

Welcome to Turning Conscience Into Action, the Earth Charter podcast. Join Mirian Vilela, Earth Charter International Executive Director, in her fascinating conversations with great thinkers, scholars and activists from around the world who are working in the fields of sustainability, ethics, education and social transformation. Our purpose is to generate new insights on how to face current global challenges and inspire informed action.

Hello, everyone. Today we'll have a conversation with Namrata Sharma, who is faculty at State University of New York in the United States.

Namrata is an expert with the United Nations Harmony with Nature Knowledge Network. Her research areas of interest include international and comparative education, with a special focus on India, Japan, the UK, and the USA. She has authored several books, including Value Creating, Global Citizenship Education for Sustainable Development, Strategies and Approaches. I had the pleasure of meeting Namrata about 10 years ago at a conference on global citizenship education called World Summit of Educators at Soka University, America, which is located in a beautiful setting in California.

When I heard Namrata speak at that conference, and actually she gave one of the very special keynote speeches, my eyes really opened and it really sparked my interest in learning more about her work. So I'm very glad and grateful that Namrata is accepting to join us today for this conversation. Thank you, Namrata. Thank you so much, Mirian. It's a pleasure to join you today for the Charter International Podcast. So I would like to start our conversation today with a main, I think I would say, question that I think when I think about global citizenship education, I think of Namrata Sharma.

So Namrata, would you share with us what do you think is global citizenship education? So first of all, let me thank you, Mirian, for being an inspiration for many years through your work with the Earth Charter International. And I also would like to thank your team for putting together the recent podcast series. You know, I've enjoyed listening to the several enriching conversations between you and the people you have interviewed. So I am honored to be part of these discussions and very much look forward to our conversations today.

Yes, likewise. Thank you. You know, so related to the initiative of global citizenship education, let me sort of actually introduce both GCED, which is global citizenship education, as well as ESD, which is education for sustainable development. So these are both UNESCO-led initiatives. UNESCO, of course, is the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. But to respond to your question, you know, that is, what is global citizenship education? I think we need to first, I guess, look at, you know, the context within which these initiatives have developed.

And that includes, you know, some urgent concerns in the 21st century that has, you know, the concerns around climate change, migrations due to strife or climate conditions, and the politics of narrow nationalism. So as a response to some of these issues in September 2015, 17 sustainable development goals or SDGs were adopted by the United Nations with active participation by UNESCO. So of these 17 goals, goal four addresses

education for sustainable development and related approaches, you know, such as global citizenship education.

I think it's so important to ask this question that you have posed, you know, and to examine what is our respective definition of global citizenship education. One of the recent studies, you know, scholarly work suggests that depending on what definition of global citizenship we adopt, the definitions and models of global citizenship education and its focus on its goals in terms of students' outcomes will change. You know, so rather than assuming that there is this standard definition of global citizenship, I think it's crucial to reflect on what definition we choose to use in the process of implementing both GCE as well as EST.

In my work, I use a value creating approach to examine GCE and EST. And you know, we can discuss this more in our conversation today. Why do you think global citizenship education is that important to current times? I think that's really a relevant question. You know, my interest has been in intercultural education, multicultural education, and of course global citizenship. And so I think within, you know, sort of this discourse and debate, what I'm truly interested in are values-based perspectives.

You know, how do we integrate values-based perspectives within formal, non-formal, informal education? And when we talk about values-based perspectives, I think one finds that there is often a very western-dominated agenda within education worldwide. And global citizenship education, I think, provides that discursive space within which we can talk about the values of less widely known cultures and communities and the impact that has on schools and learning institutions worldwide historically and in our present times.

And how can we engage in those discussions about, you know, hegemonies and the dominance of certain types of values and norms within education globally? So to me, global citizenship education provides this discursive space in which we can talk about the dominance of certain types of values and how to bring into the discussion and to people's knowledge, you know, values that come from less widely known perspectives. That's great, Namrata. Yes, indeed, we could see global citizenship education as a space, as an opportunity to look at our values as humans that are really beyond our cultural differences and where we come from.

Certainly a wonderful opportunity. So you just mentioned a while ago about value-creating. What is that approach, value-creating? How does that link with global citizenship education in ESD? Thank you so much for asking that question. You know, I'm of course most passionate about value-creating education and using a value-creating approach. And, you know, those are also sort of in the title of my two recent books. You know, overall, the focus of my work is to examine the underlying paradigm and perspectives of global citizenship education and education for sustainable development.

So for example, like I mentioned, I situate my studies within the wide-ranging scholarship that challenges the Western dominated agendas and underlying Western worldview in global citizenship education. And I propose value-creating global citizenship education as a pedagogical approach that I have developed from a study of less widely known perspectives. So in particular, I take the worldwide phenomena of SOCA studies in

education as a focal point of inquiry. So let me explain briefly the term SOCA or value-creation is an approach to curriculum that emerged in Japan in the early 20th century by the educator Suni Saburo Makiguchi.

So this approach to curriculum that was developed by Makiguchi has been advanced by his fellow school teacher, Josai Toda, and more recently by their successor, Daisaku Ikeda. So Ikeda describes SOCA or value-creation as the capacity to find meaning to enhance one's own existence and contribute to the well-being of others under any circumstances. SOCA or value-creating education is a learner-centered approach, you know, that is focused on the health, well-being, and happiness of each student. But the concept of happiness here is very specifically understood, you know, as the ability to lead a contributive life.

So happy life is a contributive life where the learner can learn how to contribute to the welfare of self and others moving on, you know, for the life of long-turning. There's a very strong emphasis on the well-being of the person and others. Absolutely. The happiness of the self is inextricably linked with the other, and that's the basic, you know, sort of premise of SOCA or value-creating education. So I really am quite passionate about this philosophical underpinnings of this approach to curriculum, and I use this concept of SOCA or value-creation as a lens in my work.

So one of my arguments is that, you know, whereas it is common practice to use theoretical frameworks developed in the West for education worldwide, there are also important contributions that come from non-Western education perspectives, and we need to examine the impact of these, you know, on the practice of education. And so, you know, with regards to the UNESCO-led initiatives of education for sustainable development and global citizenship as well, I use a value-creating approach to engage with the discussions and the practice around these initiatives.

And that's how I propose value-creating global citizenship education as a pedagogical approach that advances learning for sustainable development based on an integrated view of life. I'm fascinated to hear this because, of course, it's very similar to the thinking behind the Earth Charter and how it's articulated, but also in our pedagogical approach, focusing on the well-being of the person as human, but also of the surrounding of others, as you're rightly saying. Okay, can you continue expanding on that?

Yes, of course. I absolutely, you know, love the similarity that you made between the earth's charter and this particular integrated view of life of SOCA that, you know, has informed my work. And I am really looking forward to especially talking about that commonality later today. But let me just explain here what I meant, what I mean by an integrated view of life and also, you know, what relevance this might have for the practice of education. So in my work, I examine certain Eastern ontological understandings that provide an integrated view of life.

So for example, I refer to the Buddhist concept of dependent origination. So this term, dependent origination, is in Sanskrit, it is called Pratitya Samutpada. And it is the view that all beings and phenomena exist or occur in relation to other beings or phenomena. Everything is linked to an intricate web of causation and connection and nothing, whether

in the realm of human affairs or of natural phenomena, can exist or occur solely of its own accord. So this is a definition by Ikeeda, who is the...

I love it. I really love the way it sounds in the same. It's very clear and succinct way of articulating this very important idea of existing in relation to other beings or phenomena. Exactly, you know, and what I'm really interested to do moving ahead is to do a little bit more research as to see how this phenomenon or this concept has influenced the schools and universities established by Ikeeda worldwide. You know, so I feel that there is a distinct influence of this notion of dependent origination within the Soka schools and universities that Ikeeda has established across the world.

These are, of course, secular institutions. And I find that a key emphasis, you know, within the learning of all these Soka institutions is to enhance the students' relationships in education, to broaden an understanding of other people and other cultures. So this includes the Soka University of America, where we had met and I do remember the joyful, you know, sort of occasion and so fortunate to have met you there. So the Soka University of America is a liberal arts college in California, and a key feature of this university is to provide students with a study abroad experience.

And that is interesting. It's included in tuition so that every undergraduate spends a semester living in and learning about another culture. But what I also find that in having this sort of, you know, as part of their learning process within the Soka University, what they're also doing is not just sort of enabling them to be global citizens who go out there and have a sort of a multicultural experience, but also enable them to build relationships with other people and other cultures. I thought this was another way in which one can perceive this particular type of learning that takes place or emphasis in the learning of Soka University that fosters these exchanges.

And you know, when I see the Soka schools in Japan as well, one of the aims, a key aims in these schools is to promote friendships among the students. So I would argue that, you know, there is this underlying aim across various Soka institutions, often expressed in the institution's mission statement to develop a sense of purpose within students to contribute to the wider world as global citizens. But also I would say that these schools and institutions, although they are secular, they are informed by the philosophy of, you know, dependent origination, the Buddhist view of interdependence, that undergrants, you know, the education within these institutions.

And why that is important is that, you know, we tend to miss such instances of how particular paradigms and perspectives have influenced practice, practices across diverse education settings worldwide. And we need to have conversations that include such examples, you know, of philosophical underpinnings of education and how they inform practice. And this is necessary so that education can be oriented to respond to the needs and particularities of the learner. Sure. Otherwise, it's very much focused on the theories and not linking it with the real life and practice.

So Namrata, I suppose you have addressed some of these thoughts that you're sharing with us in both or some of your books, especially the latest books you have. Could you

share with us some other key ideas or insights you generate from either one of these books? Thank you so much. Yes, absolutely.

I mean, in that in my, like, 2018 book, what I did was to bring together these Eastern ontological understandings, you know, from the Japanese tradition and from Mahatma Gandhi and the Indian tradition, and try to show that there is this, you know, sort of non-dualistic philosophies, you know, that these thinkers, these Asian thinkers, adopted, you know, as part of their education, but also as part of the movements that they, you know, individually generated in Japan and India, respectively, that have had worldwide impact, you know. And so what lessons can we learn from this non-Western way of looking at self, others, nature from non-dualistic philosophies, you know.

So that impact on GCE and EST, education for sustainable development and global citizenship, but also what can we learn from these movements generated by Mahatma Gandhi in India, and the impact of that, you know, on King here in the US, on other thinkers worldwide, and Makiguchi Toda Nikeda, which is the Japanese lineage, you know, having that movement influence global citizens worldwide. What impact have these, you know, progenitors had, and how can we harness their learnings and lessons from movements for the sake of global citizenship education. So these are the various sort of lessons in short that I tried to bring together in my 2018 book.

Namrata, thank you so much. You seem to be a reflection of all of that theory in practice in your own self and life. Given your background from India and your experience in Japan and in various countries, can you expand a little bit more in terms of your own experience being born in Calcutta, India, and your growing up there, and then how you expanded your worldview, first by embracing other voices from other cultures. You seem to be that unique view of a non-dualistic approach in practice through your life.

Thank you so much, Mirin. I mean, you're so kind. I don't know if I see myself like that, and I think I should question my family whether they see myself, you know, to be like that. That would be the real test. But you know, to respond to your question, I think, yes, that is true. I mean, we are so much influenced by, you know, where we grow up and the people we meet, the encounters we have. And I think having sort of had this experience of living in Asia and in, you know, the West, which is the UK and the US, I think I have felt both the advantage of being educated in a Western school, you know, so English language being the main language in which I was, which I studied in Calcutta.

But I also see the disadvantage of that in terms of always feeling that, you know, the Western dominated agendas are prevalent within the education that I'm receiving. I received in Japan, in UK, you know, and so my endeavor has been not to say that we should not engage with thinkers from the West. For example, John Dewey, I talk about him in my 2020 book, and I'm still learning from Dewey, who's such an incredible, you know, thinker, philosopher, educator.

But also what I argue is there are thinkers, you know, from the Indian subcontinent and from the Asian subcontinent like Aurobindo or Sunissa Buromaki-Gucci that have been educators, and we need to include their ideas within teacher education with a relevance for practicum-based study, you know, not just as a theoretical, you know, sort of a broad

enough theoretical understanding but really how can we use what they have said in terms of practice?

And of course, you know, like what you said, practice in our daily life. I mean, how can I enhance my understanding of other ways of living, acting, being, and the earth's charter? I don't think anything equals that till date that brings together the wisdom and the culture and traditions of all, you know, of examples from worldwide. And I'm so excited to have met you and the earth's charter initiative.

Thank you. So how do you see the role of the earth's charter in all of this, in your research, and thank you so much for bringing the voice of these philosophers in education, in this approach. I also myself, I have been researching and trying to find other voices of education from other parts of the world, and to tell you the truth is not that easy.

So I'm very happy that you have been working on giving more visibility and bringing that voice to our current times.

So how do you see the role of the earth's charter in all of this research and work you have been doing?

So the premise of my work is that, you know, there is a lack of scholarly literature on values based perspectives that can contribute to the discourse and practice of education for sustainable development and global citizenship. And as part of my proposals, you know, for policy, teaching, practice, I integrate lessons in my work from values based frameworks, and this of course includes the earth's charter that provides an ethical framework for building a just, sustainable and peaceful global society in the 21st century.

And you know, Mirian, you and several colleagues have done so such important work, you know, with regards to the earth's charter and global citizenship, and I feel like I'm still learning so much. Here I would, you know, reference Dower, for example, who suggests that the earth's charter and global citizenship can be complementary to each other. So as Dower points out, the earth's charter offers to global citizenship, a concrete expression of a global ethic, you know, because the earth's charter is not tied to any particular worldview.

So there is this concrete expression of a global ethic that the Earth Charter provides for global citizenship. On the other hand, the discourse around global citizenship recognizes the realities of global social political processes, which can be helpful to discussions on adopting the earth's charter within schools, businesses, non-government organization, and global society. So, you know, I think, as Dower mentions, the earth's charter and global citizenship can be complementary to each other through the earth's charter providing an ethical framework that can be used within the social political processes that global citizenship education needs to work with.

And I use that, you know, in my work on global citizenship, I use the earth's charter in this way and point my readers to it to look at the earth's charter as a values-based framework, you know, so that we can situate our position as scholars and practitioners within the field of education for global citizenship and reference this document, you know.

Well, that's very, very interesting for me. Can you share with us some other examples of your work in research and when you teach and how you bring these ideas on linking global citizenship education and the world views that are articulated in the earth's charter?

So, you're interested in looking at values-based perspectives. So, that's, you know, the earth's charter, the Asian thinkers who are referred to, but also as I mentioned, I'm interested in movements, you know, and the relevance of movements, you know, and the impact that that can have on teaching for global citizenship. And so, I'd go back to Dr. Rikeda, who, you know, suggests that, you know, not only does the earth's charter offer an invaluable education resource, but it also, you know, is interested in to see the manner in which this people's charter was drafted.

You know, it's significant because in the drafting process, efforts were made to incorporate the essential wisdom of cultures and traditions from all regions of earth. So, looking at, you know, the consequence of how these world views can, you know, lead to movements, I think one of the consequences is that, and this has to do with the and this has to do with my, you know, my connection with the United Nations Forum Harmony with Nature, it's about earth jurisprudence, you know, so giving constitutional rights to trees, rivers and nature as being sacred.

So, across the world, we find examples of how values-based action within communities have led to environmental rights protections in various countries. And this has a constructive effect in terms of environmental protection, in terms of human rights, that upholds, you know, the dignity to a healthy environment as well.

I suggest the importance of paying attention to different philosophical understandings and values-based perspectives because I think, you know, we need to bring forth diverse and creative solutions to global issues, you know. And I mean global issues such as environmental degradation and climate change. How can we propel people and communities, you know, just educating like Bernstein says, you know, who's a UK scholar, he says, we can't educate the child within the narrow, you know, walls, brick walls of the school where they are asked to drop off their values and interests at the school gate.

So, in order to, you know, entice students, but also propel people and communities to take part in local, regional, global solutions, we need to be able to harness the values of the citizenry so that they can take constructive, you know, action within their own personal, social and environmental, you know, sort of, sort of context. I'd like to share here, you know, the example of the Green Belt movement in Kenya, pioneered by Wangari Mathai and, you know, inspired by African tradition, I think it's such a beautiful, amazing reference, a point in history.

It is. It was certainly a visionary and it's important to see also that perspective, not only because of Wangari Mathai, but also in terms of the approach from Kenya in, in galvanizing a whole social movement around these issues. Absolutely. This is one of those examples that brings together both the, you know, aspects that I'm interested in. That is, you know, what are the values based perspectives from less widely known, you know, paradigms and beliefs, but also what are the movements that have been initiated by these, you know, values that people have held on to.

And so in the case of the Kenyan example, you know, this group of people were really inspired by the African tradition, such as the mythology surrounding the psychomole fig tree, you know, they really held the fig tree to be sacred. And I use this example to argue that, you know, in UNESCO, we have this three sort of ways in which UNESCO suggests that development can take place, which is the economic, you know, dimension of development, the social dimension of development and the environmental dimension.

But I think what it is missing is the human personal dimension of education, you know, that is the values, interests and needs of people across communities worldwide. And when we harness the human personal dimensions, you know, we find constructive examples of sustainable development as illustrated by the Greenbelt movement. And, you know, during this movement, the community, as many of us know, was affected by environmental degradation and the, you know, economic and other repercussions of this situation.

But the people in Kenya at that time in history were able to come together based on their needs, interests and values. And it was possible for them to realize the environmental dimension of sustainable development, you know, in terms of protecting the natural environment, the trees from being cut. You know, planting more trees, so they were able to protect the environmental dimension of sustainable development. They were able also to enhance the social dimension of sustainable development, you know, by defending human rights within a dictatorial political regime, because the political regime did not, you know, sort of favor them.

And they were able to, through the Greenbelt movement, promote economic growth, you know, and the economic dimension of sustainable development. But this example of the Kenyan Greenbelt movement suggests that all of this started by engaging the human personal dimension and then the other dimensions of sustainable development were realized very naturally. And with this, we basically bring another dimension because when we look at sustainability without putting ourselves in the story, it actually sounds very abstract.

I'm happy you stress and brings this important emphasis on the human personal dimension in how we address all these issues. We have to bring ourselves in this picture, you know, in this, how we approach these global and local challenges.

Absolutely. And then, and, you know, engaging the Earth Charter, I think, within the conversations, you know, going back to the do that point made by Dower, I think global citizenship and an Earth Charter have so much to learn from each other and engaging the global, sorry, and engaging the Earth Charter for us scholars, you know, who are working in the field of global citizenship, allows us to have a discussion on this missing piece of sustainable development, which is the human personal dimension of development, you know.

This really sounds clear and to the point. So would you help us in summarizing some of the outcomes of your recent books that I think it's so important for any educator and anyone trying to understand the importance of global citizenship and value creating approach and how to make that happen in, in actually in practice. Would you give us some brief summary of that? Yes, thank you. You know, Mirian, the overarching contribution, I

would say, of my study is to respond to the search for supplementary perspectives, you know, so really examining diverse pathways and possibilities for the practice of education for sustainable development and global citizenship.

And maybe also in response to, you know, your question about value creating education as well as, you know, the role of the Earth Charter in my particular work, I would say that first of all, I propose value creating global citizenship education as a pedagogical approach and bring in certain non-western perspectives into the discourse and practice of education for sustainable development and global citizenship. And the second is that in engaging with a discussion around values based perspectives, I draw inspiration from the earth's charter and such notions of interdependence from alternative perspectives and paradigms, you know, alternative ways of which of viewing ourselves, others, nature and the universe.

Someone asked me, how I would, you know, what I would think is the value base of the earth's charter. And I think that the value base of the earth's charter is also that it provides a more integrated view of the relationship between humans, nature and all species. And one of the suggestions that I make in this work, you know, is that we, at least, you know, my first people like myself, who we've known about the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, you know, the rights of all people, that need to be guaranteed.

But not many of us still know about the earth's charter. And I think it needs to get to more, to, you know, be more accessible to more people in terms of understanding the wisdom and responsibility for all life as expressed by different individuals and other communities. You know, so maybe the earth's charter can be used along with the declaration to facilitate classroom discussions on the duties and responsibilities towards all life. Which I think is so important, especially, you know, for lessons and activities on the topic of climate change as an example.

Sure. I do think that

I agree with you, one of the key roles of the earth's charter is that it can be used as an instrument to stimulate dialogue and expand our thinking with regards to what is our ethical responsibility to the planet, to the well-being of the planet, to the community of life. It's just a matter of using it as an instrument to expand our thinking and consciousness with regards to others in all these dimensions. But also with regards to our ethical responsibility with the common good and the well-being of the planet, certainly.

So there are many people now focused in developing research and work and projects on global citizenship education and others on education for sustainable development. And as it often happens, people become people, projects and institutions become experts in a specific field and they grow knowledge around that and with that they also grow, I would say, borders. Which sometimes even makes it difficult to to interact among areas of knowledge or research or areas of interest. So sometimes I see a gulf between the world of education for sustainable development and the world of global citizenship education.

But at the same time I see so many similarities, synergies that would, I think, it would be very useful to sometimes bring these two worlds of knowledge or scholarly research together.

I would like to hear from you your thoughts on on what are the synergies or similarities of global citizenship education and ESD despite the fact that many people see it as different avenues and areas of knowledge. What do you think are the similarities and differences between these two?

That's absolutely interesting. I mean, I think the relationship between GCE and ESD, you know, education for global citizenship and sustainable development the relationship between them is a contested one and needs more research in terms of their history as well as their present issues and challenges. So to explain, you know, one of the UNESCO guidelines on global citizenship clarifies that, as you mentioned, you know, ESD and GCE should not be treated as independent areas of work because both are concerned with, you know, global challenges and actions, you know, that we that are needed to tackle them.

But as UNESCO also mentions, you know, the thematic topics associated with GCE is very different from that of ESD. You know, GCE tends to be more associated with global challenges related to peace and conflict and education for sustainable development or ESD with global challenges related to environmental warnings and natural resources. You know, so I think in this context further research is required that can bring together the discourse on GCE and how this, you know, discourse on GCE, because I think a lot of work is being done in that area, how that could then impact, you know, education for sustainable development.

So, you know, let's- In vice versa, no? In the vice versa, because ESD work can also generate or contribute with the work research and work and goals of global citizenship education. Absolutely, absolutely. I completely agree. You know, and maybe as a start, one could take the global youth-led campaigns around climate change, you know, let's say, which is the, you know, the Fridays for Future. That can be an important topic of study that brings together discussions related to both, you know, sustainable development and global citizenship.

So for example, you know, how the youth globally are coming together as citizens of this world to work on sustainability issues, such as climate change. This could be definitely one way of bringing together discussions on global citizenship with education for sustainable development. Absolutely. I think they are very- This example you just shared is a very concrete way of looking at, well, the Fridays for Future or any other effort of engaging youth in addressing global challenges, such as Fridays for Future or climate action, are very- are addressing both goals, I would say, of global citizenship education and ESD.

Yes, absolutely. And you know, let me move on to another suggestion here also. So UNESCO currently offers three key pedagogical approaches in ESD. So these are, the first is a learner-centered approach, second is an action-oriented learning, and the third is transformative learning. So these three approaches are all aimed to empower the individual learner. And if you think about it, it is of course important, you know, to focus within education, the important goal of individual empowerment. But I think what we should also ask is how we can foster citizens who can take bold collective actions for local and global issues.

So coming back to the point of, you know, bringing together climate change and youth activism, you know, as one way of bringing together discussions related to ESD and GCE, I developed suggestions for value-creating global citizenship education as a pedagogical tool that can bring together these discussions to facilitate collective action along with individual responsibility that comes from learners' own personal sense of values, you know. So it's, you know, I think there is so much that can be done in terms of bringing together ESD and GCE with regards to the topics of climate change and youth activism.

One other way is, you know, that we can use this to enhance the relationship between learners and their natural and social environment. Because what I see, you know, in some sort of, you know, sort of work that is being done in this area is that students are being made to feel as if they are rescuers of this planet, you know. And I think moving away from such non, from such anthropocentric ways of thinking and being, it's bringing, you know, within the topics of climate change and youth activism, how can we, you know, engage students with class materials that view the creativity and coexistence of all forms of life, you know.

And so that youth activism is not just about, you know, protecting the planet, but it is to understand the beauty of the planet, to understand life's capacity, you know, nature's capacity, to create value and meaning under the most challenging circumstances. So this, you know, creative coexistence, as Ikeeda calls it, as is depicted in the Earth Charter, I think this, you know, this sort of emotional, social emotional connection to nature is also something that can be facilitated by bringing together ESD and GCE on through the topics of climate change and youth activism, not just the behavioral dimension, let's take action, let's protect the planet, you know.

Yeah, I think many people would see global citizenship education as maybe even related to peace education in very focus on the human relations across the world. But we can expand that thinking that it's not global citizenship also involves our relationship with the large living world, which is what, where I think global citizenship education comes together with ESD, Education for Sustainability, that can be seen as a, both would be addressing our human, to human relations, but also human to the large living world relations, how we ought to relate to the large living world, which by the way, it's how the Earth Charter principle 16F is articulated, it's kind of an invitation for us to think about how we ought to relate, not only with our in ourselves and other people, but also with this large living world.

And I think that's where I find the a strong possibility and of working together in synergy between global citizenship education and in ESD. What is any other difference?

Would you identify the difference between these two educational approaches? I think, you know, I mean, I think there could be with what is happening at the moment, there are differences, you know, in the way that like I said earlier, you know, in which these approaches are being met, especially in terms of the thematic topics, you know, associated with that.

But, you know, if we look at, you know, whatever, I think, you know, I'd argued many years ago with in an article written by my at that time PhD supervisor, is that often we

look at environmental issues as only, you know, to do with nature. But if we understand it from from multicultural, you know, perspective or an intercultural approach to environmental and sustainability issues, then we would be able to integrate within these conversations on both ESD and GCE. Much broader sort of borrowing from lenses from different parts of the world, you know, so I'm more interested in bringing together the discussions around GCE and ESD rather than looking at it separately.

And I think this is one of the maybe I think it's just one of the ways in which UNESCO works, you know, GCE, the people who work for GCE are different from the people who work for ESD, you know, but that's not human life, human life, not be divided in that way.

Yes, absolutely. I think we definitely share a common area of interest here. And I really maybe that's why I feel so closely connected with you. Namrata, can I ask you to share with us some of your own personal experience as a learner? Maybe from your childhood, a specific moment, an aha moment you have had that illustrates from your own experience learning in practice that links with this scholarly work that you have been doing.

Thank you so much for asking.

You know, I was thinking about this and maybe I could share some reflections that I had noted in my you know, 2018 book. I conclude that book by, you know, raising the two aspects of the treasure within as described in the Delors report. So the Delors report for those who might not know it is is a report that was developed in 1996. And I think it is still a classic reference for education for sustainable development and global citizenship. So in the Delors report, you know, they talk about the treasure within.

You know, to me, the first treasure is this treasure that lies within human beings, abilities, aptitudes that can enhance social and self-actualization. The second, you know, is the value, I think, of learning itself as the treasure which has been championed as the right of each child, you know, by activists such as the Nobel Prize Laureate Malala Yusuf Zayn. And in responding to the second aspect of perceiving education as a treasure, I think the broader emphasis is on developing societies that values and supports the needs of education.

So, you know, the first aspect of the treasure within, you know, which is the treasure that lies within us human beings. I would say that, you know, there is a lot of emphasis being placed on project-based learning, theater and arts-based approach and the development of video games within the recent practice of global citizenship education. And of course, these experiential learning methods are important. And I think it is also equally important to engage with the existing experiences, values, needs and interests that learners bring into the classroom from their home and community. So I'm so, you know, moved that that you would ask, you know, for me to also share my own sort of values and experiences and how that has informed my work.

In my personal experience, I can say that although I have learned much, you know, through the education that I received at various schools and universities, it was largely my daily subjective experiences in my family and community that have propelled my work on

thinkers such as Iqeda and Gandhi. So this, you know, includes my indirect experience of Gandhi. So I had my indirect experience of Gandhi is through, you know, being the daughter, my father, was a once a refugee and he experienced the partition of Undivided India in 1947.

And the ramification, of course, of that on him, on the community, family. And my indirect experience of Gandhi also through my mother, you know, whose grandfather was, you know, massacred in the Jalaya Wala Bagh incident, an incident in which innocent nonviolent protesters were killed during, you know, their rally for Indian independence. And these are very strong, powerful stories that you have lived through your family. Absolutely. You know, but Mirian, growing up, I never articulated this. Honestly, I never articulated this.

And I think I would say that in many ways, as a young, you know, woman growing up in India, even during my time in Japan and UK, I was maybe more immersed and influenced in Western literature, music, American pop songs. But it's only when I started to work on values based perspectives on global citizenship education. And, you know, and the Earth Charter, for example, that engages, you know, the whole human being that I was able to go and introspect on myself. So it's a story that you knew you had there as part of your knowledge, the story of your father and your, your, your grandparents.

But you never really had a deep reflection on that and how does that relate with your worldview?

You're absolutely right. And, you know, and there's a saying that a village, that a saint is never respected within their own village. I mean, I think my family were quite unique in the sense that they were and they still are very much devoted to Mahatma Gandhi. Unfortunately, not many people, especially in the middle class in India, would still regard Gandhi as being this great thinker, you know, that was born in the Indian subcontinent. In many ways, Gandhi is still regarded and revered more than the Indian subcontinent.

So now with this new look you have had in your research work and when you linked it with your family experience, what is the insight that it generated in you?

The key is to think about the history of the world and to think about the history of the world. And to think about the history of the world, and to think about the history of the world. And to think about the history of the world, and to think about the history of the world. The key is that, you know, in engaging with youth through my teaching, you know, with my family and community, I think as an educator, of course, the meaningful question, I think that becomes pertinent are, what motivates this youth?

What enthuses her? What interests him? And captivates their imagination, you know? I think these are the questions that we need to be engaging with in education for global citizenship. Because these are the questions that truly put the focus on the happiness of the learners who are the citizens of our world. Any other final thoughts you would like to share with us? So I don't know for the sake of sharing whether we have five minutes for me to share this story. I just recently read this story. So yeah, this is really a token of my appreciation to share this story with you.

The story appears in a recently published dialogue with Dr. Rikeda and the Argentinian human rights activist, Mr. Adolfo Esquivel. And the story is shared by Mr. Esquivel and he suggests, you know, he himself doesn't know the author, but he says that it was actually the story was sent to him by comrades of the Service for Peace and Justice of Costa Rica, the Red Solidarity. So in any case, the story goes like this. An enterprising farmer with little education participated in his city's agricultural fair every year.

The extraordinary thing was that year after year, he always won the best corn of the year trophy. Each year, he brought his corn to the fair and each year he walked away with the blue ribbon. His corn was improving every year. One year, a television reporter approached him after he had been presented with yet another blue ribbon. The reporter was eager to learn how it was that he always produced the best corn. He discovered that the farmer shared much of the best seed from his corn field with his neighbors.

How can you share your best seeds with your neighbors? The reporter asked. When they compete directly with you. Do you not know why? Asked the farmer in return. It's simple. The wind carries the pollen from the mature corn and from field to field. If my neighbors cultivated corn inferior to mine, that pollination would gradually degrade the quality of my crop. If I want to get good corn, I have to help them grow the best, yielding the best seeds. The farmer goes on to say, so I hope you can see that we are all important to one another and that to live well, we must help each other.

I hope you will also be able to help your neighbors plant the best seeds, the best maize and the best friendships. So I found this story to be so inspiring and it is shared by someone from Costa Rica. There is so much to be learned from the bold action taken by Costa Rica, for example, to combat climate change, the efforts for land protection, which is one of the world's best climate change practices. And I really am so humbled again by this conversation with you Mirian, coming from Costa Rica and with all the work that you do with the Earth Charter International to enable scholars like myself to learn much more about values-based perspectives in global citizenship education.

So thank you so much. Well, thank you so much, Namrata. I'm very much in admiration and appreciation for the work you do. And certainly I see so many similar passion and areas of interest between the two of us and I certainly hope we will continue to collaborate as years go by. Thank you so much. Thank you. Thank you for joining us today.

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