



The book is a part of the recent Palgrave Studies in Global Citizenship Education and Democracy series.

This new edition on comparative studies of citizenship education contributes to the literature on civic engagement both theoretically and empirically. The comparative perspective is based on studies from Canada, England, Hong Kong, India, Italy, Japan and Mexico. The student and country sample thus covers a global variety (except Africa) of samples that represent a variety of cultures, democratic traditions and educational practices. The book is well organised by country chapters that combine introductions to citizenship education, empirical studies of student samples from each country and local varieties in citizenship education. What is quite noteworthy is the new theoretical model of youth civic engagement, awareness and action. The model of human civic cognition and action builds on sources in developmental psychology and social interaction. According to the editor 'The model theorizes that people are born with varying traits and that they develop in various ways depending on the interactions between their internal and external factors. Thus, youth's attitudes and actions in civic life may differ, based on the manner in which individuals' personality traits, attitudes, and beliefs interact with their experiences and their sociocultural environments' (page 8). A central concept in the model is the 'civic mindset' or a personal cognitive orientation toward civic life. The model combines different internal and external sources as determinants of the civic mindset. Internal is self, civic knowledge motives, aims feelings, sense of efficacy, gender, personality traits, labels and events. Context and external influence are family skills, friends, attitudes, values and school identity. Social context is economic wealth and social issues cultural context and international context.

The study's main questions are: *What are the characteristics of youth civic engagement/disengagement in nations/societies with different experiences with democracy? How does engagement relate to individuals'*

## Review of the Book:

**Broom, Catherine, Ed. 2016. Youth Civic Engagement in a Globalized World: Citizenship Education in Comparative Perspective, Palgrave MacMillan, ISBN 978-1-137-56533-4, \$99.00**

*internal and external factors, such as knowledge, attitudes, characteristics, experiences and cultures? What recommendations emerge from the findings?*

The empirical study builds partly on a common framework and partly on local emphasis. The authors developed survey and interview research tools to explore youths' mindset, i.e., conceptions of and participation in civic life and the relations between these, and the conceptual model just described. The country chapters cover a brief history and introduction to citizenship education in the country. These introductions are of course very different, like Canada, where there are regional histories of civic education, and there have been only recent attempts for a national education. England is introduced, where there was no citizenship education before 1998 until Crick introduced its first attempt. Italy is also discussed, where the turbulent (fascist) political history caused much conflict about the role of citizenship education, and the strong presence of the Catholic church for a long time had a monopoly on moral education. Japan, on the other hand, experiences quite different challenges; the author claims that Japanese schools fail to encourage Japanese youth to actively engage and participate in Japanese politics.

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At the end of the book, there is an unusual but important contribution from a young Mexican (*Medardo Tapia Uribe*) who voiced some important concerns for

the Mexican democracy that is also relevant for democracies in general. Democratic political systems are supposed to provide a framework for self-subsistence and to solve problems for ordinary people the world. Instead, they often give priority to their own (politicians') interests and/or their friends, which creates distrust, frustration and disengagement. Such voices are echoed by the youth in other countries too. It is suggested that citizenship education needs to address these frustrations and provide some means to overcome these challenges through more un-conventional and effective participation.

What is actually addressed at the end of the book are the options but also the limits of criticality in citizenship education. It also seems that educational programmes in citizenship education may face fundamental challenges in responding to the needs of the variety of students who distrust politicians and the political system and may find conventional participation in democracies less attractive due to the many failures in the political system. This book touches upon these fundamental challenges as well. I do recommend reading the book and continuing this discussion. Many democracies face similar challenges (as in Mexico) of distrust and decline of participation which raises fundamental questions about citizenship education and its role in support for the system versus supporting the critical young people. I do recommend reflecting on this dilemma while reading this book.

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