

## WHAT IS MEANT BY DEVELOPMENT EDUCATION?

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### Abstract

Development education has been subject to a number of interpretations, influenced by practices of non-governmental organisations and policy-makers. Development education as a concept has in many countries become subsumed within themes such as global education, global citizenship and sustainable development. In the Global South the term has a number of interpretations, some of which have been forgotten in the North. Themes such as social justice, critical and reflective dialogue and recognizing and valuing different voices and perspectives are suggested as central to a development education approach. Development education is here proposed not as a static concept but as a pedagogical approach that can continue to provide an important contribution to learning.

**Keywords:** Development Education; Non-governmental Organisations; Sustainable Development; Global Citizenship; Aid and Development.

Development education as a term has a number of different interpretations, from awareness-raising about global poverty to learning about development issues to a framework for broader learning that has an active, change component. This article summarises the main components of development education in terms of the different definitions that exist today. It addresses the perspectives of academics, policy-makers and practitioners from both the Global North and the Global South. The article also notes that definitions and interpretations of development education today also need to be seen within broader discussions around learning about global themes. This themes and interpretations of the term are summarized within a changing and evolving historical context. The article concludes by suggesting a possible typology as to how the term could be interpreted and a potential new framework as a pedagogy for global social justice.

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## Evolution of Themes, Concepts and Principles

Development education as a concept emerged in the 1970s within the framework of initiatives by Northern based governments and International Non-Government Organisations (NGOs) to raise public awareness, understanding and support for international development. The term came to have a number of different interpretations in the 1980s and 1990s as policy-makers and practitioners came to see the potential value of engaging in educationally based activities to raise understanding amongst the public about international development. Regan and Sinclair, reflecting on these trends noted:

*There has been a general movement from seeing development education as a matter of information, to make up an information deficit in the 'west', to seeing education as the very fuel for the engine of development both in the 'west' and in the 'Third World'. (Regan and Sinclair, 2006: 109)*

The growth and emergence of the concept of development education needs to be seen alongside its influence as a 'community of practice', an approach towards learning that may have come to be articulated through a number of different terms such as global education, global citizenship education, education for sustainable development and most recently of all, global learning (Bourn, 2014).

Within this evolution however, a number of concurrent different interpretations of the term development education were noted as recently as 2010 by Krause who suggests the following different approaches:

- development education as public relations for development aid;
- development education as Awareness Raising – public dissemination of information;
- development education as Global Education – focusing on local-global interdependence;
- development education as enhancement of life skills – focusing on the learning process and critical thinking (Krause, 2010).

While these typologies have some value, they tend to hide the complexities and underlying pedagogical principles that can be seen to have influenced much of development education practice over the past two decades.

A useful starting point in identifying these underlying themes and principles is the 'European Consensus on Development: the contribution of Development Education and Awareness Raising'.

This Consensus document, agreed in 2007, identified the following common aim:

*The aim of development education and awareness raising is to enable every person in Europe to have life-long access to opportunities to be aware of and understand global development concerns and the local and personal relevance of those concerns, and to enact their rights and responsibilities as inhabitants of an interdependent and changing world by affecting change for a just and sustainable world. (EU Multi-Stakeholder Group on Development Education 2007: 4).*

This document had the support and involvement of a number of foreign affairs and aid ministries, non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and networks across Europe. The Consensus document whilst recognising that organisations had different objectives and values bases, noted the importance of working in partnership between funder and recipient, educator and learner, and actors in the Global North and Global South. Within these common principles, a key theme is the recognition of the value of a “rich variety of voices and perspectives”, particularly giving voice to those who are marginalised from or adversely affected by global development” (p.6).

The review of funding from the European Commission for development education and awareness projects in 2010 (Rajacic et al, 2010a) makes reference to the importance given by both funders and NGOs to “active Southern involvement” in projects. The involvement of Southern partners via direct exchanges of peoples between the Global North and the Global South or the engagement of minority communities within Northern projects has been a feature of European development education practice for a number of years (Pardinaz-Solis, 2006; Ohri, 1997).

Another key feature of the Consensus document is the recognition of the linkages between globalisation and development, the “interconnectedness of people’s lives and needs”, and the “commonality of development processes and interests throughout the world by engaging the public in experiences and creative responses that highlight the relevance of global development to local situations” (p.6).

Implicit in the Consensus document, but also mentioned in other European focused material (Rajacic et al, 2010a,b; Krause, 2010), is the importance of a multi-stakeholder approach. This means securing ownership and engagement in strategies and delivery of programmes of a range of bodies covering government at local, regional and national level, NGOs, educational bodies, universities, media, business, trade unions and Southern partners.

Another strand in the same European material is the emphasis on participatory learning methodologies and the promotion of critical thinking. Rajacic et al (2010a), for example, refer to good practice in development education including a learner-centred approach.

The Consensus document also emphasised the importance of working with and through existing mainstream education systems and to develop common approaches with those bodies promoting human rights, environmental and inter-cultural education.

Finally the Consensus document referred to what development education was not, which was not public relations or simply encouraging public support for development or to raise money. This continues the long tradition of development education practice that distinguishes itself from public communication programmes.

The Consensus document, alongside other documents such as the ‘Maastricht Declaration on Global Education’ (Osler and Vincent, 2002) has resulted in a strong learning based focus to national global and development education strategies, been influential in the development of national strategies, particularly in Portugal, Czech Republic and Poland (O’Loughlin, 2008; IPAD 2010; Luczak, 2010).

Another influence on these themes were the series of Global Education Network Europe Peer Reviews of national programmes that have been produced since 2005. These reviews have given legitimacy and status to the importance of recognizing and valuing national education policy-makers and to provide some themes for future action (see O'Loughlin, 2013).

Whilst the Consensus document alongside other policy initiatives between 2001 and 2012 from bodies such as the European Commission and the Council of Europe were influential, there is a danger of ignoring the variances and differing influences on development education ideas and practices during this period.

### **Role of Education and Learning as Opposed to Campaigning**

An important theme within the debates on development education across Europe has been the relationship of learning to action, campaigning and behaviour change because for many organisations who become involved in this area of practice, their motivation is to secure social change. In Austria for example the development education working group of NGOs stated that 'global learning' is about an open-ended educational process which does not and cannot have predetermined results nor campaigns with a clear output goal or focus on mobilisation of people and political change (Rajacic et al, 2010a). The tensions between an education and campaign focus have been noted by Ni Chasaide (2009) in reviewing practices in these areas in Ireland, where at a conference in 2008 the need was noted to "protect and strengthen open learning spaces, with no pre-determined outcomes to participation. This reflected the NGO community's desire to guard against instructive approaches to identifying political solutions and routes to political action" (Ni Chasaide, 2009: 29).

These debates are not unique to development education and have been commented upon by Gearon (2006) with regard to human rights, Vare and Scott (2008) with regard to the environment and Marshall (2005) with regard to global themes.

There is a view, as expressed by Rajacic et al (2010a), that the term 'Global Citizenship Education for Change' should be used to cover both global learning which has to do with the development of the competencies of the learner, and campaigning and advocacy being concerned with changes in individual behaviour or institutional/corporate policies. These authors in the Final Report for the European Commission on the review of funding for development education and awareness raising (Rajacic et al, 2010b) make a distinction between a 'Global Learning approach' that aims to enhance the 'competences of the learner' with a focus on dialogue and experiential methodologies, and differing perspectives within a 'Campaigning/Advocacy approach' that aims at concrete changes in individual behaviour or institutional/corporate policies (p.11).

This distinction is similar to that outlined by Vare and Scott (2008) who, in reviewing education for sustainable development, refer to two types, one with a focus on open ended learning and one with a focus on clear goals and objectives.

The usage of the term global citizenship education as an over-arching term has been used by Oxfam in the UK for example who state they work:

*... in education policy and practice to empower young people to be active Global Citizens. We promote education that helps young people understand the global issues that affect their lives and take action towards a more just and sustainable world.*<sup>2</sup>

## NGO Perspectives

The usage of terms such as global citizenship education to cover both the learning and active engagement elements may have some value but there is a need to review in more detail what are the main themes as to how NGOs perceive development education. Within European NGOs, a number of common elements were identified from a survey undertaken in 2010:

- to inform and raise awareness of development issues;
- to change attitudes and behaviours;
- to enable understanding of causes and effects of global issues;
- to mobilise citizens through informed action (Krause, 2010).

These elements are close to the definition of the Development Awareness Raising and Education (DARE) Forum. It sees the term as:

*An active learning process, founded on values of solidarity, equality, inclusion and co-operation. It enables people to move from basic awareness of international development priorities and sustainable human development, through understanding of the causes and effects of global issues to personal involvement and informed actions.*

*Development education fosters the full participation of all citizens in influencing more just and sustainable economic, social, environmental, and human rights based national and international policies.*<sup>3</sup>

There is clearly within the perspectives of many NGOs an assumption of linkage between awareness raising learning and informed action, with an emphasis on empowerment and democratic engagement to secure global social change. But for many NGOs their perspective comes from a strong values base around equity and social justice.

This might be religion-based, as in the case of Catholic organisations around Europe such as CAFOD in the UK, which refers to the values of compassion, solidarity, stewardship and hope as central to its ethos and identity. Another example is HIVOS from the Netherlands, a humanist based organisation which emphasises global social justice<sup>4</sup>. UNICEF takes a more particular standpoint related to its educational work around the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child<sup>5</sup>.

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<sup>2</sup> [www.oxfam.org.uk/education/global-citizenship](http://www.oxfam.org.uk/education/global-citizenship)

<sup>3</sup> [www.deeep.org](http://www.deeep.org)

<sup>4</sup> [www.hivos.nl](http://www.hivos.nl)

<sup>5</sup> [www.unicef.org.uk/education](http://www.unicef.org.uk/education)

Marshall (2007) has commented however that too often NGOs have promoted the affective to the detriment of the cognitive domain. Scheunpflug and Asbrand (2006) have criticised NGOs for their lack of attention to the importance of competencies and the links between knowledge and skills, and their overemphasis on individual action and change.

In the review of funding for development education for the European Commission by Rajacic et al (2010a), an emphasis on 'challenging global injustice and poverty' was identified as the ultimate goal, with challenging misinformation and stereotypes, encouragement of active participation, understanding globalisation and engagement of civil society as the means to achieve this (p.118).

In conclusion, the key characteristics of NGO perspectives could be summarised as:

- understanding the globalised world including links between our own lives and those of people throughout the world;
- ethical foundations and goals including social justice, human rights and respect for others;
- participatory and transformative learning processes with the emphasis on dialogue and experience;
- developing competencies of critical self-reflection;
- supportive active engagement;
- coming together as active global citizens (Rajacic, 2010a: 121).

### **Foreign Affairs and Aid Ministries Interpretations**

Policy-making bodies with a responsibility for aid and development have had a strong influence on interpretations of development education in many countries because they have often been the main funders.

Across Europe from Ireland to Austria, UK to Poland, Norway to Portugal and Germany to Czech Republic and Slovakia, there are examples of strategies of support for development or global education that have been led by ministries responsible for international development and aid (see Forghani-Arani, Hartmeyer, O'Loughlin and Wegimont, 2013). What is noticeable about many of these strategies is the recognition of the need to engage broader stakeholders in the implementation of the programme and to put a central focus on learning. In Austria, for example the focus is on the "broader integration of Global Learning in the Austrian education system" (Forghani-Arani, 2013: 27).

However whilst in many countries there has been a recognition of the central role of working within mainstream education, the continuing usage alongside education of terms such as 'general awareness raising' as for example in the UK's strategy in 1998 (DFID, 1998) can, as happened in this country, lead to a difficulty of demonstrating impact and contribution to broader development and educational goals.

However across Europe, development and global education emerged from many different starting points from influence of NGOs and charitable based activities, in Western Europe, Canada and Australia to direct leadership from governments, particularly in newer member states of the European Union. This means that in countries such as Czech Republic, Poland and Slovakia, there is a greater emphasis on providing citizens with 'access to information on developing countries' and to develop programmes that go across all areas of

learning, including further and higher education (see Skalicka and Sobotova, 2013; O’Loughlin and Wegimont, 2013).

Where the European Commission is perhaps different from most national government strategies is the emphasis it puts on changing attitudes and mobilizing greater public support for action against poverty. This has meant that within European Commission funded programmes there is encouragement of initiatives that promote greater citizenship engagement although they have now two different strands of funding and policy, one explicitly on global learning and one more clearly focused on campaigning and advocacy (European Commission, 2012).

There are some examples within national policy initiatives that do encourage greater public engagement, such as Ireland which refers to taking action towards a more just and equal world (Irish Aid, 2007). But where governments have made reference to these themes they have tended to be done so in a form that is based around funding civil society organisations.

This role of national governments as acting as enablers and promoters through grant funded programmes to civil society organisations has however led to some difficulties in some countries from appearing to resource bodies that could be perceived as being on the margins of development and co-operation activities (see Bourn, 2014) to resourcing bodies that were overtly critical and questioning of aid and development policies.

In Norway, Nygaard in reviewing the growth of the NGOs in this area noted the importance of securing government support for an approach that valued and recognised different interpretations:

*The NGOs have had a breakthrough in stressing the role of civil society not just as service providers in the South, but as ‘watch dogs’ as well as ‘lead dogs’ in the North, achieving political consensus in parliament for the basic principle that the state should fund its own critics. This has opened up and stimulated, with the strong participation of NGOs, a lively and critical debate on global development issues and policies.* (Nygaard, 2009: 27).

The role and relationship of civil society organisations to national government policies and strategies remains a main issue in many countries. One country that has attempted to move the relationship on to a different footing has been in the UK where its Global Learning Programmes have been based around resourcing schools who then buy in skills and expertise from NGOs if they deem to be of value and useful to them.

This programme through the encouragement of a network of schools, aims to commit their pupils to “make a positive contribution to a globalised world by helping their teachers to deliver effective teaching and learning about development and global issues”<sup>6</sup>. The GLP puts the process of learning as its main focus and will be evaluated within the framework of increased knowledge and understanding of development and global issues.

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<sup>6</sup> <http://globaldimension.org.uk/glp>

## Development within the Global

A trend in a number of countries in the Global North has been to re-think development education as a contribution to a broader educational framework of Global Education (see Kirkwood-Tucker, 2009). Whilst the term Global Education has a history and tradition of its own, it has within Europe and North America in the past decade begun to have a closer relationship to development.

Within Europe, the view often taken about why the use of the term 'global education' came about is because, as Scheunpflug and Seitz (see Hartmeyer, 2008) have stated, development is an outmoded concept, and linkages to broader global themes ensure the primacy of learning goals and objectives. The Austrian Development Agency for example differentiates between 'global learning' and 'development education'. The former term is now dominant in Austria, influenced by the thinking of Scheunpflug and her approach of promoting "competencies to leading a fulfilling life in the twenty first century". These competencies include: to "understand and critically reflect global interdependencies, own values and attitudes, develop own positions and perspectives, see options, capability to make choices, and to participate in communication and decisions within a global context" (Rajacic, 2010a: 107). In reviewing the emergence of global learning in Austria, Forghani and Hartmeyer (2011) note the influence of a number of conceptual roots including civics, peace, human rights and environmental education, stating their close affinity with the development education field.

In a number of countries the use of the term 'global education' or 'global learning' has been an indicator that the government ministry responsible for development and the leading NGOs recognise the value of connections between development and broader societal agendas, particularly in relation to cultural understanding, issues of immigration, the impact of globalisation and global terrorism. An example of this is Finland where the government strategy document recognises the changing nature of civil society:

*...the task of global education (is) to enhance intercultural understanding, on the one hand; and to foster awareness of one's prejudices and change attitudes, on the other* (Ministry of Education, Finland, 2007: 9).

Finland's global education strategy, based on a partnership between foreign affairs and education ministries with the starting point of the Millennium Development Goals, defined global education in this broader societal context. It is seen as an activity that includes global responsibility, embracing recognition of human rights, the need to economise the earth's resources and understand the impact of globalisation and its 'cultural ramifications' and that promotes intercultural dialogue.

Canada is another example where you cannot divorce the history of development education from the growth of global education. Canada is unusual internationally in that it is one of the few countries where academic influence has had a strong impact within development education. Combined with the provincial educational structure, the strength of NGOs such as UNICEF and the related influence of themes such as human rights and citizenship education have meant that there are a number of common themes.

These as Mundy suggests are:

- view of the world as one system – and of human life as shaped by a history of global interdependence;
- commitment to the idea that there are basic human rights and that these include social and economic equality as well as basic freedoms;
- commitment to the notion of the value of cultural diversity and the importance of intercultural understanding and tolerance for differences of opinion;
- belief in the efficacy of individual action;
- commitment to child-centred or progressive pedagogy;
- environmental awareness and a commitment to planetary sustainability (Mundy, 2007:9).

What is noticeable about these ‘orientations’ is the absence of specific reference to international development. This has resulted in a wider range of actors being involved in the pursuit of broad goals and objectives. A specific consequence has been the development of province-based curriculum initiatives and the emergence of some independent academic discourses around themes such as global citizenship and human rights (Abdi and Shultz, 2008).

Similar traditions can be seen in the United States where development education has become subsumed within global education, led by networks of academics and teachers with the engagement of a small number of NGOs (see Kirkwood-Tucker, 2009). The practice of global education in the United States builds on the long established activities of the American Forum for Global Education, and the work of academics such as Merry Merryfield. The focus of global education practices in the United States has tended to be through the social studies school curriculum through the theme of increasing knowledge and understanding about world affairs.

### **Partnerships with Education Policy-Makers**

A feature of practices and policy statements on development education in the first decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> century has been the engagement with education policy-makers.

These have tended to be related to one of the following themes:

- international education;
- education for sustainable development;
- specific curriculum focus around key subjects such as geography, social studies, history.

The driver’s driver for this engagement with broader educational themes could be said to include the following:

- 1) A commitment, based on the Maastricht declaration, to provide access to quality Global/development education for all people in the particular country. This could only be achieved through partnership with education systems rather than project-based initiatives.

- 2) The emergence of a quality standard-setting between countries, in the form of the GENE sponsored European Peer Review mechanism, where national reports focused on integration within education systems.
- 3) The push by a variety of actors including NGOs, policy-makers and researchers to build on either Maastricht or the Consensus document and develop national strategies which included engagement with Education policymakers at national level.
- 4) International networking between policymakers that encouraged that approach
- 5) Leadership in this partnership, integrationist perspective by those with policymaking traction among education policymakers.

In Ireland, for example, the strategic aim of its programme was:

*To ensure that development education reaches a wide audience in Ireland by increasing the provision of high-quality programmes to teachers and others involved in development education and by working with the education sector, NGOs and civil society partners (Irish Aid, 2007:8).*

In Poland, it has been noted that due to the involvement of NGOs and the education ministry, “global education materials have been incorporated into the reformed core curriculum” (Luczak, 2010).

In England under the Labour government from 1997 to 2010 themes such as learning in a global society, global citizenship and sustainable development were reflected in a range of curriculum initiatives and policy statements by the education ministry. For example in 2005 the education ministry published its strategy for international education, entitled ‘Putting the World into World Class Education’ (DfES, 2005a). A feature of this strategy was the promotion of the ‘Global Dimension’ within schools. At around the same time, the same education ministry published a strategy on education for sustainable development, the ‘Sustainable Development Action Plan’, which again made a small reference to the global dimension (DfES, 2005b).

There are also examples from a range of countries where development education or its related terms have been seen as educational approaches to tackle domestic issues of racism and cultural understanding, or themes such as global terrorism and fundamentalism. This can be seen in the USA, for example, through a number of educational programmes that arose in response to the events of September 11, 2001 (Merryfield, 2002) or in Europe where economic migration was giving rise to new tensions within communities.

Education for International Understanding is another theme which has provided opportunities for development education approaches. This approach, influenced by the work of UNESCO, can be seen for example in a relatively new donor aid country such as South Korea (Kim, 1997) and in China in reviewing the role and purpose of their education in the context of globalisation (Bao-cun, 2010).

The UN Decade on Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) has also resulted in a number of countries looking at how their development or global education programmes contribute to these broader goals. In a number of industrialised countries such as Japan, Germany (Scheunpflug and Asbrand, 2006), Netherlands and the UK, most notably in Wales, the principal driver for learning about global and development issues has become education for sustainable development (Norcliffe and Bennell, 2011).

## Development Education in the Global South

Development education has usually been seen as a Northern constructed term and only of relevance to the Global North yet many of the ideas and theories that have influenced its practice have come from the Global South. Development education as a term has been used in the Global South although what it means has, like in the Global North, been open to a number of interpretations.

Southern theorists and practitioners have however played a major role in the discourses around development education. This includes the work and influence of Paulo Freire but also more recently academics such as Vanessa Andreotti, originally from Brazil, Catherine Odora Hoppers from South Africa and Ajay Kumar based in India. Behind these academics lie three interpretations of development education that go beyond, and in some cases, question development education in relation to human development.

Three traditions from the Global South could be identified as having a connection to or using the term development education:

- Freirian and Popular Education as seen in Latin America;
- Development Education as outlined in South Africa;
- Development Education in South Asia.

The first tradition, one that has emerged from within Latin America, is the use of terms such as 'popular education', seen as an approach towards the educational dimension of participatory community development (Kane, 2010). The influence of this tradition, inspired by the work of Freire, has an influence around the world, particularly in adult education, by promoting participatory techniques and empowering communities to secure social and political change. In Brazil there is evidence of the influence of Freire through educational programmes that make connections between human rights, global issues and social change. Centro de Criação de Imagem Popular (CECIP) for example is a civil society organisation that seeks to "democratise the access by all layers of the Brazilian Society to quality information on their basic rights, thus fostering a conscientious, active and participative citizenry".

The second tradition, whilst taking "development as a pedagogical field and human development as a goal", poses the forms of transformative action that need to take place in Africa for these goals to be achieved. This approach is central to the interpretation of development education offered by Catherine Odora Hoppers, Professor of Development Education at the University of South Africa. Central to her perspective is knowledge development, especially indigenous knowledge systems and the anchoring and articulation of the African perspective within disciplines and the curriculum. She argues that the knowledge society of today requires a recognition that knowledge production can no longer be confined to the silos of formal education, and that non-formal learning is only mentioned as an add on. Her approach is about much more than challenging dominant Western ideologies within education; it also recognises the "multiplicity of worlds and forms of life" (Odora Hoppers, 2008). This diversity of knowledge means that development education should be more inclusive, responsive and dialogic, to expose learners to different experiences and approaches. Hoppers argues that the focus of development education should not be the competency to adapt to current globalisation but rather, to destabilise the homogenisation of other forms of knowledge.

The third tradition has its origins in India, and brings together notions of human development with concepts of dialogical learning and critical humanism, merging, as Ajay Kumar (2008) has stated, the influence of Freire and Gandhi. Kumar states that development education must be concerned with:

*How learning, knowledge and education can be used to assist individuals and groups to overcome educational disadvantage, combat social exclusion and discrimination, and challenge economic and political inequalities - with a view to securing their own emancipation and promoting progressive social change* (Kumar, 2008: 41).

Kumar goes on to suggest that development education is a kind of “emancipatory and dialogical learning based on critical humanist pedagogy”. Dialogic education, he suggests, is where learners together pose problems, enquire and seek solutions. It builds on Freire’s notions of teachers and students being co-investigators in an open and ongoing enquiry, combined with Gandhian notions of an education that liberates us from servitude and builds mutual respect and trust.

However these perspectives are often at variance with the dominant messages in the Global South about education and development, where the focus has been more on access to education than on quality and pedagogy. As Liddy (2013) notes, where development education has been used as a concept, for example in Liberia, the focus has been much more on community development approaches. As Liddy also notes the pressure in countries such as Liberia has been to focus on skills development; but themes that may appear within education such as gender, conflict and the environment are global issues which require an understanding of different perspectives and critical reflection.

Research by MacCallum (2014) on sustainable livelihoods and global learning in Zanzibar demonstrates that an educational approach that is global in outlook, participatory in approach, encouraging learning from differing perspectives can be not only empowering to communities but make a positive contribution to social change. Her research showed that if a pedagogical approach is taken towards global learning, then it can have relevance and value both in the Global North and the Global South. She summarised these common and transferable features as:

- “Globally aware and informed communities are more likely to make more sustainable choices;
- Unless an individual can relate to the issue at hand they will not understand it or see its relevance to them, so relevance was key to social change;
- Understanding and building on perceived strengths was an empowering process rather than an outcome;
- Being exposed to different perspectives strengthened ability to set priorities and agendas;
- Experiential, hands on, peer lead social learning approaches develop awareness and new knowledge” (MacCallum, 2014: 330).

Concepts that have emerged out of the development education tradition from the Global North are being discussed, debated and in some cases applied in many countries in the Global South. Global citizenship for example is now referred to within UNESCO documents, although the focus appears to be more on equipping

learners to have skills to engage in a global economy and to have some understanding of sustainable development, rather than linking to Freirean traditions or the practices of NGOs.

The UN Global Citizenship initiative provides a potential opportunity to demonstrate the relevance of a more critical reflective and transformative approach towards learning. It states:

*The world faces global challenges, which require global solutions. These interconnected global challenges call for far-reaching changes in how we think and act for the dignity of fellow human beings. It is not enough for education to produce individuals who can read, write and count. Education must be transformative and bring shared values to life. It must cultivate an active care for the world and for those with whom we share it.*<sup>7</sup>

The UNESCO Global Monitoring Report for 2014 also makes reference to these themes by stating that “Global citizenship education requires transferable skills, such as critical thinking, communication, problem solving and conflict resolution” (UNESCO, 2014:296).

The evidence suggests however that despite the increasing use of concepts such as global citizenship, the themes implicit within development education do not appear to have been recognised or incorporated (Pasha, 2014).

The area of the relevance of the pedagogy of development education and global learning to education in the Global South is very important and as will be suggested in the final section of this article, an approach that needs to be given greater consideration in taking forward the debates on what is development education.

### **Development Education, Global Learning and Critical Pedagogy – a Pedagogy for Global Social Justice.**

Since the late 1970s development education has shown elements of a more transformative and critical learning approach. This has its roots in Paulo Freire but also incorporated elements of postcolonialism and transformative learning.

The work of Vanessa Andreotti is particularly important here. A Brazilian educator who has built on the thinking of Freire, postcolonialism and postmodernism to pose approaches to learning about global and development issues that recognise different interpretations and encourage critical dialogue but also that re-conceptualise knowledge, identities and culture within education (Andreotti, 2010).

Elements of the influence of Andreotti’s work can be seen in the practice of a number of development education organisations in the UK and in the recent re-conceptualisation of development education into global learning by the Development Education Association (DEA), now Think Global.

Shah and Brown (2010) from the DEA, in reviewing critical thinking for global learning, identified six elements that need to be considered:

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<sup>7</sup> <http://www.globaleducationfirst.org/220.htm>

- making connections within and between systems particularly in terms of social, economic and environmental dimensions;
- awareness that many terms such as sustainability are contested;
- the need to respond to complexity and change;
- understanding the significance of power relations;
- the importance of self-reflection;
- the promotion of values based literacy.

Taking forward these themes, this author has elsewhere (Bourn, 2014) suggested that development education should be seen as an approach towards learning based on promoting a global outlook, understanding of power and inequality in the world, belief in social justice and a commitment to reflection, dialogue and transformation. This framework or Pedagogy for Global Social Justice is one possible interpretation of development education, an approach that continues to show the relevance and value of its underlying themes at a time when in practice terms such as global citizenship, sustainable development and global learning seem to be more popular as practical applications.

### Typologies and Common Practices

In bringing the different approaches together as to what might be interpreted as development education, Manuela Mesa (2011a) has referred to the five generations approach. This interpretation has some value and merit but as the author herself has commented the model needs some refinement to take account of variations of practice and approach (Mesa, 2011b). Other approaches to summarizing the different interpretations have been Arnold (1988) who has referred to different pedagogies around information, critical skills and mobilisation with three visions: charity, interdependence and empowerment.

Some interpretations of development education would view the different perspectives along some form of continuum, from awareness and information about development at one end, to action and change at the other. This however ignores the influences related to moving beyond development to the global, and also the relationships to mainstream educational provision. The increasing use of the term global citizenship education comes from a number of different influences and has a number of different meanings. There is also the influence of actors from the Global South who, whilst having a number of different interpretations, would link development education in some way to their own broader goals of education in general, with a more personal and human approach to education.

Different pedagogical approaches need to be seen in relation to the various sectors of education. For example, activities and programmes within formal education settings have in the main tended to be more focused on knowledge and skills compared with, say, work with adults. A number of the more informal educational programmes would have more of an action orientation.

Despite these varying interpretations, in concluding this overview it is valuable to return to some common themes and practices. Whilst not necessarily seen as the 'consensus' outlined in the European document, nor necessarily the viewpoint of all policy-makers and practitioners, the following underlying themes provide

some underlying basis which could help to contribute to see development education as a pedagogical approach.

Firstly, within most of development education policies and practices there is recognition of the promotion of the interdependent and interconnected nature of our lives, the similarities as well as the differences between communities and peoples around the world (Regan, 2006).

A second theme is about ensuring that the voices and perspectives of the peoples of the Global South are promoted, understood and reflected upon, along with perspectives from the Global North. This means going beyond a relativist notion of different voices to one that recognises the importance of spaces for the voices of the oppressed and dispossessed.

Thirdly, underpinning practice in many countries is the encouragement of a more values-based approach to learning, with an emphasis on social justice, human rights, fairness and the desire for a more equal world (Abdi and Shultz, 2008).

Finally, many NGOs would wish to see development education as incorporating linkages between learning, moral outrage and concern about global poverty, and a desire to take action to secure change (Oxfam, 2006).

Development education will continue to evolve and adapt to changing needs and approaches. Debates on terminology will always be ever present. What is more important than coming up with a definition of development education is to understand and relate the themes and principles behind development education to the appropriate educational environment. This is why as this article has suggested and what is developed further by this author elsewhere (Bourn, 2014) is to see development education not as a static concept to be used directly within educational environments, but as a pedagogical approach based on learning that brings together the underlying principles upon which the practice has been based.

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