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Civic Goals and Implementation in Educational Practices.

The concept of citizenship has recently been both broadened and deepened. Beside political sciences other scientific orientations are influencing the concept and practice of citizenship and citizenship education. For example character education, multicultural education, moral education, critical pedagogy and globalisation studies. The concept of citizenship and citizenship education is becoming closely linked to identity development.

In our own research we ask teachers and students about important pedagogical goals. We find three clusters: discipline, autonomy, and social concern. These clusters are linked with different types of citizenship: an adapted type, an individualised type, and a critical-democratic type. These types of citizenship express different values orientations and suppose different kind of educational learning activities. The research shows differences between intended goals and realised practices.

The concept of citizenship is not only composed of knowledge and skills, but also of attitudes. Psychological elements of citizenship need more attention in research and educational practice: in particular internal and external efficacy; appreciating differences; emotions; engagement.

Citizenship and citizenship education is strongly embedded in culture. How can citizenship balance between ‘global’ desirable outcomes and regional and cultural differences? And who determines what is ‘global’ desirable?

What do these changes in the concept, differences in types of citizenship, psychological elements and cultural contextualisation implies for implementing citizenship education, and in particular a more critical-democratic type of citizenship education? What are possibilities and constraints? In the paper we take as example a Western Europe society, the Netherlands. We analyse the levels of the educational system; the schools; and academic science and educational discourse. The paper ends with a ply for a more complex understanding of citizenship and citizenship education.