

Reimagining Digital Citizenship in Civic Education: Towards a Critical Global Digital Citizenship Framework

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Digital citizenship has become an important concept in contemporary education as learners increasingly participate in digitally connected local and global communities. Existing approaches primarily emphasise digital literacy, online safety, cyber resilience and responsible technology use (Harris & Johns, 2021). While these dimensions remain important, they provide only a partial understanding of the knowledge, values and dispositions required for meaningful civic participation in an increasingly interconnected world. They often overlook broader issues of human rights, democracy, equity, cultural diversity and global responsibility that are central to contemporary civic education (de Andreotti, 2014; Mansouri et al., 2017).

This conceptual paper responds to this gap by developing a Critical Global Digital Citizenship (CGDC) Framework for civic education. Drawing on four complementary theoretical traditions – Digital Citizenship, Global Citizenship Education, Critical Global Citizenship and Postcolonial perspectives (de Andreotti, 2014; Harris & Johns, 2020; Lingard, 2009; Mignolo, 2007) – the paper synthesises key concepts into an integrated framework that repositions digital citizenship as a civic, ethical and socially transformative practice.

The proposed framework is organised as a developmental model comprising three interconnected domains: Knowing, Acting and Transforming. Across these domains, six dimensions are identified: Critical Digital Literacy, Critical Intercultural Consciousness, Ethical Participation, Democratic Engagement, Human Rights and Social Justice, and Global Responsibility. Together, these dimensions illustrate how learners move from critically understanding digital societies, to participating ethically within them, and ultimately contributing to more democratic, inclusive and sustainable futures.

The paper concludes by discussing the implications of the CGDC Framework for curriculum design, teacher education and educational policy, arguing that it provides a contemporary conceptual foundation for preparing learners to become ethical, critical and globally responsible digital citizens.

References

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