

Importance of Education for Global Cooperation

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Abstract

While education is a basic necessity for any country's development, it is also extremely beneficial in terms of the institutionalization and promotion of culturally comprehensive behavior, cross-cultural understanding, and a movement toward promoting a culture of peace. The approval of values like cross-cultural tolerance and global understanding is principal in overcoming transnational security threats such as poverty, environmental degradation, migratory issues, terrorism, disease and political corruption. New higher education access policy in Georgia is in its early years of implementation, as it was introduced relatively recently, in 2005. Therefore, there are a number of issues to be considered in order to evaluate the positive consequences as well as the disadvantages that this policy has caused for different socioeconomic and ethnic groups residing in Georgia, as well as for the Georgian and ethnic minority populations residing in isolated regions of the country. However, the 2005 policy cannot be considered without putting it in a wider historical perspective. In order to evaluate its importance and consequences it is necessary to analyze past experiences, namely the post-soviet period from 1991 up to 2005 when the education system of the country fell in another extreme of a total chaos. Sustainable global security can only be achieved when education is made a priority by states and their institutions. When properly realized, education can be a global advantage to fight poverty, inequality, insecurity, and disease. Thus the article outlines the components that any educational system must include in order to ensure a well-educated, tolerant, and peaceful world.

While education is a basic necessity for any country's development, it is also extremely beneficial in terms of the institutionalization and promotion of culturally comprehensive behavior, cross-cultural understanding, and a movement toward promoting a culture of peace. The approval of values like cross-cultural tolerance and global understanding is principal in overcoming transnational security threats such as poverty, environmental degradation, migratory issues, terrorism, disease and political corruption.

Arising from the fact that contemporary people live and interact in an increasingly globalised world, there appeared an education perspective, such as Global Education. As a specific approach towards Education, Global Education is an answer to the globalised world and the needs of people within it. It is a fundamental renewal in the area of education in an age of globalization; it represents an educational concept with a political, philosophical and pedagogical background; it is global citizenship education preparing people to fully take up their role as citizens of one world, by exploring world realities, providing information and by developing understanding and respect.

Today Education needs a new dimension that would encourage people's critical thinking and capacity to reflect on and perceive the reality around them, while at the same time developing their understanding of how their Global Education contributes not only to improving local realities but also to sustaining development

and social justice.

New higher education access policy in Georgia is in its early years of implementation, as it was introduced relatively recently, in 2005. Therefore, there are a number of issues to be considered in order to evaluate the positive consequences as well as the disadvantages that this policy has caused for different socioeconomic and ethnic groups residing in Georgia, as well as for the Georgian and ethnic minority populations residing in isolated regions of the country.

Georgia belongs to a category of states where development of civil integration policies and their consistent implementation is of a key importance for country's stable and democratic development.

Cataclysms emerged in the 1990s predetermined a low degree of participation of a considerable part of the country's population, in the face of ethnic minorities, in the economic, public-political, or cultural life of the country. One of the negative factors is, that as a result, ethnic minorities, especially the Azeri and Armenians living compactly in KvemoKartli and Javakheti, were turned into secondary citizens.

Positive factor is, that in view of the fact that Georgia is linguistically diverse country as its ethnic groups speak different languages and various religious groups reside in Georgia as well, Georgian national legislation takes account of the country's cultural diversity. Many serious reforms have been carried out in that direction, such as:

- Decentralization of education system;
- Elections to school boards;
- Elections of school directors;
- School curricula and textbooks;
- Development and functions of resource centers;
- Teacher professional development and certification;
- Georgian language teaching etc.

However, the 2005 policy cannot be considered without putting it in a wider historical perspective. In order to evaluate its importance and consequences it is necessary to analyze past experiences, namely the post-soviet period from 1991 up to 2005 when the education system of the country fell in another extreme of a total chaos.

Unfortunately, being annexed by Russia in early 19th century and later being a part of the Soviet Union, Georgia was isolated from the rest of the world and was deprived of opportunity to have open relationships with different countries in any field, including education.

Since proclaiming independence in 1991, Georgia restored its linking role with various countries.

Georgia started to move to market economy; however reforming changes were interrupted by constant internal and external problems faced by the independent country, namely high level of corruption and lack of trend towards any kind of changes. Much more intensive reforming process started since 2003, after the “Rose Revolution”.

At this period one of the main domestic priorities of the Georgian government is to fulfill ongoing economic reforms, increase employability, and create better conditions for foreign investments and more effective legislation to improve the business opportunities in the country.

During the last five years Georgia is extremely growing economically, it has fought against corruption, has facilitated licenses, taxes and most of the burdens for foreign investors. That is why Georgia is considered to be one of the countries with the best climate for doing business.



Due to its geopolitical location Georgia is coming forward as a key country for expanding energy-transit routes from Central Asia and Caspian region towards the West and Europe.

Important changes took place also in education area. As we all know, the Bologna Process became the most important trend of internationalization of higher education in Europe. Education and knowledge became important factors in a new stage of development.

On May, 2005 Minister of Education and Sciences of Georgia signed the Bergen Communiqué and thus Georgia, post-Soviet state, officially joined the Bologna Process like forty five other European countries and committed itself to becoming a constituent part of the European Higher Education Area by 2010. That is the justification of the fact, that Georgia sees the opportunity to solve its economic, political and social problems through education.

It is obvious that the Bologna Process may have possible negative impacts and cause some problems, but the results and benefits of the Bologna Process depend on how the governments and higher education institutions will respond to this challenge. Georgia has a chance to internationalize higher education successfully. Nowadays Georgia is making efforts to achieve this ambitious goal through designing and implementing the proper policy and strategy.

We are convinced that education is a fundamental pillar of human rights, democracy, sustainable development and peace, and it should therefore become available to all throughout life. Measures are required to ensure co-ordination and co-operation across and between the various sectors, particularly between different kinds of higher institutions, organizations and state itself.

Education is necessary for building the future, for which the younger generations will need to be equipped with new skills, knowledge and ideals. Higher education includes all types of studies, training or training for research at the post-secondary level, provided by universities or other educational establishments that are approved as institutions of higher education by the competent State authorities.

One of the biggest challenges for administering the new education process is its modern demands. Everywhere higher education is faced with great challenges and difficulties related to financing, equity of conditions at access into and during the course of studies, improved staff development, skills-based training, enhancement and preservation of quality in teaching, research and services, relevance of programs, employability of graduates, establishment of efficient co-operation agreements and equitable access to the benefits of international co-operation. At the same time, higher education is being challenged by new opportunities relating to technologies that are improving the ways in which knowledge can be produced, managed, disseminated, accessed and controlled. Equitable access to these technologies should be ensured at all levels of education systems.

Today, education is more vital than ever before in determining how well people adjust to the realities of an increasingly interdependent world. Education determines who will be able to face persisting challenges in a constructive and positive way. In this respect, national governments should construct education systems that meet a multitude of goals: social, intellectual, economic, political/civic, moral, and cultural.

Considering a substantial change and development of higher education, the enhancement of its quality and relevance, and the solution to the major challenges it faces, requires the strong involvement not only of governments and of higher education institutions, but also of all stakeholders, including students and their families, teachers, business and industry, the public and private sectors of the economy, parliaments, the media, the community, professional associations and society as well as a greater responsibility of higher education institutions towards society and accountability in the use of public and private, national or international resources.

Sustainable global security can only be achieved when education is made a priority by states and their

institutions. When properly realized, education can be a global advantage to fight poverty, inequality, insecurity, and disease. Thus the article outlines the components that any educational system must include in order to ensure a well-educated, tolerant, and peaceful world.

It is said that, the Globalization - with its opportunities and its challenges - is neither simply a dream nor a nightmare. It is a reality that needs a new educational approach and Global Education can provide a good answer. Bringing together relevant actors and stakeholders can implement Global Education and turn the world into one big learning space for all citizens.

The world in which we live, is a world where violations of human rights still occur; where the unequal development and distribution of wealth is a reality that everyone faces - and most severely those, who as a direct result, live in extreme poverty; and where climate change threatens the environment and thus humanity.

Nowadays there are two challenges our societies are facing; firstly the need to build a society that is socially just for everyone and is developed in a sustainable way, and secondly to do it in a world that is globalizing at an ever increasing speed. Education is a life-long and life-wide experience.

Building Global Cooperation is designed as a common working program that stimulates and supports collective learning and mutual understanding. It aims at bringing together eminent persons and young leaders from business, politics and civil society.

Emphasizing that higher education systems should enhance their capacity to live with uncertainty, to change and bring about change, and to address social needs and to promote solidarity and equity; should preserve and exercise scientific rigor and originality, in a spirit of impartiality, as a basic prerequisite for attaining and sustaining an indispensable level of quality; and should place students at the center of their concerns, within a lifelong perspective, so as to allow their full integration into the global knowledge society of the coming century.

As a conclusion, we would like to once more underline multicultural and intercultural education as a significant paradigm of the XXI century and a way to achieve above mentioned goals. Multicultural education is based on democratic principles and values and promotes cultural pluralism in multicultural societies. The main underlying concept of this approach to the learning/teaching process is the idea that the primary goal of education is to facilitate every student's intellectual, social and personal development.

Among the recommendations that might be offered for schools and HEIs are the improving of professional qualifications of staff of resource centers; as well as of teaching of Georgian as a second language through developing the content of syllabuses; making all staff members aware of any kind of changes and innovations; working together to involve stakeholders, employers, professors, students in the development of educational programs; providing good management system; searching for more financial and professional support in order to improve and enrich the research area of the Education Institutions;

Recommendations might be given to governmental bodies as well, such as studying of issue very deeply before implementing it into the education system; making some forecasting and analyze of what kind of results may follow; creating the basis and appropriate conditions for right adaptation of any kind of reforms and changes, etc., assuring the readiness of the educational system of the country; setting up Georgian language houses in ethnic groups of the country in order to recognize and make more efficient the bilingual education reform and carrying out adult education programs.