1.4

The second largest percentage of references on global themes was concentrated in the subject of Geography; there is a sum total of 6.6%, while the category ‘protection of the environment’ received the highest percentage.

The next highest percentage resulted in the subject of Social and Political Education with a sum total of 3.2%. Of this, the largest percentage deals with ‘human rights’ followed by ‘arts-symbols’.

The subject of History concentrated the next largest percentage with a sum total of 1.6%, while the category ‘wars’ received the highest percentage of that.

Finally, the smallest percentage of references on global themes, 1.4% (as in the case of year 1982 curriculum) exists in the subject of Religion. Most of these references were concentrated in the category ‘human rights’.

Table 4 revealed that the greatest number of references on specific categories regardless of curriculum subject was concerned in the category ‘human rights’ 8.3%, followed by the category ‘protection of the environment’ 7.2%, while the category ‘energy’, received the least amount of references 0.2%.

TABLE 4: Aspects of global themes in the social studies curriculum

REFERENCES CATEGORY	POSITIVE		NEUTRAL		NEGATIVE		TOTAL	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Human Rights	22	1.6	94	6.7	-	-	116	8.3
Protection of Environment	4	0.3	96	6.9	-	-	100	7.2
Technology	7	0.5	33	2.4	-	-	40	2.9
Arts- Symbols	9	0.6	20	1.4	-	-	29	2.1
Economy	2	0.1	10	0.7	-	-	12	0.9
Nutrition	-	-	9	0.6	-	-	9	0.6
Wars	-	-	7	0.5	-	-	7	0.5
Climatic Conditions	-	-	5	0.4	-	-	5	0.4
Energy	-	-	3	0.2	-	-	3	0.2
TOTAL	44	3.1	305	22	-	-	349	25.1

All in all, the content analysis of the year 2000 Social Studies Greek curriculum reveals that most of the references on global themes were neutral, 22%, followed by the positive ones 3.1%, while no negative references were found.

In sum, the content analysis of both of the Greek primary education curriculum guides reveals that for the most part, as expected by a nation state, nationalistic messages seem to prevail but supranational dimensions are also present. The largest amount of references on global themes was found in the year 2000 curriculum guide and not in that one of year 1982. More specifically, the 1982 social studies curriculum contains 17.8% references of global themes, while the corresponding curriculum guide for the year 2000 includes a percentage of 25.1%.

The fact that no negative references were recorded in neither of the two curriculum guides shows that in Greece, despite the nationalistic ethos, the intent has been to instill affinity to Greek students towards the global community.

In conclusion, the percentages devoted to global themes, even though they are not scant, they do not totally harmonize with the pronouncements of the primary school curricula and their goals, which include supranational commitments such as to cope with ‘problems faced by common efforts by the world community...resolved... with the cooperation and mutual exchange of all people’ (Flouris, 1997, p.32). Thus, the findings of this study tend to support the observation that the formal curricula of the Primary Education in Greece are organized more according to a national and regional perspective rather than supranational or global ones. This situation may potentially direct teachers to promote national loyalty and ethnocentric orientations in students, which can perhaps hinder the attainment of a global awareness (Ivrideli, 1998, 2002).

Globalizing curriculum and education

The results above reveal that the intended curricula in Greece of both years 1982 and 2000 are not totally committed to global concerns and it may potentially cloud students’ orientations towards the globe. Such practices are short of crosscultural understanding and supranational sentiments since they promote the maintenance of a state-endorsed curriculum but potentially negate cosmopolitanism (Massialas, 1995).

Given that world conditions require that individuals, nations, and societies develop a global consciousness and a cosmopolitan perspective, what type of curriculum—i.e. content of school knowledge, activities, etc.—and instructional strategies are needed in order to meet the challenges of the new century and millennium? How will the postmodern schools be able to facilitate the development of the global perspective in students of all ages and prioritize their school content and processes so that national partisan and patriotic citizens are transformed into global ones?

Schools around the world need to provide reliable and ‘objective knowledge’ which is oriented in world matters and interconnect the planet instead of drawing it from the ‘pool’ of the traditional ‘mainstream academic knowledge’. To bridge the mainstream or centralist knowledge systems (Coulby, 1997) with the transformative knowledge, which aims at elevating students at a supranational plateau, a very vital role can be played by multicultural education, which can act as a buffer to harmonize the two. Afterall, there is an interconnection between multicultural and global education. Multicultural education usually refers to the

process of promoting the recognition, understanding and acceptance of individual uniqueness and cultural diversity within a pluralist society (Weaver, 1988, p. 108). However, some writers draw a distinction between the two forms of education. Multicultural education is defined as the process of 'emphasizing issues that are indigenous to the country in which students and their teachers live versus global education which focuses on world issues' (Diaz, Massialas & Xanthopoulos, 1999, p.209).

As many educators note, multicultural education focuses on issues that are indigenous to one's country as well as those which transcend countries and nations and has a great deal in common with global education. Both areas share in common humanistic and educational values, which emphasize compassion for otherness and foster local and world environments such as human rights, overarching values, equity, justice, etc. (Diaz et al., 1999). More specifically, multicultural education 'connects the study of other countries, the concept of the world as a global village, and recognizes of the need for everyone on this planet to collaborate...Focus on international studies brings an awareness of the shared concerns of nations around the world' (Tiedt & Tiedt, 1995, p.17). Such approaches challenge the traditional school knowledge of the nation states and tend to transform the national oriented 'knowledge systems' as well as the 'regimes of truth' which are presently used, to a new orientation that can harmonize with postmodern realities and global perspectives (Flouris & Pasiadis, 2004).

Nation states in every part of the world can no longer afford to offer students a parochial pedagogy and ethnocentric orientations. These orientations ignore global views and themes, which can mediate effectively for the formation of a global identity and world citizenry (Flouris & Spiridakis, 1992). Perhaps the time has come to engage in a systematic reappraisal of national curricula by moving away from maintaining existing systems and establishing new ways of life, which enlighten the minds of the future citizens of the world. Students need to become good national as well as global citizens who are able to think reflectively, and are willing to participate in the democratic processes by taking appropriate actions. The balanced development of the above-mentioned virtues is still considered the fundamental precondition for an actual democratic citizenship (Kymlicka & Norman, 2000) in the late modern and diverse societies.

Thus, the prime goal of schools today is to enhance quality and meet the current needs and future challenges by creating learning environments that foster knowledge, skills, values, and attitudes which can bring about a meaningful and peaceful life in regional, national, and global contexts. As Billeh (1999) puts it 'in this global era there is no place for isolation, passivity or mediocrity. Salvation resides in dynamism, quality...and compliance with universal rules' (p.119).

In conclusion, this study revealed that nationalistic features continue to co-exist with some global principles. Curricula of all countries around the world ought to discontinue their practice of developing nationally oriented approaches to the various disciplines and centralist knowledge especially in the social studies subjects. Times call for new curricular models and designs which celebrate global themes and ecumenical issues such as human rights, ecological principles, notions of equality of world cultures and societies based in solidarity and interdependence. As a scholar wrote ‘the reorientation of education towards global rather than national society involves shifts in curricular perspectives: the editing out of some past realities, and the construction of a [brave] new world’ (Myer 1999, p.13). In order to infuse global views into the curriculum we need to abandon not only our nationalistic emphasis on school knowledge but also to shift from Eurocentric orientations of the curriculum to multiple global perspectives of content. This way, students, future citizens, can critically reflect on what they are taught at the local, national, supranational and global levels, and learn to perceive a spectrum of realities not only through their nation centred perspective but also through the vision of other people in the entire planet.

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