

Civic Education in Greek Educational System: Empirical Approach in Schools of Central Macedonia of Greece

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Abstract: Politicization is the process by which norms, values and behaviors are learned; Easton and Dennis (1980) refer to "*developmental processes by which individuals are socialized politically*" (p.7) while Dawsons and Prewitt (1969) refer to "*the development process with which the citizen matures politically*"(p. 71). Similarly, Rush and Althoff (1971) consider that political socialization as "*the process that results in the acquisition of all the politically oriented experiences the individual needs. These experiences are not only political in the narrow sense, but they are relevant because they shape their political behavior*" (p. 3). Scholars, however, question the way in which young people acquire these values in schools and elsewhere, as well as whether these values are real values for young people (Gimpel, Lay, & Schuknecht, 2003). What is generally known is that at some point in time a person will be integrated into a given political ideology or value. This view of political socialization overlooks the idiosyncratic personal development of the new man (Dahlgren, 2009). This paper seeks to outline the degree of effectiveness of civic education in Greek public schools. Civic education effectiveness was measured by students' knowledge of eight variables related to issues of everyday politics. The variables concerned pupils' views on the political system in Greece, their knowledge of political system name, their knowledge of the way of election of the president of democracy, the time of each government election, the right to vote, who is President of Democracy and who the Minister of Education. Finally, the students were asked about the political space in which they integrate themselves. In addition, the effect of factors on the above variables was also examined, such as urbanity, gender and grade. The results of the survey include the fact that there is statistically significant difference between genders and the political space in which they integrate themselves. Also, the political space influences the performance grade, given the fact that students who belong to anarchist space have the lowest grade in the previous school year. Our analysis of political socialization is based on the assumption that next to a rational choice utilitarian process, which guides us in matters of party preference and voting behavior, lays a less-than-rational cognitive process of moral decisions, which is based on definite notions of good and evil. This analysis allowed us to capture visually these discourses in the form of "semantic maps."

Keywords: Civic education, Politicization, Political knowledge

Introducing the Concept of Political Socialization

The political socialization (politicization) attracted the attention of social scientists because it was considered that it could explain the function of political institutions and procedures. Many definitions have been proposed: According to Greenstein (1968) and Calavita (2005) the term refers to a) the acquisition of norms that dominate in the society and b) to the political learning of any kind. Having such a large width of criteria, it is very hard to be given a definition which would be able to include everything. Greenstein distinguishes between specific and general definitions of political socialization. According to him, the definition that best describes political socialization is as follows: Political socialization is "*...the intentional implantation of the political information, the values and the practices by institutions which are assigned for this responsibility; also, political socialization refers to the political learning, formal and informal, intentional and not, in every stage of life,*

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including not only what has been defined as political learning but also of politically relevant characteristics of personality” (Greenstein, 1970: 54).

Rush & Althoff (1971: 13-14) define political socialization as *“the procedure with which the individual familiarizes himself/ herself with the political system and determines in this way his convictions about politics and political phenomena. It includes the examination of social, economic and cultural environment of a society and its impact on the individual and his/her political attitudes and values. The political socialization is the most important connection between the social and political systems, but it can be quite different from the one system to the other”*.

According to Sigel (1989: xii), *“the political socialization refers to the procedure with which the individuals learn to adopt the norms, the values, the attitudes and the behaviors that are largely accepted from the existing systems. This kind of learning however, includes much more than the acquisition of the knowledge of political norms of the society as well as and much more than the credible application of these political actions; it suggests also that the individual will be familiar with these norms and behaviors – will internalize them – in a way that they look to him/her just and moral”*. Patrick (1977: 92) states that political socialization deals with experiences that aim at the formation of human actions supporting social and cultural order.

All the previous definitions have two common characteristics: at first, they have defined political socialization as the procedure with which norms, values and behaviors are learnt by the individuals; Easton & Dennis refer to *“the developmental procedures with which individuals socialized politically”* (1980: 7) whereas Dawsom & Prewitt refer to *“the developmental procedure with which the citizen matures politically”* (1969: 71). Similarly, Rush & Althoff (1971: 3) consider political socialization as *“the procedure which results the elaboration of the personality of the individual so as to obtain all the political oriented experiences that he ought to. These experiences are not only political but they are considered relevant because they form his/her political behavior”*. Scholars however, question the way with which young people obtain these values; also, they put into consideration the assumption that these values are real for the youngsters. What is generally known, is the fact that in a specific time an individual will join a given political ideology and will accept its values and norms. This consideration of political socialization overlooks the idiosyncratic and personal development of the young individual (Dahlgren, 2009). Therefore, there is the need for knowledge of the idiosyncrasy of the individual; the full frame of behavior for the study of political socialization is not necessary the study of conformation and of maintenance of the status quo (Conover, 1991· Colby, Beaumont, Ehrlich, & Corngold, 2007).

The second characteristic of the definitions of political socialization is the emphasis on its instrumental character aiming at the formation of a conventional frame in which new man will be part of, given the fact that the existing status quo has to be reproduced and at the same time underestimates the abilities of the youngsters to renovate and to modify political learning. Rush & Althoff (1971: 30) state that *“political socialization is characterized by a complex network of knowledge, values and attitudes which are conveyed among the individuals and the groups within a given political system, resulting in the contribution of a set of experiences that are inter-weaved around the personality of an individual aiming at the formation of political behavior”*. The scholars that give emphasis on this point use terms like *“cultural communication”*, *“adoption of cultural norms”* etc. Langton (1973: 4) poses it differently: *“The political socialization in its wider conception refers to the way with which society transmits its political culture from one generation to the other”*.

The procedure of socialization influences every kind of social group and is connected with every type of social relation. It is considered by the scholars as one of the most important processes of systemic survival. As Almond puts it (1970: 27): *“All the political systems tend to perpetuate their culture and their structures as time goes by and they succeed in this task through socialization procedure by the primordial and the secondary institutions through which new man is led to maturation”*.

It cannot be stated that there is a unique theory of political socialization, even though that there are generally three approaches: the first and maybe the dominating one comes from the assumption that the attitudes are learnt in a young age and are especially resistant; they are considered also determining factors of prediction of political stances in the adult life of the individual (Dawson & Prewitt, 1969· Easton & Dennis, 1969· Gimpel, Lay, & Schuknecht, 2003). This approach has an important influence on the political convictions that are obtained in childhood and in the structure of personality which is created this period and which, even though it is not visible, determines permanent orientations in politics and in the choices of the individual when he/ she comes to adolescence.

In the other side of theoretical spectrum, it is assumed that the political orientation of the individual can be subject to many differentiations and modifications during his/ her life, provided that specific motives are given (Hahn, 1998· Hart & Fegley, 1995). This approach puts forward the point of view that during adult life the individual contacts with a multitude of new facts and events, new experiences and responsibilities, as well as with changes of its social position. Changes are also observed in his/ her biological condition. All the above have a determining impact on the socializing process. Some aspects of socialization can be based on values and attitudes that have been obtained in childhood, in other case some other aspects are created de novo the moments that no socialization process takes place.

The third theoretical approach stresses the importance of different generations on individual attitudes during adult life (Harwood & Creighton, 1993· Inglehart, 1990). This approach attributes an important role on events that form the attitudes, considering that these events will be interpreted differently by the age groups which share common values and points of view in the framework of their educational infrastructure. The age in which this specific event took place plays also important role, as well as the reaction of peer groups in this event.

As a conclusion, political socialization describes the procedure through which the individual, obtaining his/ her experiences from the childhood until the adult life, learns to develop political orientations, to form attitudes and to express moods about the political phenomena and procedures. The main purpose of political socialization is the acquisition on behalf of the individual of the reactions, the knowledge and the evaluation of the political phenomenon. It is the joint between the individual and the political system, which can contribute to a political culture sometimes towards the direction of political stability and sometimes towards the evolution of the existing culture. One of the most important factor of this process is school socialization and especially civic education which provides youngsters with the necessary cognitive equipment to obtain their political identity.

Civic Education in Greece

In Greece particular emphasis is given in civic education as a procedure of youngster's political socialization. The obligatory educational system in Greece comprises of two major levels: primary and secondary level. Each one consists of six classes (the last two classes of secondary educational level are more or less a preparatory step for university entrance). Secondary education level has two sub-levels: gymnasium and lyceum (each one has three classes). Civic education begins at the last two classes of primary level – one hour every week. In the third grade of secondary education level pupils are taught Social and Political Education for two hours per week. In the first class of lyceum students are taught Civic education for three hours per week and the same goes on in the second class. There are also specific directions that students should choose when they finish the second class. If humanities are chosen, then the student attends a subject that is called Basic principles of social sciences. In 2018 a new subject is included in the curriculum of the second class of lyceum which is called Modern world: citizen and democracy. In the last class of lyceum students are taught History of social sciences and Sociology (the last subject replaced Latin as the major subject – together with three others – for the university entrance), a fact that shows a turning point in Greek educational policy as far as politicization is concerned.

Aim of the Research

The theoretical frame of political socialization that was examined above was used to examine the level of political knowledge of Greek adolescent students, that is civic education effectiveness. Student political knowledge was delineated using five different variables:

- pupils' views on the political system in Greece,
- their knowledge of political system name,
- their knowledge of the way of election of the president of democracy,
- the time of each government election,
- the right to vote,
- who is President of Democracy and
- who the Minister of Education.

Finally, the students were asked about the political space in which they integrate themselves.

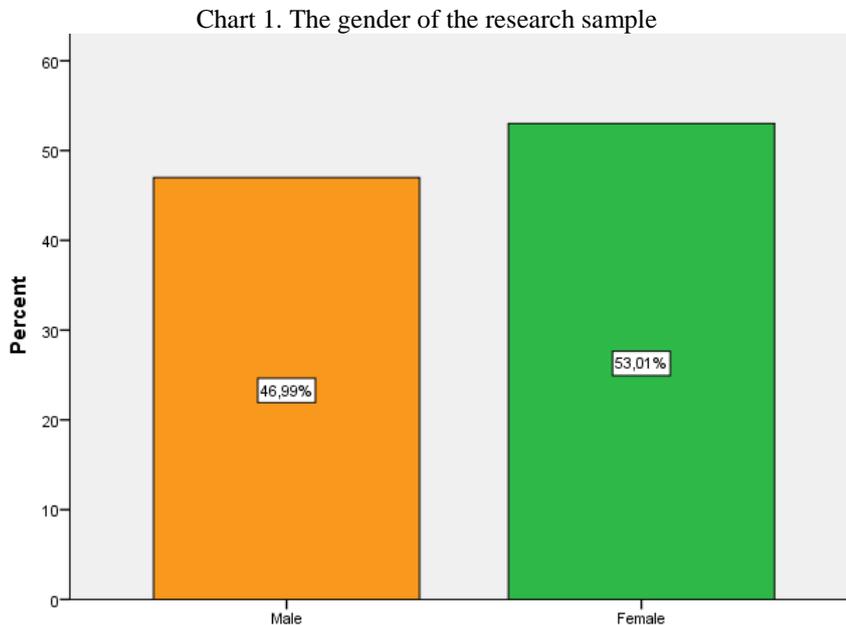
These variables are connected with familiar models of analyzing politicization that were used in previous researches (Mussen & Warren, 1970: 277· Milner, 2002). Also, influences were examined between these

variables and independent factors as the gender of the students, their performance in the previous class, their age etc.

Methodology of Research

For the examining of the researching problem, survey was considered as the most appropriate method which, despite its limitations, is considered more advantageous for the purpose of participating a large number of secondary education pupils from central Macedonia (Metaxas, 1976· Marshall, 1998· Gotovos, 1996, 2004). Schools from the prefectures of Katerini and Thessaloniki were chosen so as to be presented the pupils' points of view from urban, semi-urban and rural areas. The questionnaire of this research was based on two previous researches that were conducted for similar reasons. The first is the research that was conducted by Michalis Kelpanidis in 2012 and concerned the examining of pupils' points of view about sit-ins (Kelpanides, 2012). The second is a research conducted by Staurakakis and Demertzis about the youth and their attitudes on different issues of their daily life (Demertzis & Stayrakakis, 2008). At first, a pretest research was conducted in a lyceum class so as to ascertain pupils' attitude towards the questionnaire and to calculate the time that was needed in order for the pupils to fill it. In general, the results showed a good reception while time did not exceed 25 minutes. Once the research was approved by Institute of Educational Policy and instructions were given, letters were sent to pupils' parents so as to approve the participation of the pupils to the research. It has to be noted that all parents gave their consent without any objections. The original sample consisted of 2800 students from 16 Greek High Schools. The final sample used for data analysis included the responses of 2382 students, obtained during the academic year 2016-17. With regard to gender, 1110 were men and 1252 women.

As far as the gender of the students the following chart presents the fact that 53,01% were female and 46,99% were male. According to Hellenic Statistical Authority the same percentage applies more or less to the Greek student population.



Another useful descriptive data is the class in which the students belong. It was mentioned previously that this research took place in schools of central Macedonia in Greece and in particular in schools of the prefectures of Katerini and Thessaloniki. Only senior high schools took part due to the fact that the sit-ins are more frequent in these types of schools. This assumption does not exclude the fact that sit-ins take place also in junior high schools but for the sake of analysis only senior high schools were chosen. The table below show that 40,1% were students from first grade of high school, whereas 33,6% from second grade and 26,2% from third grade.

Table 1. Student number and percentage regarding class

	Frequency	Valid Percent
First class (A)	918	38,5
Second class (B)	770	32,3
Third class (G)	694	29,1
Total	2382	100,0

Results

Chi square analysis

At first a crosstab analysis was performed in order to present some simple correlations between independent variables such as sex and grade. Also chi square method was used to correlate political knowledge with variables concerning students' opinion about schools' sit-ins, about their participation in the sit-ins, about their participation in demonstrations in general and about their political orientations.

At first no statistical significance was observed between student sex and political knowledge. On the other hand, students' grade seems to correlate significantly with political knowledge. More specifically, students with high grade in the previous class seem to know more about political matters since 83,9% of them answered correctly to almost all the questions. It has to be noted that students with low marks are not totally uninterested in political matters since a significant 73% of them answered correctly to the questions. The following table shows the percentages analytically:

Table 2. Correlation between political knowledge and school performance

			Political Knowledge			Total
			1	2	3	
grade	Low marks	Count	40 _a	200 _a	649 _b	889
	(up to 15)	% within grade	4.5%	22.5%	73.0%	100.0%
	Medium	Count	23 _{a, b}	103 _b	613 _a	739
	mark (15-	% within grade	3.1%	13.9%	82.9%	100.0%
	17)	High mark	11 _a	98 _a	567 _b	676
	(17-20)	% within grade	1.6%	14.5%	83.9%	100.0%
Total		Count	74	401	1829	2304
		% within grade	3.2%	17.4%	79.4%	100.0%
Pearson Chi-Square			38.992 ^a	Df=4	P=.000	

Each subscript letter denotes a subset of pol_know_new categories whose column proportions do not differ significantly from each other at the ,05 level.

It has to be stated that a usual phenomenon in Greece every autumn is schools' sit-ins by students. Many researches were carried out in order to search for the reasons why students act in this way. In our research we correlated political knowledge with sit-in participation. The findings showed that there is a significant statistical relation but in the opposite direction. That is, 82,3% of the students who answered correctly to almost all the questions about political matters in Greece did not participate in the sit-ins. The corresponding percentage of the students who participated were 77,8% ($\chi^2=7.156$, $df=2$, $p=0,028$). Relevant with the previous finding is the next correlation between the opinion about the sit-ins and the political knowledge: students who believe that sit-ins are a completely acceptable way of political demonstration show the lowest scores in political knowledge (66.7%). On the other hand, 81.1% of the students who show the highest score in political knowledge disagree with sit-ins as a means of political mobilization. Finally, a crosstab test was conducted between political knowledge and the political space in which students put themselves. The majority of students that belong to the center left show the highest score in political knowledge (95.2%). On the other hand, the lowest scores present the students that belong to the anarchist political space (78.8%) ($\chi^2=37,152$, $df=2$, $p=.001$).

Cluster Analysis

Data analysis was based on Hierarchical Cluster Analysis (HCA) and Multiple Correspondence Analysis (MCA) in two steps (Chadjipadelis, 2015). In the first step, HCA was used to assign subjects into distinct

groups according to their response patterns. The main output of HCA was a group or cluster membership variable, which reflects the partitioning of the subjects into groups. Furthermore, for each group, the contribution of each question (variable) to the group formation was investigated, in order to reveal a typology of behavioural patterns. To determine the number of clusters, we use the empirical criterion of the change in the ratio of between-cluster inertia to total inertia, when moving from a partition with r clusters to a partition with $r-1$ clusters.

Table 3. Hierarchical cluster analysis

	4594	4595	4596	4597	4599	4603	
sex1	4.3		4.7		11.4	9.5	Male
sex2		4.1					Female
grade1	2.7		2.8				Grade A
grade2	5.4						Grade B
grade3				3.8		9.3	Grade C
E161	5.4			1.9		23.0	
E162			2.1		11.0		
E331						173.0	
E332				71.6			
E333	4.4	4.4					
E334	1.8				4.6		
E335			12.9		28.5		
E351		4.3				9.7	
E352				8.5	13.4		
E353	80.8						
E441						152.0	
E442		2.6					
E443				6.6	13.2		
E444	43.6		61.5				
E511		5.7				18.2	
E512							
E513	87.0					7.6	
E514							
E515				109.9			
E516			6.6		96.6		
E517		20.2					
E518			1.9		71.0		
E519			133.4			1.8	
Urb1	11.6			3.1		11.6	
Urb2		3.7		2.6	3.8		
Urb3	22.0		23.0				
POLKN1			155.6				
POLKN2	7.3				4.1	2.2	
POLKN3				3.7			
GRA1			9.4			2.9	
GRA2							
GRA3			26.8		12.2		
GRA4	4.9		4.3				
GRA5				4.5			
GRA6	3.3			5.3		9.3	

In the second step, the existing variables were jointly analysed with via Multiple Correspondence Analysis on the so-called Burt table (Greenacre, 2007). The Burt table is a symmetric, generalized contingency table, which cross-tabulates all variables against each other. The main MCA output is a set of orthogonal axes or dimensions that summarize the associations between variable categories into a space of lower dimensionality, with the least

possible loss of the original information contained in the Burt table. HCA is then applied on the coordinates of variable categories on the factorial axes. Note that this is now a clustering of the variables, instead of the subjects. The groups of variable categories can reveal abstract discourses.

Table 4. Multiple correspondence analysis

59	71	72	74	76
				Male
	Female			
				grade A
			grade C	grade B
	take part (NO)			
				take part (YES)
			SD (lock-in)	
	Neither, Nor		D	
				A (lock-in)
		SA		
	Demonstrations (NO)			
				Demonstrations (YES)
				Demonstrations (No, I know)
				function very well in Greece
	Important reformations are needed			
				Essential changes are necessary
No answer				
			Right	

	Centre-right			
				Centre
			Centre-left	
		Anarchist		left
	Not decided			
				Nowhere
No answer				
			City	
	Semi-Urban			
				Rural
Low				
				Medium
	High			

The analysis showed that high political knowledge is connected with female, high grade and centre right political affiliation, while they don't take part in lock-in or demonstrations. They think reforms are needed. Also they come from semi-urban families. Medium political knowledge is connected with male, medium grade, left and centre political affiliation, while they took part in demonstrations and lock-in. Also they think that essential changes are necessary. They come from rural families.

Conclusions

The main aim of this research was to outline the civic education impact on the adolescent students of higher secondary education in Greece. The sample was consisted of students from high schools of central Macedonia in Greece from urban, semi-urban and rural areas. For the analysis several variables that present students' knowledge about political matters in Greece were used. A hyper-variable was created which was correlated with some independent such as sex and grade. Also, this hyper-variable was correlated with variables that referred to school sit-ins and students' opinion about political demonstrations. Finally, the political knowledge variable was tested against the political space that students put themselves.

There has been observed a distinction among students. More specifically boys seem to be more politically active but with lower political knowledge whereas girls, even though they show higher scores, they do not participate in demonstrations and sit-ins. These results agree with some other researchers who have moved on, so as to assume that the sex and that school performance influence students' political attitudes especially during his/her transition from childhood to adolescence and adult life (Youniss, 1980). Meeus & Dekovic (1995) found that the

student identity, as it was measured by commitment in school chores plays an important role in the formation of individual political identity.

The research on civic education influence on the formation of the future political identity is a major issue because of phenomena such as political apathy that can lead to political “inertia”. Systematic analysis of the impact of the socializing factors has to become a major pursue of social researches aiming at the designation of the causes that push future citizens to the formation of their political convictions.

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