

## DIRECTION OF EDUCATIONAL POLICY IN THE FORMATION OF TEACHER PROFESSIONALISM IN THE SUBJECT OF CIVIC AND CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION IN AUSTRALIA

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### ABSTRACT

This paper discusses the direction of educational policy in the formation of teacher professionalism in the subject of Civic and Citizenship Education (CCE) in Australia by reviewing teacher qualification standards, learning strategies, and the implementation of citizenship pedagogy in minimal-maximal contexts. This study uses a literature review method through the analysis of policy documents, scientific publications, and institutional reports related to the development of teacher professionalism. The results of the study indicate that teacher professionalism in Australia is built through comprehensive AITSL standards that emphasize professional knowledge, professional practice, and professional engagement. Teachers act as facilitators who encourage student autonomy, democratic learning, and participation in school and community environments through classroom, extracurricular, and community-based approaches. When compared with practices in Hong Kong, Australian teacher professionalism is more inclined toward the maximal context because CCE learning is directed at creating active citizens who are critical, participatory, and sensitive to contemporary socio-political issues. These findings confirm that Australian government policies make a significant contribution to strengthening teacher professionalism and the effectiveness of Civic and Citizenship Education learning.

### INTRODUCTION

The revival of Civic and Citizenship Education (CCE) in Australia has strong historical roots, beginning during the Hawke-Keating Labor government in the 1980s. Government policies during that period became an important catalyst for the resurgence of citizenship education. CCE did not emerge organically, but rather through deliberate policy-driven initiatives and significant financial commitments. Without such policy-driven intervention, CCE might not have regained its footing in the Australian curriculum. This indicates a cause-and-effect relationship in which government policy acts as the primary driver of reform and emphasis in certain educational fields.



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Success in learning is largely determined by the direction of policy in curriculum development, one of which is the development of teacher professionalism. The duties and functions of teachers are not merely to teach in the classroom, but rather to educate, guide, and shape the personality of learners in order to prepare future generations as competent human resources. Teachers also have a role in observing the development of each student in realizing an optimal life in the future.

In terms of the teaching profession, there are several criteria used as prerequisites as stated by the National Education Association (NEA), including: a) requiring sufficient professionalism, b) engaging in a scientific discipline relevant to what is taught, c) involving high intellectual activities, d) requiring special and continuous professional training, e) promising a permanent life career, f) having permanent membership services, and possessing a recognized professional organization (Sanusi, 2015). Furthermore, Sanusi states that in teaching activities, at least professional teachers must master two necessary characteristics, namely teaching materials and students. These two categories are essential in determining the methods and strategies used in teaching (Sanusi, 2015). When viewed from the criteria of professional teachers above, teachers who teach Civic and Citizenship Education must have high professionalism, where teachers are not only focused on skills and expertise, but also on a vocational calling and possess the behavior and morality that must be fulfilled by a Civic Education teacher.

This paper focuses more on comparing teacher professionalism in teaching Civic Education in Australia by examining teacher qualifications, the duties and functions of teachers in developing Civic Education, as well as teacher strategies in the learning process by linking them to Kerr's concept of minimal-maximal education. Because the position of Civic Education in Hong Kong and Australia is equally integrated with other subjects, it is interesting to examine the position of teachers from both contexts.

## METHOD

The type of research used in this article is a literature study method (Nazir, 2003). The data collection method is conducted by reviewing literature sources derived from primary books and scientific journals related to teacher professionalism in the subject of Civic and Citizenship Education in Australia. The data obtained are then analyzed inductively in accordance with studies related to teacher professionalism in the subject of Civic and Citizenship Education in Australia.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### A brief profile of Civic and Citizenship Education (CCE) in Australia

In the 1980s, during the Hawke-Keating Labor government, efforts were initiated to revive the Civic and Citizenship Education program. In 1990, the Civic Expert Group reviewed the implementation of education on civic and governmental issues in Australia. Kemp explains that between 1997 and 2014, the conservative coalition government injected funding of AUD \$31 million to design and implement the Civic and Citizenship Education program, which was not only aimed at schools but also at higher education institutions, under the name Discovering Democracy (Heggart, 2018). Thus, the institutional regulation of CCE fell under nationalist drivers.

The concept of Civic and Citizenship Education in Australia is a set of school-based learning experiences aimed at preparing young Australians to become effective citizens. As stated by Print, Civic Education is not a stand-alone subject in schools (curriculum) but is



instead integrated into other subject areas such as history, social sciences, geography, and commerce, within the learning area of Studies of Society and Environment (SOSE). However, according to the ACARA (Australian Curriculum and Reporting Authority) document, as a result of the Melbourne Declaration in December 2008, CCE has been included within the Humanities and Social Sciences learning area, which includes geography, history, business, economics, and CCE (ACARA, 2012).

### **Direction of Government Policy and Teacher Professionalism in CCE**

Teacher professionalism in Australia is regulated by comprehensive standards issued by the Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership Limited (AITSL) in 2011. These standards are interrelated and grouped into three main teaching domains: professional knowledge, professional practice, and professional engagement.

**Professional Knowledge:** This domain emphasizes teachers' ability to utilize their knowledge to transfer it to students in learning activities. This includes understanding student characteristics and how they learn, as well as mastery of subject content and how to teach it.

**Professional Practice:** This domain focuses on strengthening classroom practices. With diverse student backgrounds, teachers are required to master classroom conditions by using interactive learning models to create engaging learning experiences and to develop cooperative character and mutual respect among students. This also includes planning and implementing effective teaching, creating supportive and safe learning environments, and assessing, providing feedback, and reporting student learning.

**Professional Engagement:** This domain generally requires teachers in Australia to model effective learning and to extend their professionalism by engaging with students, colleagues, parents/guardians, and the community. Teachers are expected to engage with communities both inside and outside schools in order to build and develop students' intellectual capacities.

### **Professional Teacher Standards in Australia**

The development of professional teachers in Australia is carried out across all territorial regions as a means of ensuring educational quality. The professional teacher standards issued by the Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (2011) emphasize the importance of teachers' involvement in government projects or programs to dedicate themselves to service in remote schools, with the aim of providing children in remote areas with access to education from professional teachers (Simone White, 2016). This statement clearly establishes Rural Educator Work as an obligation that must be adhered to by all educators in Australia, requiring readiness to be placed in remote areas.

What Simone White states regarding teacher professionalism is reflected in the Australian Government document through the Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership Limited (2011), which issued general professional teacher standards consisting of seven interrelated and interdependent standards, grouped into three teaching domains: professional knowledge, professional practice, and professional engagement. For clarity, the classification of teacher professionalism is explained in the table 1.



**Table 1. For clarity, the classification of teacher professionalism**

No	Teaching Domain Standard	Standard	Focus and Descriptor
1	Professional Knowledge	1. Knowing students and how they learn 2. Knowing content and how to teach it	See career stage standards
2	Professional Practice	1. Planning and implementing effective teaching and learning 2. Creating and maintaining supportive and safe learning environment 3. Assessing, providing feedback, and reporting on student learning	
3	Professional Engagement	1. Engaging in professional learning 2. Engaging professionally with colleagues, arents/guardians, and the community	

Source: Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership Limited (2011)

Professional knowledge emphasizes teachers' ability to utilize their knowledge in the process of transferring knowledge to students in learning activities. Meanwhile, professional practice emphasizes strengthening classroom practices; with diverse student backgrounds, teachers are required to master classroom conditions by using interactive learning models to create engaging learning and to develop cooperation among students and mutual respect for existing differences. Finally, in professional engagement, teachers in Australia are generally required to model effective learning and extend their professional learning by involving students, colleagues, parents, and the community, and teachers are expected to engage with communities both inside and outside the school to build and develop students' intellectual capacities.

A study by ACER (Australian Council for Education Research) investigated the characteristics of effective initial teacher education programs in Victoria, as reported by teachers who had just completed their first year of teaching (Ingvarson, Kleinhenz, Khoo, & Wilkinson, 2007 in Laurence Ingvarson et al., 2014), showing that teachers in Australia are prepared to meet required educator competency standards, including:

1. A deep understanding of what is expected to help students learn and how students learn.
2. Skills in diagnosing students' existing levels of understanding of the content being taught.
3. Planning and selecting activities that will encourage further student development.
4. Teacher methods for assessing the extent of student learning progress.



In terms of inclusive teaching practice, Civic and Citizenship Education in Australia emphasizes consideration of students' abilities and respect for diversity in Australian schools. Professional teacher standards in Australia do not only teach Civic Education competencies in the classroom, but also provide sufficient space for students to actively participate in community activities, as stated in the Melbourne Declaration (Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, 2008), which asserts that the educational goals for young Australians should be to become active young Australian citizens who:

1. Act with moral and ethical integrity
2. Have an understanding of Australia's system of government, both historically and culturally, and respect cultural, religious, and social diversity
3. Have knowledge, skills, and understanding in recognizing culture and contributing to reconciliation between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians
4. Have a commitment to upholding democratic values, justice, equity, and participation in Australian civic life
5. Work for the common good in improving harmony in the natural and social environment
6. Able to communicate across cultures, especially with cultures in Asian countries
7. Responsible to local and global communities.

### Teaching Skills of Teachers in Australia

In developing capacity to build engaging classrooms in the teaching and learning process, teachers in Australia have changed leadership models in teaching styles, such as beginning instruction at the front of the class, sometimes mingling with students, supervising student learning activities from slightly behind while guiding them (Keith Heggart, 2018). Furthermore, Keith Heggart states that teachers, students, and schools work collaboratively regarding what is learned and how it is learned (Keith Heggart, 2018). In civic learning activities, teachers are positioned more as facilitators and emphasize student autonomy in choosing topics related to citizenship issues in Australia, such as exploring cases of domestic violence, homelessness, vehicle safety, refugees, racism, and teenage pregnancy.

The teaching of Civic and Citizenship Education emphasizes developing the goals and strategies of CCE in Australia, namely that schools must fully develop the talents and capacities of all students, including:

1. Having the capacity and skills to analyze problems, solve problems, and communicate ideas and information to plan and organize activities and collaborate with others
2. Having qualities of self-confidence, optimism, high self-esteem, and commitment to personal excellence as the basis for shaping future life potential
3. Having the capacity to make judgments and take responsibility in matters of morality, ethics, social justice, and the capacity to understand their world, make rational and informed decisions about their lives, and accept responsibility for their own actions (Libby Tudball, in Kerry Kennedy et al. (eds), 2011)

To achieve these goals, schools and teachers need to emphasize knowledge acquisition and skill development that are student-centered. From 1997–2004, Australia's CCE and Discovering Democracy programs aimed to provide teacher resources and professional learning to help prepare Australian youth to be effective, responsible citizens, learn about Australia's system of government, and understand democratic heritage and the values that





support it, including equality, freedom, justice, trust, and social cooperation (Libby Tudball, in Kerry Kennedy et al. (eds), 2011).

### **The Role of Teachers in Professional Learning in the Subject of Civic and Citizenship Education in Australia**

Teachers as learning subjects play a decisive role in achieving expected goals. In Civic and Citizenship Education, teachers are required to develop students' academic potential in terms of knowledge, attitudes, and skills to make students active citizens by utilizing classrooms, school environments, and communities as spaces where students can experience and enact democratic values and sharpen their dispositions to become active citizens (Department of Education, 2010). Teachers as learning subjects play a decisive role in achieving expected goals. In Civic and Citizenship Education, teachers are required to develop students' academic potential in terms of knowledge, attitudes, and skills to make students active citizens by utilizing classrooms, school environments, and communities as spaces where students can experience and enact democratic values and sharpen their dispositions to become active citizens (Department of Education, 2010).

To enhance students' potential in Civic and Citizenship Education, three learning methods are used in Australia, namely classroom learning, out-of-class learning, and learning within specific communities. *First*, classroom learning. In the classroom, the goal of Civic and Citizenship Education learning is to develop and build engaging learning contexts, and classrooms are used as democratic spaces where everyone is empowered to contribute to learning experiences. Students are encouraged to be active and participate in the classroom by linking their participation to their understanding of democratic processes (Department of Education, 2010: 6). Thus, in the context of classroom learning, the teacher's role is as a facilitator to develop student participation and build a democratic classroom environment. *Second*, out-of-class learning. In the context of out-of-class learning, emphasis is placed on student participation outside the school in applying and extending citizenship learning outcomes in accordance with the curriculum taught (Department of Education, 2010: 22). Out-of-class learning focuses on developing knowledge, skills, and experiential learning through interactions with the community environment. *Third*, community participation. Student participation in communities serves as an application of the three competencies students must possess: knowledge competence, attitude competence, and skill competence. The objectives of community participation include: 1) creating and maintaining student interest in political, social, and environmental worlds, 2) encouraging willingness to participate in local, national, and global communities, 3) increasing awareness of social and political issues to make informed choices and decisions, 4) understanding the importance of working together for the common good to support or oppose certain behaviors or actions, and 5) having confidence and awareness of one's own beliefs and values (Department of Education, 2010).

### **Comparison of the Role of Teachers in Civic and Citizenship Education Learning in Australia Reviewed from the Minimal-Maximal Context**

The substance examined in this paper focuses only on the role and professionalism of teachers in Hong Kong and Australia. Using David Kerr's theory of minimal-maximal Civic Education contexts, there are differences in the roles and professionalism of teachers in Hong Kong and Australia, as explained in the table 2.



**Table 2. The roles and professionalism of teachers in Australia**

Country	Nomenclature	Developed Content / Objectives	Teacher Professionalism	Minimal–Maximal Context
Australia	Humanities and Sosial Sciences	System of Governm ent, political educatio, human rights, national history	<p>Professional Teacher Standards</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Planning and implementing effective teaching</li> <li>2. Creating supportive and safe learning environments</li> <li>3. Engaging in professional learning</li> <li>4. Building professional relationships with colleagues, parents, and communities.</li> </ol> <p>Teacher Teaching Skills</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Possessing good teaching skills</li> <li>2. In civic learning activities, teachers act more as facilitators and emphasize student autonomy (Keith Heggart, 2018)</li> <li>3. Providing sufficient space for students to actively participate in community</li> </ol>	When viewed from the content of teacher teaching skills, it can be stated that the implementation of Civic Education learning in Australia is more inclined toward the maximal direction because teachers involvement is limited to facilitation and emphasizes the formation of active citizens, where students not only learn in classrooms but also develop civic skills and dispositions to engage in schools, communities, and social groups.



			activities (Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, 2008)	
			4. Providing broad freedom for students to create more democratic learning spaces.	
			5. In the learning process, teachers prefer contemporary political issues to develop critical students	

Source: processed from the author's analysis

## CONCLUSION

The substance of policy direction in the development of teacher professionalism in Australia, when viewed from qualification standards in teaching, aligns with Kerr's theory of minimal-maximal Civic Education when examined through teacher teaching strategies used in schools. Civic Education in Australia, in its learning implementation, positions teachers as facilitators, requiring students to have high creativity and manage classrooms democratically. The concept of learning in Civic Education in Australia is not limited to classrooms but also utilizes community environments and specific communities as learning resources, with the expectation that students become active citizens who are sensitive to contemporary social, political, and economic issues in Australia.

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