

# Political Socialization in the Contemporary Greek Kindergarten *Views of Kindergarten Teachers and the Readiness of Preschoolers*

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## **Abstract**

The purpose of this research is to study preschool children's readiness to political socialization and to investigate kindergarten teachers' views regarding citizenship education. It is appreciated that teachers' views constitute strong evidence of plans, instructive choices and teaching practices, determining sometimes even their instructive effectiveness, i.e. the degree they consider themselves to be able to influence students' performance. Children's readiness is considered to be related to their ability for direct reaction in their political socialization. Two questionnaires were used as a data collection method. The readiness in early childhood for political socialization is investigated through fourteen proposals which are analyzed into the frequencies of "always", "sometimes" and "never". The views of kindergarten teachers in connection to citizenship education are investigated through five open questions. The collected data were coded, entered in SPSS and analyzed quantitatively and qualitatively. The findings confirmed mostly the inquiring affairs and gave interesting information in the frame of inquiring questions as well.

**Keywords:** political socialization, citizenship education, kindergarten, preschoolers, views, readiness

## 1. Conceptual Orientation

Focusing on the process of political socialization Easton and Dennis (1960) and Almond and Coleman (1960) defined political socialization as:

*“Political socialization is the process through which individuals acquire political views which are accumulated in a way that affects the political life of the nation” (Easton, 1965; Easton & Dennis, 1969 in Papanou-Tzika, 1989:17).*

*“Political socialization is the process of placing the person into a political culture-function which all political systems seem to serve (Almond & Coleman, 1960 in Papanou-Tzika, 1989: 16-17).*

R. Sigel (in Papanou-Tzika, 1989:16) focusing on the outcome of the political socialization process, states that:

*“Political socialization is the process through which individuals adopt norms, values, attitudes and behaviors acceptable in their social system”.*

While, Karakatsani (2003:31) combines the above two definitions as the process of individual's induction into the “political culture”, the construction of political identity, the transmission of a series of attitudes, values and principles of social coexistence, to wit a variety of factors that shape and determine political behavior.

### 1.1 Citizenship

Although the term citizenship was initially translated as nationality, it did not prevail as it only attributed the formal and legal aspect of the concept and not its significance (Marshall & Bottomore, 2001:10). Thus, the current translation signifies the universal and cosmopolitan dimension of the term and the people multiple attributes as citizens (Petrou in Sakellariou, Zempylas & Petrou, 2010; also Banks, 2012: 471-472; Banks, 2011).

It is a vague content to a great degree as “it has not substantially or universally concrete and genuine meaning (Crick, 2009 in Karakatsani, 2003:13). It depends on the specific social and historical context, has multiple meanings and is susceptible to different interpretations since it is connected with various scientific fields and is geared to several political and ideological parameters (Karakatsani, 2003:13; also Phillips, 2010; Kymlicka, 1995).

T.H. Marshall's theory in his work “*Citizenship and Social Class*” (1950) constitutes a landmark in the sociological theory of citizenship. According to T.H. Marshall, “Citizenship is a social status granted to full members of the community. Those who possess it are equal as for the rights and obligations, with which this status has been enriched. There is no universal principle to specifically determine the rights and obligations” (Marshall & Bottomore, 2001:62).

However, the above theory is criticized to stress the rights of individuals and not their obligations to society, which is estimated to promote only an interpretation- approach of citizenship (Karakatsani, 2003). On the other hand, A. Oldfield (1990, in Pantelidou-Malouta,

2002: 103-104), proposed the discrimination of citizenship as legal and practical situation (Phillips, 2010; Millei & Imre, 2009).

Turner (1993) support that citizenship refers to the equal rights and their political expression in the public life. He defines the significance as a total of legal, economic and cultural practices that determine the individuals as public/ common member of society. While, Kymlicka (1995) reports that citizenship is not simply/just a situation that is fixed by a set/ total of rights and obligations. It is also an identity that is related with the sense of belonging in/to a political community.

The present research adopts Karatzola & Intzidi's definition (2008), according to which "individual's rights and needs in the frame of liberal individualism and its bonds with the community, the sense of "belonging" and being a member of the society or a social group, its identity in the frame of communitarianism are all determined by "citizenship".

### *1.2 Children Citizenship*

The nation of children's citizenship is a recently theorized concept, which has been subject to much debate. Many sociologists (e.g., Alderson, 2008; Cockburn, 1998; James, Curtis, & Birch, 2008; Kulnych, 2001; Lister, 2007, 2008; Prout, 2001, 2002; Roche, 1999, in Phillips, 2011:778-779), have discussed what children's citizenship might be for young children and have proposed various ways of viewing and addressing children's citizenship.

The adoption of the Convention of United Nations on the Rights of Children (1989) and its implementation on social policy, contributed to the promotion of current interest in the concept of children's citizenship. According to Millei and Imre, this interest assumes "a legal-political link between citizenship and rights" (2009 in Phillips, 2011:778).

A socio-political definition of citizenship welcomes acknowledgment and redress of the inequality that children experience in society because of their reduced access to resources (Phillips, 2011:779).

As Cohen point out (2009 in Lister, 2007:699), there is a tendency in accounts of children's citizenship to treat one element of citizenship as if it were the whole, yet in its substantive form, citizenship is not a unitary, either/or phenomenon or only a status (Larkins, 2014). It may be that some of the "building blocks" of citizenship are more compatible with childhood than others. In particular, simply to analyze children's citizenship from the perspective of rights, important as they are, would be paint a very incomplete picture and one which fails to capture children's practice as citizens and the dialectic between those practices and their citizenship status (Lister, 2007:699). Difference-centred, relational approaches to children's citizenship, that recognize and value children's practices and differences, are therefore necessary (Cockburn, 1998; Moosa-Mitha, 2005 in Larkins, 2013:8).

In 2005, Bron posited three essential components to active citizenship. The first component is about exercising human rights and responsibilities. The second includes democracy, law and freedom and the third is about human values such as tolerance and empathy in diverse societies. The IPPA translates these components for the child into (Baker, 2013:1117):

-Membership: having a sense of belonging, of “I” and “We” (I am) and entitlements. This involves the learner in being a right-holder and thinking about how to exercise those rights respectfully (I can).

- Obligations: having a sense of duty to self and others within society (I must) which means thinking about others, and

- Participation: being a thoughtful contributor with a voice that is heard and effects change (I do).

### *1.3 Civic Readiness of Children*

Civic readiness demotes a young child’s maturity to interact with and engage in society (Kelly, 2008:55). Poverty, poor education, limited social supports, and even inconsistent or absent parental involvement over a sustained period of time decrease a young child’s level of civic readiness and increase the likelihood of social disconnectedness within society (Kelly, 2008:57). To reduce the likelihood of social disengagement from society, it is critical age-appropriate civic education and civic activities begin as early as three years old.

Although there are no clear guidelines for measuring civic readiness, one can use thematic benchmarks that emerge from the research of David Easton and Jack Dennis, Robert Hess and Judith Torney, as well as Jane Junn and Jonathon Zaff and collaborators. Overall, the research shows that early exposure to and consistent activity with civic training during early childhood education comprises three dimensions: cognitive (thinking or beliefs), affective (feelings or temperament), and behavioral (performance or activity). Theoretically, to demonstrate civic readiness a child should be able to show cognitive benchmarks of law-and-order awareness, perceiving self as a “good helper” and believe that most people can be trusted. In addition, affective benchmarks are demonstrated by empathy, trusting peers and adults, and presenting positivity and agreeableness. Finally, behavioral benchmarks present an outward demonstration of concern for others through physical affirmation (hugs, holding hands, and so on), one’s ability to follow directions, and the ability to work well in groups (essential skills for demonstrating mutual aid and social cohesion and connectedness) (Kelly, 2008:55-56).

### *1.4 Citizenship, Adolescents and Children*

The last decade has seen, in the policy arena, a broad global push for children to be treated as active participants in society rather than as the passive recipients and targets of adult decisions and interventions (Nichols, 2007:119). Policy initiatives and programs based on the notion that children should participate ‘on the basis of who they are, rather than who they will become’ (Moss, 2002 in Nichols, 2007:119), trying to reverse the current identification of citizenship with adolescence and children’s description as “awaiting citizens”, “intern citizens” or “apprentice citizens” and “potential citizens”.

Cockburn (1998 in James, 2011:169), has unpacked the historical discourses of childhood that underpinned T.H. Marshall’s (1950) argument that children should be seen as citizens *in potential* only. Cockburn claims that this understanding of children’s supposed inability to participate as citizens in society are not fixed or invariable. Rather, he shows that it reflects a specific historical process (James, 2011:169).

Contemporary sociology of children sees children as competent and capable citizens of today

(Phillips, 2011:778). In order children become active members of these societies adults should facilitate children's participation as political and social actors and supply them with skills and abilities for effective citizenship. Likewise, some authors e.g Ben-Arieh & Boyer, 2005; Cohen, 2005; Liebel, 2008; Lister, 2007; Moosa-Mitha, 2005; Stasiulis, 2002, suggest children are citizens in some ways, because in relationships of social interdependence, they live and negotiate the practices and statuses of holding rights, exercising responsibilities and participating in social life (Larkins, 2014:8).

### *1.5 Political Socialization in Kindergarten*

The contemporary multicultural reality and the crisis of values that characterizes modern democracy require the promotion of democratic values through education. The school, especially the pre-school level, as the first formal education characterized by flexibility that could contribute to the development of citizenship and democracy, can instill values and conduct in young children, which are likely to shape awareness and active citizens (Balias et al., 2011, Seefeldt, 2005).

As stated by Teresa Vasconcelos (2007 in Cordona et al., 2013: 45), the kindergarten- just like the school- is a fundamental locus of citizenship because personal and social development takes place there by educating children about their sense of ethics and aesthetics (Nichols, 2007: 120-121). Preparing them to effectively exercise citizenship, the kindergarten is where they begin to learn about diversity and equal opportunities, parity between the sexes, cultural diversity and the social responsibility of each one to promote a more democratic and inclusive society.

It is an active learning environment where children- always with the evident support of their peers and adults- are free to manipulate materials, make choices and plans, make decisions and speak and reflect about what they do/did, expand their ability to think and reason and to understand themselves and appropriately relate to others (Júlia Oliveira-Formosinho, 2006 in Cordona et al., 2013:45-46).

Citizenship education begins when the child first arrives at the preschool. The institution should be attentive and take into consideration children's difficulties with separation and the new environment (Dyrfjord et al., 2004: 11). From the moment the child enters an early learning civil identity is being established by using the first name (Imbert, 1994 in Baker, 2013:1123; also Ailwood et al., 2011; Phillips, 2010).

Therefore, every interaction in preschool can be analyzed with regards to certain questions: What possible learning about global citizenship, solidarity and individuality, might come about in the preschool? What kinds of value conflicts evolve? What values (rights, justice and care) are of priority or subordinated, by whom, and on what grounds? What issues of power and powerlessness are actualized? How is participation or lack of participation expressed? What positions are given/ taken by teachers and the children? The questions are numerous and complex (Johansson, 2009:90).

As reported by Sherrod, Torney- Purta & Flanagan (2010:249), although a considerable amount of theorizing about the process surrounding young children's political socialization

exists e.g Dawson and Prewitt (1969); Easton and Dennis (1969); Hess and Torney (1967), there is little current empirical research shedding light on early childhood antecedents to youth civic engagement. For this reason, most recently, scholars are again calling for a downward extension of the age ranges involved in the study of civic engagement (Flanagan, 2003; Sherrod, 2002 in Sherrod, Torney- Purta & Flanagan, 2010: 252).

Young children can gradually understand that they belong to groups (such as family, friends and classroom), in which they share common objectives (Seefeldt & Barbour, 1998 in Oikonomidis & Eleftherakis, 2011: 217; also Seefeldt, 2005; Ramsey, 1987). Observations in kindergartens have shown that children inside the group and along with the proportional assistance of adults can, from the age of 3-4, participate in common activities such as preparing food, tidying and cleaning the room and taking care of plants and animals (Oikonomidis & Eleftherakis, 2011: 208).

In the early childhood, children can learn what it means to be a responsible member of a group (McIlveen & Gross, 2002 in Baker, 2013:1126), and gain independence and self-reliance by learning to do a job and taking credit for it (Baker, 2013:1126). In the classroom, for example, children can be responsible for collecting in the books or delivering a note to another teacher. This trait will help the child in school and in all of life's endeavors (Baker, 2013:1126). Moreover, as argued Brunner (1996 in Balias, 2008) "when we treat persons, young and old as responsible individuals, active members of a group and people who have a job to do, they gradually familiarized the idea, some obviously better than others, and everyone is willing to play her/his role" (Phillips, 2011).

Thus, at the age of 5-6 children participate in group activities, in which they share responsibilities, plan and work together (Oikonomidis & Eleftherakis, 2011:208). By announcing and discussing their ideas children are able to solve problems and plan their learning. By taking responsibilities within groups children participate in a democratic society (Seefeldt & Barbour, 1998 in Oikonomidis & Eleftherakis, 2011: 208).

Young children can assist in many ways in the community by being thoughtful and compassionate and showing kindness to others. They can help others in need or help to clear the classroom which means children evolve from being 'passive subjects into active citizens' (Baker, 2013).

Mayall (2002 in Nutbrown & Clough, 2009) identifies children's abilities to challenge, negotiate, and participate in social interactions with children and with adults, and increasingly, the traditional notions of a helpless child are being challenged, certainly in terms of learning competence and the study of education in the early years. In this sense then, we can argue that children can be seen as citizens, from their earliest years, because they are able to express ideas and wants and to contribute to decision-making that affects those (Nutbrown & Clough, 2009:196).

Research suggests that children are more open to diversity in the early years than in later years so the earlier children think about and develop respect for diversity the better (Stone, 1986 in Baker, 2013:1122).

From the existing studies and researches results that political socialization may start sine intermission from childhood and adolescence. Then the first seeds of certain basic inclinations that contribute to individuals' future political behavior and attitude are identified (Kalogiannaki- Xourdaki, 1992). Children coexisting at school helps them understand the problems, the basic values of democracy (justice, equality etc.) and generalize about the political world (Koutsouvanou, 1999, 2008, 2011).

### *1.6 Education on Citizenship*

Nowadays, we speak increasingly of a citizenship that is active, emancipator and multiple. This idea of citizenship requires that a set of practices be implemented in different social spaces for education and training which can involve people of all -ages, in order to give them the skills to participate in the various spheres of life (Cordona et. al. 2013:31). According to Karen O' Shea (2003 in Cordona et. al. 2013:31, also Brett et al., 2009), these educational practices for citizenship:

- Are fundamentally aimed at promoting a culture of democracy and human rights.
- Seek to strengthen social cohesion, mutual understanding and solidarity.
- Highlight the individual experience and the search for good practices to develop communities committed to establishing authentic human relations.
- Are devoted to the person and his/her relations with others, to the construction of personal and collective identities and to living conditions as a whole.
- Are intended for all people, regardless of their age and role in society.
- Involve a process of learning that can unfold throughout one's life and emphasizes values, such as participation, partnership, social cohesion, equity and solidarity.

### *1.7 Education on Citizenship in Kindergarten*

As mentioned before kindergarten constitutes a crucial site for children's citizenship development. Children familiarization with democratic process, their acknowledgement and awareness of human rights as well as the cultivation of the values of democracy, respect for human rights, solidarity and participation could be achieved through the following practices:

#### *Education on Human Rights*

The respect for children's rights on the one hand and their awareness, education on knowledge, demand and practice of human rights, on the other, are judged necessary for the preschool education field (Smirniaki, 2003 in Oikonomidis & Eleftherakis, 2011:226).

#### *Education on Cooperative Learning*

Thus, in kindergarten and throughout the educational system, particularly in the context of social studies, our aim is to shape children able to participate in today's "small republic of their class", prepared for their later adult life, as active citizens of a democratic society and capable of exercising and claiming obligations and rights (Thomas, 2002; Oikonomidis &

Eleftherakis, 2011).

Democratic education of children is promoted through the organization of school life, the way of class administration, the teaching methods and forms and the democratic educational climate that formed (Oikonomidis & Eleftherakis, 2011:207). Within this democratic climate children begin to experience democracy, learn about it, know their rights and demand their application, sympathize with others' rights and be involved in democratic processes (Fieling & Prieto, 2002 in Oikonomidis & Eleftherakis, 2011; also Seefeldt, 2005).

In this direction, a good practice is cooperative learning, as it contributes, in the most effective way, to the acquisition of democratic participation, responsible action, search and communication for both trainers and trainees (Kalogridi, 2005:194). Also, activities relative to the process of voting and respect for the majority, give children the opportunity to experience democratic practice (Harder, 2002 in Oikonomidis & Eleftherakis, 2011:208). For instance, dilemmas about building materials or pencils related to children's creative activation could be set and lead to voting.

### *1.8 The Role of Kindergarten Teacher in Citizenship Education*

The main questions "how" and "to what extent" the teacher influences the process of political socialization; does not seem easy to answer empirically. The effect of teacher on political socialization constitutes the most complex "variable" to investigate, particularly her/his methodical effect, i.e. the way of practicing "political action". This is because the teacher is not only a mediator between traditional values and the new generation, but also a citizen with personal attitudes and perceptions about political and social issues, which affect the way of handling political education (Papanaoum- Tzika, 1989: 29-30; also Phillips, 2010).

Educational institutions, such as universities, have an influence on political socialization, on account of the fact that student movements enhance political mobility, not only in terms of political activation; in other words, they enhance political involvement, without having to reshape an individual's fundamental political beliefs. A part of Greek social and political history has been "written" in universities, either by imprinting social, ideological and political trends and judgment or as modeling political action and interaction. In general terms, citizens have invariably conceived universities as stepping stone of political action and involvement or even "interpenetration" with the authorities (Kyridis et al, 204; Makrinioti & Solomon, 198; Atkin, 1981; Banks & Roker, 194; Easton & Denis, 1969; Koutouzis et.al., 208; Hes & Torney, 1967; Jenings, 193; Langton, 1967 & 1969 in Kyridis, Zagkos, Papadakis, Daskalaki, & Fotopoulos, 2011).

It is known that citizenship is not learned through explanatory teaching or based on pedagogy of authority. In order for its distinctive values to be incorporated, it needs to be observed, taught, represented and discussed in 'emotionally protected', spaces and by using positive and achievable models. Fathers, mothers, male and female teachers- and all other agents in education- must be these models (Cristina Viera, 2009: 196, in Cordona et al., 2013:33, also Phillips 2010, Millei and Imre, 2009).



It is highly important to enable children to be members of smaller as well as groups larger groups, as the feeling of belonging gradually take place while egocentrism fades out (Cole & Cole, 2002; Elliott et al., 2008; Korhonen, 2005, in Oikonomidis & Eleftherakis, 2011: 217).

Therefore, in a democratically organized group, the teacher: a) recognizes and enhances each child's individuality, which constitutes equivalent element of the group, b) causes concrete responsibilities/ tasks/ functions that contribute to the common work of team to be accordingly assigned to each child, g) awards and reinforces cooperation (Seefeldt & Barbour, 1998, in Oikonomidis & Eleftherakis, 2011: 218, also Seefeldt, 2005).

According to Mousena's research (2003 in Mousena, 2004:6), on how kindergarten teachers deal with Social and Political Education, Political Education is crucial under their belief. Political and social issues are accessed very often and are considered basic for the integration of children in school life and the operation of team

## **2. Methodology**

### *2.1 Research Aim and Specific Goals*

The purpose of this research is to study preschool children's to political socialization and to investigate kindergarten teachers' views on citizenship education. It is appreciated that teacher's views constitute strong evidence of plans, instructive choices and teaching practices, determining sometimes even their instructive effectiveness, i.e. the degree they consider themselves to be able to influence the students' performance. Children's readiness is considered to be related to their ability for direct reaction in their political socialization.

Specific goals investigate the views of preschool teachers for: a) the conceptual approach of citizenship education, b) the aim and content of citizenship education, c) the teaching methods and techniques that enhance citizenship education, d) the role of kindergarten teachers during activities concerning citizenship education and e) the encouragement of preschoolers through activities that concern citizenship education.

Furthermore, specific goals examine the readiness of preschool children regarding : a) sharing materials, b) feeling comfortable to share their ideas at school, c) listening carefully to others, d) trying to follow the rules, e) learning how to get along with others, f) helping other people in need, g) noticing their peers being teased or bullied because they are different, h) helping to keep their school neat and clean, j) taking responsibility of their actions, k) treating others with respect, l) participating in decision- making processes in connection to their kindergarten, m) participating in processes for determining class rules, n) trying to avoid doing things that displease others and o) participating in the arrangement of kindergarten.

### *2.2 Research Hypotheses*

Based on the research problem developed, the aim and the objectives set, the main research hypothesis was formed as following: Kindergarten teachers express positive attitude towards citizenship education. Preschool children possess characteristics that allow their political socialization.

Moreover, individual research hypotheses were set: Teacher's views with regard to teaching methods that strengthen citizenship education vary depending on the place they work. Furthermore, preschoolers' readiness to:

- 1) Share materials in kindergarten varies with gender
- 2) Listen carefully to others is associated with their gender
- 3) Try to follow the rules is differentiated by gender
- 4) Treat others with respect varies with gender
- 5) Participate in the arrangement of kindergarten is formed by gender
- 6) Help other people in need is related to nationality
- 7) Participate in processes for determining class rules differs with nationality
- 8) Notice their peers being teased or bullied because they are different depends on the degree of urbanization
- 9) Take responsibility for their actions is modulated according to the degree of urbanization
- 10) Participate in the decision- making processes in connection to their kindergarten is associated with the degree of urbanization
- 11) Participate in the determination of rules of their kindergarten is depending on the degree of urbanization

### *2.3 Research Method*

We used a methodological triangulation, in order to investigate both toddlers and their teachers using the appropriate research methods and tools of collecting data. We use the term triangulation in order to describe inquiring planning or combinational inquiring strategies (Bryman, 2004), that include the use of different inquiring methods (multi-methodical) (Creswell, 2003; Tashakkori & Teddlie, 1998; Brannen, 1992), or multiple or mixed inquiring methodologies (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 1998). N.Denzin (1978) defines triangulation as the combination of different methodologies for the study of the same phenomenon. The advantages of multi- methodical approach of social phenomena have been presented and analyzed extensively and sufficiently by many scientists. The first reference to triangulation was in 1996 by E. Webb, D. Campbell, R. Schwartz and L. Sechrest (1966). However, the idea of D. Campbell and D. Fiske (1959) about "multiple functionalist" preceded the later.

Two written questionnaires were chosen as a research method and data collection instrument. The questionnaire is as the most appropriate means of data collection since it is possible to easily collect information from a relatively large number of people in a short period of time and in low cost (Gillham, 2000:6 in Karadimou, Tsioumis & Kyridis, 2014:84) as well as the preservation of anonymity which can greatly increase the responsiveness and willingness to participate (Oppenheim, 1992:102 in Karadimou, Tsioumis & Kyridis, 2014:84). The validity and reliability of questionnaires were ensured via questions- variables that correspond to the

theoretical frame of research. The construction of preschool teacher's questionnaire was based on Korhonen, R's research (2005) «*Teaching citizenship in the pre-preschool educational process*». Preschooler's questionnaire is part of the educational program «*The Heart of the Matter: Character and Citizenship Education in Alberta School*» (Schmidt et al., 2005). Questionnaires were translated and applied pilot to test linguistic adaptations.

The usability of questionnaires related to kindergarten teachers was achieved by the use of appropriate vocabulary, evasion of ambiguous, guidance and inference questions, formulation of explicit directives and apposition of the definition of "Citizenship" (Karatzola & Intzidi, 2008). For the same purpose, accompanying images for each proposal were used in preschoolers' questionnaires, while the gradient "always", "sometimes" and "never" was represented with different size columns.

Reliability test was conducted on the questionnaire, where according to the Cronbach alpha co efficiency. The reliability index Cronbach's alpha value for preschoolers' questionnaire is 0,667 which is considered as a sign of a fairly reliable set of questions.

#### 2.4 Sample

Table 1. Preschooler's demographic data

	<b>Boy</b>	<b>Girl</b>
<b>Gender</b>	56	44
<b>Degree of Urbanization</b>		
Urban area	15	15
Semi-urban area	8	6
Rural area	6	7
Thessaloniki	27	16
<b>Total</b>	56	44
<b>Nationality</b>		
Greek	53	42
Other	2	3
<b>Total</b>	55	45

Preschooler's gender, degree of urbanization and nationality.

Table 2. Kindergarten teacher's demographic data

	<b>Women</b>	<b>Men</b>
<b>Gender</b>	29	-
<b>Total</b>	29	-
<b>Years of working experience</b>		
1-5 years	3	-
6-10 years	4	-

11-20 years	14	-
More than 21 years	8	-
<b>Total</b>	29	-
<b>Type of education degree</b>		
Degree of Pedagogic Academy	2	-
Equation	8	-
Teaching College	3	-
Degree of Pedagogic Department	11	-
Other Degree of Pedagogic Department	3	-
Postgraduate degree	2	-
Ph.D. degree	-	-
<b>Total</b>	29	-
<b>Place of work</b>		
Urban area	14	
Semi-urban area	5	
Rural area	4	
Thessaloniki	6	
<b>Total</b>	29	

Kindergarten teacher's gender, years of working experience, type of education degree and place of work.

### 2.5 Content Analysis

B. Berelson (1971) considers that content analysis is offered for the study of views or perceptions of individual or team of individuals. He also notes that it is "a research technique into the objective, systematic and quantitative description of obvious content of communication, written or oral, with final objective the interpretation". De Sola Pool (1959) gave a different dimension in content analysis by noting that it is ideal for the study of meaning and semiotic relations that are contained in written or oral reason. Many years later M. Palmquist used content analysis in written texts of students or teachers (Palmquist, 1990; Weber, 1990). Content analysis focuses on the obvious content and tends to suppose that the later represents a unique constant attention. However, French literature gave a different dimension in the particular method renewing both the technique and possibilities of its use (Bardin, 1977; Moscovici, 1970; Mucchieli, 1988; Veron, 1981; Grawitz, 1981). Finally we should note that content analysis can also be applied to figurative material, which includes reason as well (Giroux, 1994).

Content analysis as a research tool presents the following advantages (Curley, 1990 in Asher):

- Enables combination of quantitative and qualitative data
- Enables detection and recording of concrete forms of social interaction via discourse analysis

- Enables recording of historical and cultural elements
- Is ideal for recording and analyzing social ideologies
- Enables exploration of significances and the way social subjects conceive it

### 3. Data Analysis

Table 3. Preschooler's readiness for political socialization

		All the time	Sometimes	Never	Mean	Std. Deviation
1	I share materials	49%	49%	2%	1,53	,540
2	I feel comfortable sharing my ideas in school	25%	64%	11%	1,86	,586
3	I listen carefully to others	51%	48%	1%	1,50	,522
4	I try to follow the rules	44%	51%	5%	1,61	,584
5	In school, I am learning how to get along with others	39%	54%	7%	1,68	,601
6	I help other people when they need it	51%	42%	7%	1,56	,625
7	I see other students being teased or bullied because they are different	16%	47%	37%	2,21	,701
8	I help to keep my school neat and clean	67%	33%	-	1,33	,473
9	I take responsibility for my actions	79%	18%	3%	<b>1,24</b>	,495
10	I treat others with respect	44%	50%	6%	1,62	,599
11	I participate in the decision-making for my kindergarten	7%	69%	24%	2,17	,533
12	I participate in the determination of rules of my kindergarten	3%	42%	55%	<b>2,52</b>	,559
13	I try to avoid things that displease others	61%	37%	2%	1,41	,534
14	I participate in the arrangement of kindergarten	64%	35%	1%	1,37	,506

Preschooler's readiness for political socialization in scales "always" "sometimes" "never". Relative results (mead, std. deviation) between questions.

Studying in descending order and in each scale of frequency ("always", "sometimes", "never" ) preschoolers' readiness for political socialization, we found out that in frequency "always" preschoolers feel ready to:

- 1) Take responsibility for their actions (**79%**)
- 2) Help to keep their school neat and clean (67%)

- 3) Participate in the arrangement of kindergarten (64%)
- 4) Try to avoid doing things that displease others (61%)
- 5) a. Help other people in need (51%)  
b. Listen carefully to others (51%)
- 6) Share materials (49%)
- 7) a. Try to follow the rules (44%)  
b. Treat others with respect (44%)
- 8) Learn how to get along with others (39%)
- 9) Feel comfortable to share their ideas at school (25%)
- 10) Notice their peers being teased or bullied because they are different (16%)
- 11) Participate in the decision- making processes in connection to their kindergarten (7%)
- 12) Participate in the processes for determining class rules of their kindergarten (3%)

In the present study the effect of independent variables of gender, ethnicity and degree of urbanization on preschoolers' readiness for political socialization was examined through the analysis of variance for one factor (ANOVA). According to the results, the independent variable of gender (boy-girl) notes statistically significant effect on preschoolers' readiness to share materials ( $F= 10,548$ ,  $df= 1$  and  $p=0,002$ ) and treat others with respect ( $F= 10,682$ ,  $df= 1$  and  $p= 0,001$ ). Whereas the same variable seems to have no statistically significant impact on preschoolers' readiness to listen carefully to others ( $F= 7,792$ ,  $df= 1$  and  $p=0,006$ ), try to follow the rules ( $F= 7,812$ ,  $df= 1$  and  $p= 0,006$ ) and participate in the arrangement of the kindergarten ( $F= 6,616$ ,  $df=$  and  $p= 0,012$ ).

The independent variable of ethnicity (Greek, other) was found to have statistically significant impact on preschoolers' readiness to help others in need ( $F= 10,420$ ,  $df=1$  and  $p=0,002$ ). However, it has no statistically significant effect on preschoolers' readiness to participate in the determination of rules of their kindergarten ( $F= 3,995$ ,  $df= 1$  and  $p= 0,048$ ).

Finally, the study of the effect of the independent variable "degree of urbanization" (urban area, semi- urban area, rural area, Thessaloniki), ascertains that it has statistically significant effect on preschoolers' readiness to watch other students being teased or bullied because they are different ( $F=7,225$ ,  $df= 3$  and  $p=0,000$ ) and take responsibility for their actions as well ( $F= 5,004$ ,  $df= 3$  and  $p=0,003$ ). On the other hand, the present variable notes statistically insignificant effect on preschoolers' readiness to participate in the decision- making for their kindergarten ( $F= 3,464$ ,  $df= 3$  and  $p= 0,019$ ) and the determination of rules of their kindergarten ( $F= 3,783$ ,  $df= 3$  and  $p= 0,013$ ).

*What is Citizenship Education?*

The majority of the kindergarten teachers sample provides citizenship education without referring to any of the elements of the “citizenship” definition mentioned (41,4%,  $N=12$ ), (e.g. as the open road which leads individuals to estimating and respecting individual and collective freedom, as a way of learning the concept of community and through it as well as integrating and operating in this concept etc.). Subsequent to the above follows the sample percentage which fixes citizenship education and includes elements from the definition mentioned and further elements as well (24,1%,  $N=7$ ), (e.g. individual responsibilities, diversity comprehension, autonomy development, collaboration etc.). Definitions which are estimated to generally focus on education without making any special reference to citizenship education are mentioned with minor difference (17,2%,  $N=5$ ) (e.g. education provides the child with the first social experiences and knowledge for social life etc.). References of the word “citizenship” featuring education either as base or means of citizenship follow with small difference (13,8%,  $N=4$ ). Consequently, there is only one reference with exclusively distinguished elements from the definition mentioned which recognizes citizenship education as the way of “belong to the state” (3,4%,  $N=1$ ).

*Which is the Main Goal and Content of Citizenship Education?*

The majority of the sample defines the main goal of citizenship education without referring to elements of the definition mentioned (51,5%,  $N=17$ ) (e.g. integration of children into the school community and preparation to live along with its rules, children’s democratic armoring etc.). Next is the percentage of references in which elements of the definition mentioned are marked along with further elements (30,3%,  $N=10$ ), (e.g. development of volunteerism and community service, development of social and moral responsibility etc.). The approach of the main goal of citizenship education is completed by the use of data exclusively from the definition mentioned and makes report to the configuration and acquisition of belonging to the society (6, 1%,  $N=2$ ).

With regard to the content of citizenship education, it is estimated to reach a scale of only 12,1% ( $N=4$ ) indicating group activities, projects on democracy and communication among school- family and wider society as well.

*Which Teaching Methods Enhance Citizenship Education?*

Kindergarten teachers sample referred to:

- Cooperative learning (33,3%,  $N=28$ ) (collaboration, group organization etc.)
- Democratic education (17,9%,  $N=15$ ) (electing and voting the best solution, adaption and observation of rules, recognition of rights etc.)
- Experiential learning (16,7%,  $N=14$ ) (project, exploration, discovery, daily life situations, initiative etc.)
- Intercultural education (13,1% ,  $N=11$ ) (respect for each child’s personality, diversity or specificity of character, cultural appointment etc.)

- Interdisciplinary approach (11,9% ,  $N=10$ ) (environmental education, daily activities and routines etc.)
- Interconnection between school and society (7,1%,  $N= 6$ ) (outdoor visits e.g. the park, library, neighborhood, municipality etc.)

#### *Which Teaching Techniques Enhance Citizenship Education?*

There was a total of 19 references in the present question:

- Dialogue (31,6%,  $N=6$ )
- Dramatization (31,6%,  $N=6$ )
- Game (21,1%,  $N=4$ )
- Narration (10,5%,  $N=2$ )
- Song (5,3%,  $N=1$ )

#### *Which is Preschool Teachers' Role During Activities Related to Citizenship Education?*

According to the survey results, the kindergarten teachers sample believes that its role during activities related to citizenship education is to:

- Instruct (38,4%,  $N=28$ ) (direct, guide, help, encourage, inspire, support, remind, participate etc.)
- Advise (19,2%,  $N=14$ ) (advise, propose discriminatively while children decide, intervene only when needed, enrich knowledge by asking questions, point out and utilize the “errors” etc.)
- Observe (9,6%,  $N=7$ ) (supervise etc.)
- Organize (9,6%,  $N=7$ ) (transmit, coordinate etc. )
- Be creative (8,2%,  $N=6$ ) (create opportunities, form an engaging learning environment, enhance collaboration among children-families-colleagues-society, develop skills for active and responsible participation etc.)
- Support (5,5%,  $N=4$ ) (back children etc.)
- Motivate (4,1%,  $N=3$ ) (motivate children experientially through game, encourage children)
- Collaborate (2,7%,  $N=2$ ) (resolve conflicts)
- Be a model for imitation (2,7%,  $N=2$ )

#### *Are Children Motivated?*

The majority of the sample (35,8%,  $N=10$ ) believes that children are motivated through activities related to citizenship education based on the step they are studying and their age. For example, kindergarten constitutes a micro-society in which rules and activities help to



build a society with right and mature future citizens, who will harmoniously decide, judge, assert and coexist. On the other hand, preschool age children learn more easily and are more receptive to what they receive.

Also, kindergarten teachers believe that children are motivated through these activities because they contribute to their social, cognitive, emotional and moral development (25%,  $N=7$ ). The majority of those teachers argues that children are encouraged via these activities as the later affect their social development (60,7%,  $N=17$ ) (e.g. children learn to cooperate, accept differences, participate, share, reject, socialize etc.), cognitive development (21,4%,  $N=6$ ). (development of critical thinking, experimentation, creation.), moral development (10,7%,  $N=3$ ) (e.g. responsibility, respect etc.) and emotional development (7,1%,  $N=2$ ) (awareness, expression).

Others believe that children are motivated only through attractive activities or activities which meet children's interests, needs and level of development (25%,  $N=7$ ).

Two participants answered one word "yes" (7,1%,  $N=2$ ) and two others gave a general answer (7,1%,  $N=2$ ) (e.g. through experiential activities and game children come to know their environment, experiment, discover and try to solve problems, make choices, find their own way and rhythm).

The analysis of variance through one factor (ANOVA) was also used to study the effect of preschool teachers' workplace in pointing out teaching methods that enhance citizenship education. According to the results, the independent variable of workplace (urban area, semi-urban area, rural area, Thessaloniki), notes statistically significant effect on preschool teachers' opinions with regard to the teaching methods that enhance citizenship education ( $F=8,174$ ,  $df=4$  and  $p=0,001$ ).

#### **4. Conclusions**

Preschoolers sense of readiness to be responsible for their actions is connected to McIlveen & Gross claim that in early childhood, children can learn what it means to be a responsible member of a group (2002 in Baker, 2013: 1126), and gain independence and self-reliance by learning to do a job and taking credit for it (Baker, 2013: 1126).

Young children can assist in many ways in community by being thoughtful and compassionate and showing kindness to others (Baker, 2013: 1124). They can help to clear which means children evolve from being 'passive subjects into active citizens' (Baker, 2013). Also, children evolve belief in self as a "good helper" which corresponds to the cognitive benchmark for civic readiness in early childhood.

Preschoolers readiness to feel comfortable to share their ideas at school could be associated with the right of freedom of expression, the sense of others trustworthiness and the cognitive benchmark for civic readiness in early childhood. Also, children are able to solve problems and plan their learning by announcing and discussing their ideas (Seefeldt & Barbour, 1998 in Oikonomidis & Eleftherakis, 2011: 208).

Preschoolers' readiness to learn how to get along with others could be associated with the behavioral benchmark for civic readiness in early childhood and the element of good work in groups to help others. While preschoolers' readiness to try to avoid things that displease others could be associated with the affective benchmark for civic readiness and the element of empathizing with others.

Preschoolers' non-readiness to participate in the determination of rules of their kindergarten reveals that the observation of rules is because they have been imposed by a senior to the children, so they do not realize the existence of rules as a means of protecting themselves and others.

Moreover, preschoolers' readiness to share materials in kindergarten and treat others with respect varies with gender confirming, this way, the research hypotheses. While, preschoolers' readiness to listen carefully to others, try to follow the rules and participate in the arrangement of kindergarten is not associated with gender contradicting the research hypotheses. As for preschoolers' readiness to help other people in need, it seems relevant to nationality confirming the research hypothesis. But their readiness to participate in the determination of rules of their kindergarten differs by nationality, contradicting the research hypothesis.

On the other hand, preschoolers' readiness to watch other students being teased or bullied because they are different and take responsibility for their actions depends on their degree of urbanization and confirms the research hypotheses. As regards preschoolers' readiness to participate in the decision-making processes for their kindergarten and take part in the determination of rules of their kindergarten it does not depend on the degree of urbanization, confuting the research hypotheses.

From the above it is understood that preschool age children possess characteristics that allow their political socialization.

The basic principles and essential elements recognized in citizenship education on behalf of preschool teachers are:

-Social and moral responsibility: People learn from an early age to be socially and morally responsible for themselves and for the society in which they live.

-Participation in society: Citizens learn to participate in neighborhood and wider community by contributing in community actions and learning from their attendance in them.

-Political literacy: Citizens learn about the institutions, problems and practices of democracy in which they live and are educated in skills and values so that they are effective in local, national and global level.

Identities and feelings: The child can learn to reflect on her own identity through contact with others. She can be guided to develop empathy to other children, to accept their needs and to play together with them.

Inclusion: Children can do things together as a group and learn to help each other, despite differences in age, cultural backgrounds, etc. It is important that the pre-school teacher notice and include all children in the group.

Skills: Children should learn how to solve conflicts, how to argue and how to use their knowledge about their rights.

Kindergarten constitutes a crucial site for the development of children's citizenship, which could be obtained through education on human rights, collaborative learning and energetic-experiential learning as well. In a democratic kindergarten a teacher:

- Supports the individual value and personal dignity
- Provides children with opportunities to make choices
- Shares class control and management with children
- Promotes freedom of thought and expression
- Leads children to the gradual configuration of community concept

Kindergarten teachers' views on the teaching methods that enhance citizenship vary depending on the place they work, a case which confirms research hypothesis. Consequently, kindergarten teachers working in Thessaloniki and in urban area suggest dialogue, narration and song as teaching methods. Moreover, kindergarten teachers working in urban and rural area suggest game as a teaching method. However, kindergarten teachers serving in semi-urban or rural area propose drama as a unique teaching method.

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