ACTIVE CITIZENSHIP IN SYRIAN FORMAL EDUCATION: THE GAP BETWEEN THE EDUCATION POLICY AND THE CURRICULUM, POTENTIALITY AND PROPOSALS FOR ITS IMPROVEMENT

U. Al Khateeb, R. Comas-Forgas

Universitat de les Illes Balears (SPAIN)

Abstract

Positive perceptions and practices of active citizenship for a healthy diversified society have been linked to a variety components of civic education curriculums, such as democracy, public participation, political plurality..etc. Past research has suggested that the more comprehensive civic education curriculums are the more active citizens the students will be in the future and the more they will demonstrate adherence to the four dimensions of active citizenship (Political life, Civil society, Community life, Democratic values). The recent conflict in Syrian dreadfully demonstrated how apparently the country lacks the four aspects of the active citizenship dimensions in many ways (social cohesion, co-living, respect of diversity, intercultural understanding, political participation..etc.). No previous work has comprehensively examined the education policy in Syria and how civic education curriculum is shaped accordingly. The present research investigated the education policy behind the most recent formal civic education curriculum in Syria. This research aims to systemically analyze the education policy, how far active citizenship values are presented in, add to this diagnosing its gaps, deficits, potentiality and proposals for its improvement.

The Qualitative research will be answering the following questions:
1. What are the main concepts related to “Active citizenship” competences presented in the education policy?
2. How to bridge the gap between the Syrian citizens and the practice of their active citizenship by the means of civic education? In other words what development of the civic education policy and/or curriculum should be made? What education methodologies should be followed in designing the curriculum to connect school with everyday life? Do we need more extra-curricular activities? Digital learning? or blended learning?

Keywords: Citizenship Education, Civic Education, Formal Education, education policy, curriculum design and development, Syria.