Evaluating Citizenship Components Of The Elementary Textbooks Based On Comments Of Relevant Authorities Working In The Iranian Elementary Education

1Sadeghi Afdje. Zohreh, 2N.Ghanbari

1Department of Persian Literature, Varamin-Pishva Branch, Islamic Azad University, Varamin, Iran. 2Department of Elementary Education, Share-Rey Branch, Islamic Azad University, Tehran, Iran.

Abstract: Many national educational systems in the third millennium, have been targeted relationships learning In different types of training. This training includes: education for international understanding, education for development, multicultural education, education to promote a culture of peace in the frame of global education project, human rights education, teaching values and citizenship education and global citizenship education. Citizenship education is a plan to build this community and educate responsible, activists, religious, and aware citizens. This study aimed evaluate elementary textbooks in terms of the components of citizenship based on viewpoints of lesson planning specialists, management and teachers working in the Iranian elementary education. Field survey method was used during the present study which considered views of curriculum experts, principals and teachers working in basic education. In this study 27 curriculum specialist, 37 directors and 363 teachers are involved. The Sample size using the Morgan table with stratified random sampling were 427 persons including curriculum planners, management and elementary school teachers. The researcher made questionnaire was used for data collection that included 26 questions designed by the researcher. This questionnaire has been set according to 5-point likert scale. In this study, three categories of the citizenship components including orbital laws, patriotism and participation were investigated as a criteria for training, at social studies textbooks for primary school. the questionnaire included 26 questions was used for data collection during field survey method. To determine reliability coefficient questionnaire we selected randomly persons. using Kranbakh alpha method between testable scores in values were 0.9 for questionnaire test. Descriptive statistics (frequencies and percentages) as well as inferential statistics (Chi Square test) were used for data analysis. Results showed that social studies textbooks of the third, fourth and fifth levels of primary schools are considered medium or higher to categories studied. In this research in terms of citizenship education components.

Key words: citizenship, citizenship components, and social studies.

INTRODUCTION

Increasing changes in political, social and educational situations in many communities, has been raised a challenging issue called "citizenship education" (Torney- Purta et al., 1991). This issue does not relate only to specialists in educational sciences and humanities but policy makers and program planners who are interested in the social institutions also has involved to formulate discussion topics and issues (Kerr, 1999).

Many national educational systems in the third millennium, have been targeted relationships learning In different types of training. This training includes: education for international understanding, education for development, multicultural education, education to promote a culture of peace in the frame of global education project (Bery, 2005), human rights education, teaching values and citizenship education and global citizenship education.

The importance of citizenship education Is not only because of the rapid social changes, and patterns of extreme ideology, racism and class differences or matched individuals and groups from the psychological point of view or just about the duties and obligations but eventually is existence of ideals and liberal thought and move towards a democratic society.

Citizenship education is a plan to build this community and educate responsible, activists, religious, and aware citizens. Democratic values, should be part of a public figure in the daily life of society. So If these values not implemented in people's minds, political democracy will always remain insecure.

Dewey (1927), Willow and Neal (2004) believed that citizenship education curriculum should be considered children as adults and citizens which can experience ways to interact and communicate with others and be aware of their rights and responsibilities to defend from it. But what is important approaches to citizenship education?

Based on study of sources and references and according to the most experts opinions citizenship education are included different orientations or approaches (Kerr,1999; Schugurensky and Pimyers, 2003; Dejeaghere,
citizenship education approaches can be classified into two general approaches, conservative and progressive.

In other words, citizenship education may be used for maintenance of the existing condition (conservative) or for enabling people at enlightening changes (development oriented). Purpose of conservative approach is induction of a sense of obedience, obedience to authority, voluntary service as well as absorption and integration of population and immigrants.

From this perspective citizenship education should be accept the existing social structure, develop ethics characteristics and ensuring social order and unity (Schugurensky and Pimyers, 2003; Westheimer, 2007). This approach in terms of planning and implementation is easy but, does not benefit for learners, because central issue, notation, pre-determined and prepared knowledge and information is considered.

The approach of progressive citizenship education is to create opportunities for learners in order to involve and motivate them actively as member of the school and larger community (Keer and Cleaver, 2004)

This approach, in citizenship education has a special emphasis. On social development and social justice. Common purpose of the existing models in this approach is training of global citizenship and people who are aware and critical analyzers, and have political participation. They are also supportive of cultural interaction.

Good citizen in this approach is a kind person that is politically aware.

He is a person who concerned about social justice and the environment, hoped, and is patience and tolerance in front of others, able and willing to talk, and has active participation in social life (Schugurensky and Pimyers, 2003).

With more description, Banks (2008) believed that training of progressive citizenship has focused on understanding and recognition of multiple, related, logical and clear identity in the cultural, national, regional and global field. In other words, this approach identified and emphasizes on the students' cultural identity. The approach provides students with the knowledge, awareness, competence and approaches to be able to challenge the inequalities in local communities, their country and world. They decided to develop Justice, social, cultural and democratic societies and enables them to promote universal values and perspectives. Progressivist approach to citizenship education help students in: Improving decision making skills, social skills, skills in identifying community issues and problems, acquire knowledge about society and culture and their language, understand your values and to become a thoughtful man. This approach will help to develop critical skills that also called critical citizenship education (Dejeaghere, 2007).

Education for democratic citizenship in the European Council noted that "Education for democratic citizenship, is not necessary to inculcate democratic format, but basically is to develop creative thinker and activist, and to reinforce the ability to having active participation and asking (Buttery, 2003).

In general, a fundamental approach to citizenship education is to train of critical thinking citizens who participate in political debate (Halestead and Pike, 2006).

Schools, are one of the important places to provide citizenship education. Dewey (1927), an American educational philosopher, believed that school is a small community that students, in an active environment, are engaged in learning and cooperation in learning. Classroom is like a laboratory in which ideas and behaviors of citizenship, will be studied by students and teachers (Cabo and Kinney, 2000).

According to the United States National Council of Social Studies in 1994, the goal of social studies is to raise the qualification of citizenship among students. According to the comments of the council, to obtain citizenship eligibility students are required to acquire knowledge about the lives of the citizens, to learn ways of thinking, and also learn decision making skills necessary to engage in social interactions with others (Parker, 2001). In addition, a framework for citizenship education for the twenty-first century were prepared. In 1998, by Forty specialists of the United States.

The program emphasized on knowledge, skills, characteristics and virtue of civil participation, as could teach new generation responsibilities and competencies required for citizenship and prepare them for participation in political and civic life of the next century (Murphy Walter, 1998).

At Iran, In recent years, subject to design, develop and implement of a national curriculum has been raised. It, as solution, is for constitutional revision and fundamental transformation of the educational system as well as available lesson plans that is from foreign education system, (Europe a century ago) and their educational vision. develop an strategic plan for national curriculum has been raised from 2006 alongside develop an Islamic philosophy of education and national education plan. This strategic plan will savior of Iran's education culture. A framework for citizenship education has been raised from 2006 alongside development of the national curriculum (Salsabili, Special national. curriculum program, 2007).

In general, citizenship education through curriculum focused system (Iran) has three main components:

1. Knowledge of citizenship
2. Citizenship Skills
3. Values and attitudes of citizens

Citizenship knowledge is fundamental beliefs and basic principles that every student should know it to be able to use it on the duties and obligations of citizenship pathways.
Citizenship skills is also a set of cognitive functions that enables citizens to thinking about democratic principles, methods and to evaluate and critique social action at the community level. On the other hand citizenship skills includes the skills of civil participation whereby the citizens can participate in community issues. more clearly, citizenship skills means application of knowledge by each of the citizens in the study of social issues, making decision and civil functions. Eventually, the third component of citizenship education, is citizenship values and attitudes that enables individuals to have attitudes and values favorable on governance, democracy, law and rights of individuals in a community (Ashtiyani, 2002)

Based on this, the purpose of this study is accurate identification of complex concept of citizenship and its associated system and values as well as identification of the citizenship education approaches. Then, implemented citizenship education curriculum form curriculum experts, principals and teachers point of view of Iran's elementary schools was examined. Finally some recommendations will be provided regarding citizenship education.

extensive research in relation to citizenship education have carried out by different researchers around the world that can be pointed to the following:

Sheikh Zadeh (2008) carried out a research entitled "Content analysis of religious, civic, farsi (read) books in the fourth base of elementary school according to Implications of globalization". Findings of this research shows that Farsi book is paid more to citizenship concepts (such as encourage to thinking and respect to each other) than two other religious and civil books.

While, personal and social responsibility, is given in civil book more than other two books. Intercultural education concepts less emphasis at considered books of the fourth base elementary schools. so authors of textbooks should have special attention to teach the above concepts.

Crick and Jolderssma (2007) written an article titled "Habermas, lifelong learning and citizenship education." The authors, believed that citizenship education has Important again in many countries.

In England, legal requirements for citizenship education implies that social and moral development of learners, is seriously considering. like Learner's active involvement in the community, knowledge skills and necessary to understanding for political action. This article provides theoretical framework as perspective to correct learning with out of the reach goals. The authors of this article claim that schools need to change the direction of the contemporary dominant dialog to a combination of responsive and care dialogue. this will provide an appropriate atmosphere to effective education for citizenship. Social theory of Habermas provides them a systematic framework to place schools, as appropriate manner in the biological world like part of the civil society. Thus, schools should be considered both strategic interests and interpretive and emancipatory interests.

Authors have placed the above mentioned items in the frame of Habermas's theory of social context to provide another picture of citizenship education based on expansion desires, values and necessary attitudes for lifelong learning with look to continuous expansion to communicative action (Mohamadi Chaboki, 2006) another research conducted by Chubghi, in the frame of PhD thesis during 2007-2008 school year , titled” Designing optimal curriculum citizenship education patterns in the local, national and global scales and its comparison with the official program implemented in primary period.

According to the finding of this research there is very little attention in selected textbooks of elementary schools to the teaching of citizenship at local, national and global scales in this regard, the author emphasized on comprehensive review and reform.

Diba (2002) observed in her study uncertainty of the educational curricula with many new requirements, particularly political, social and cultural needs. Diba (2002) believed that from teachers point of view subjects such as citizenship training as well as active citizenship education in the community in curriculum are not desirable (Rashidi, 2006).

Fathi et al., (2006) mentioned in their research titled "Good citizen of Iranian society and adaptation of school curricula with this feature" that there is little attention to promote citizenship values throughout designing, implementation and evaluation of programs so, fundamental reform in this regard is required.

**Method:**

Field survey method was used during the present study which considered views of curriculum experts, principals and teachers working in basic education. In this study 27 curriculum specialist, 37 directors and 363 teachers are involved.

The sample size was calculated using Morgan table and by samples were selected by stratified sampling method.

The researcher made questionnaire was used for data collection that included 26 questions designed by the researcher. This questionnaire has been set according to 5-point likert scale.
Validity and Reliability coefficient calculation: Content Validity: firstly questionnaire was presented to teachers and experienced professors in different field include psychology, psychometrics, research method, ... to judge about test questions contains. then their views were gathered and those questions which were under their concurrence was executed. To determine reliability coefficient questionnaire we selected randomly persons, using Kranbakh alpha method between testable scores in values were 0.9 for questionnaire test.

Descriptive statistics (frequencies and percentages) as well as inferential statistics (Chi Square test) were used for data analysis.

Results:

What Is The Curriculum Specialists, Principals And Teachers Point Of View Working In Education About The Orbital Law Component?

Five questions have been raised in the questionnaire concerning about the orbital law component which asked participants to express their views about them.

Descriptive analysis of the provided answers is as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 1: The range of selected samples based on job at orbital laws component at five levels from too low to very high.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>level</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Participant abundance</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Principal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expert</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Degree of freedom=8, Chi-squared=9.574, Error Risk Rate at 0.05 = 0.296

Since the calculated Chi-square value with eight degree of freedom and error level of 5% is lesser than the table Chi-squared so, there is no significant difference among the three comments job groups.

In other words as indicated in the table 3-5, more than 85 percent of the studied groups believe that giving attention to the orbital law component, at curriculum of elementary social studies is at the average or above the average. According to the results can be said that more than five percent of the participants in the three Job groups are estimated very high giving attention to the mentioned categories in textbooks of elementary period.

These results are opposite to other findings by Diba, Fathi, Ejaregah and Modjalal those who believed that there is little attention in elementary textbooks to develop civic values and essentially, this attention is not at the desirable level.

What Is The Curriculum Specialists, Principals And Teachers Point Of View Working In Education About The Patriotism Component?

Five questions have been raised in the questionnaire concerning about the patriotism component which asked participants to express their views about them.

Descriptive analysis of the provided answers is as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 2: The range of selected samples based on job at patriotism component at five levels from too low to very high.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>level</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Participant abundance</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Principal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expert</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Degree of freedom=8, Chi-squared=7.387, Error Risk Rate at 0.05 = 0.495

Since the calculated Chi-square value with eight degree of freedom and error level of 5% is smaller than the table Chi-squared so, there is no significant difference among the three comments job groups.

In other words as indicated in the table 2-5, more than 80 percent of the studied groups believe that giving attention to the patriotism component, at curriculum of elementary social studies is at the average or above the average.

As the table 2-5 shows, significant percentage of participants believe that there is enough attention in textbooks to the above mentioned category.
These results are opposite to other findings by Diba, Fathi and Modjalal those who believed that there is little attention in elementary textbooks to develop civic values.

**What Is The Curriculum Specialists, Principals And Teachers Point Of View Working In Education About The Participation Component?**

Three questions have been raised in the questionnaire concerning about the participation component which asked participants to express their views about them.

Descriptive analysis of the provided answers is as follows:

**Table 3:** The range of selected samples based on job at participation component at five levels from too low to very high.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Too low</th>
<th>Low</th>
<th>Medium</th>
<th>High</th>
<th>Very High</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participant</td>
<td>abundance</td>
<td>percent</td>
<td>abundance</td>
<td>percent</td>
<td>abundance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>5.6</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>19.8</td>
<td>147</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Principal</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>21.6</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expert</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>11.1</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>29.6</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Degree of freedom=8, Chi-squared=11.836, Error Risk Rate at 0.05 = 0.159

Since the calculated Chi-square value with eight degree of freedom and error level of 5% is smaller than the table Chi -squared so, there is no significant difference among the three comments job groups.

In other words as indicated in the table 5-5, more than 60 percent of the studied groups believe that giving attention to the participation component, at curriculum of elementary social studies is at the average or above the average.

On the other hand, as these findings show 40 percent of the participants in the research are estimated less than average giving attention to the participation category in textbooks of elementary period. This finding is in congruence with previous results achieved by Diba, Fathi and Modjalal. Based on the findings It seems that more complete investigation is required to distinct better differences in findings.

**Discussion:**

Preparing citizens for life in society requires the use of all available capacity and facilities at the school level and even community that curriculum is the core of this type of preparation. Since the main philosophy of the formation of schools and designing curriculum, is to train active citizens and effective education for the community, so provision of appropriate curriculum for training is very important. Use of the writing signs is one of the common practices to provide a curriculum that its pervasive and typical examples are textbooks. Textbooks are considered as one of the fundamental factors at children's cognitive development and learning, in today's world.

So, analysis of textbooks enables education authorities in adopting the rational decision when develop textbooks for use in classrooms.

In this regard the findings of this study are as the following:

Generally, it can be stated that participants in the study believe that in social studies textbooks of elementary schools in the third, fourth and fifth grade, investigated citizenship education components in this study (orbital laws, patriotism and participation) have been considered more than average. These finding in total are opposed with research results of others like Diba, Fathi and Modjalal those who believed that there is little attention in elementary textbooks to develop civic values and essentially, this attention is not at the desirable level.

According to the research findings recommended that researchers do research on elementary school students, to be determined to what extent been effective citizenship education mentioned in the textbooks of social studies on them, otherwise what are the reasons for the lack of effectiveness.

And finally recommended renewed research done to survey elementary textbooks social studies courses, with separation of three classes of third, fourth and fifth grade, along with content analysis of above mentioned books to obtain more precise results.

**Conclusion:**

Results showed that social studies textbooks of the third, fourth and fifth levels of primary schools are considered medium or higher to categories studied. In this research in terms of citizenship education components.
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