Participation in the civil society, concepts of democracy and tolerance

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Voluntary participation experiences within the civil society are viewed as an opportunity for developing competencies and attitudes that are essential for the survival and expansion of democracy. In this paper we consider how type of organization and frequency of participation impact on students' concepts of democracy and attitudes towards immigrants both for 14 year and upper secondary students from various countries. Basically, results show that the quality of participation – both in terms of meaningful involvement, of interaction with (different) others, and opportunities for personal integration – must be taken into account. The implications for the development of citizenship education projects will be stressed.

National assessment of civic and citizenship education outcomes in Australia: the impact of the iea civic education study on Australian policy and practice in Civic and Citizenship Education

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The paper will posit that the knowledge gained from Australia's participation in the IEA Civic Education Study has been instructive and influential in facilitating and shaping significant developments in Civics and Citizenship Education (CCE) in Australia. The first part will focus of on an analysis of the conceptual model and item types used in the IEA Civic Education Study, and comment on how these impacted on the kinds of findings reported in CivEd reports. The second part will focus on the key Australian findings derived from secondary analysis of the national data in the IEA Civic Education Study, and the response from interested parties in Australian to those findings. The third part will describe and canvass issues associated with the National Sample Assessment, to be undertaken in Australian schools across all jurisdictions in 2004. Comparisons of CivEd instrumentation with National Assessment trial instrumentation and data will demonstrate the extensions that have been developed. Fourthly, the initial impact of the national assessment policy on school and teacher activity will be briefly examined. The Australian teacher and school data in the IEA Civic Education Study, and the findings associated with these, indicate a conflict between intent and capacity in Australian jurisdictions to deliver the CCE learning outcomes they espouse. Discussion of this dynamic policy development in CCE in Australia will conclude what is only a beginning conversation for systems and practitioners in Australia. The ways in which dominant studies such as those with the IEA can contribute to educational policy in general will be canvassed.