Towards a Comprehensive Framework on Civic Competence Development of Teachers: A Systematic Review of Literature

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Abstract: This study aims to develop a comprehensive model for the civic socialization process of teachers. Citizenship has become one of the main objectives for the European education systems. It is expected that teachers are well prepared and equipped with the necessary knowledge, skills, and attitudes to also engage students in democratic citizenship. While a lot is known about young peoples’ civic competence development and how schools and teachers (don’t) support this process, less is known about how teachers themselves engage with (the teaching of) civics. Other than the civic socialization process of young adolescents that focuses on personal competence development, the civic socialization process of teachers includes the development of professional, civic competences. These professional competences make that they are able to prepare pupils to carry out their civic responsibilities in thoughtful ways. Existing models for the civic socialization process of young adolescents do not take this dual purpose into account. Based on these observations, this paper will investigate (1)What personal and professional civic competences teachers need to effectively teach civic education and (2) how teachers acquire these personal and professional civic competences. To answer the first research question, a systematic review of literature of existing civic education frameworks was carried out and linked to literature on teacher training. The second research question was addressed by adapting the Octagon model, developed by the International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IEA), to the context of teachers. This was done by carrying out a systematic review of the recent literature linking three theoretical topics involved in teachers’ civic competence development: theories about the civic socialization process of young adolescents, Schumans (1987) theoretical assumptions on pedagogical content knowledge (PCK), and Nogueira & Moreira’s (2012) framework for civic education teachers’ knowledge and literature on teachers’ professional development. This resulted in a comprehensive conceptual framework describing the personal and professional civic competences of civic education teachers. In addition, this framework is linked to the OctagonT model: a model that describes the processes through which teachers acquire these personal and professional civic competences. This model recognizes that teachers’ civic socialization process is influenced by interconnected variables located at different levels in a multi-level structure (the individual teacher (e.g., civic beliefs), everyday contacts (e.g., teacher educators, the intended, informal and hidden curriculum of the teacher training program, internship contacts, participation opportunities in teacher training, etc.) and the influence of the national educational context (e.g., vision on civic education)). Furthermore, implications for teacher education programs are described.

Keywords: civic education, civic competences, civic socialization, octagon model, teacher training

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