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Global education at the teacher education level: a comparative study of views of pre-service teachers in Australia and Zimbabwe

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Abstract

Current events at the global level make it necessary for global education to be taught in schools. This is because society views the education system, and schools in particular, as being responsible for getting young people to learn about globalization and what it means to be global citizens. However, research shows that teachers' knowledge and competence are key to young people's successful preparation as global citizens. This study compares the views of pre-service teachers in Australia and Zimbabwe concerning global education issues. Findings indicate that while the majority of participants in both countries are knowledgeable about these issues, they, at the same time, feel their institutions had not prepared them sufficiently to teach global education in schools. At the school level, global education is not well-known. Participants made recommendations that could benefit both teacher education institutions and schools on global education.

Keywords: global education, pre-service teachers, collaborations, knowledge levels, global perspective

Introduction

Current political, social and economic events at the global level make it necessary that global education is taught in schools so that young people are aware of their obligations and responsibilities as global citizens. This is because society regards the education system as central in playing a role in the current globalised society (Shaddock, 2014). On economic considerations, and schools in particular, education is regarded as the site of preparation for the global labour market (Burbules and Torres, 2000). At the political level, and because of the "globalisation of conflict and internationalisation of crime and terrorism" (Burbules and Torres, 2000, p.20) education has had a responsibility to alert society so that people are capable of dealing with these issues (see also Peterson 2020; Reynolds, Bradbery, Brown et al., 2015; White, 2018). On cultural issues, the globalised community, that is, beyond the family, regional and national levels, requires tolerance of and respect for cultural diversity (multi-culturalism). These are values that can be learnt in an education system that offers global education in the curriculum. In support of the above, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO, 2014) highlights the importance of education in "understanding and resolving global issues in social, political, cultural, economic and environmental areas….and the development of knowledge, cognitive skills, soft skills, values and attitudes among learners" (p.9). This has to start with pre-service teachers at the teacher education level.

This paper discusses a study that compares the views of pre-service teachers at higher education institutions in Australia and Zimbabwe concerning globalisation, global citizenship/education and other related issues (UNESCO, 2014; Commonwealth of Australia, 2008). The study participants came from different social, political and economic contexts, that is, Australia and Zimbabwe.

Background: The contested nature of globalisation and related concepts

What is globalisation and why is it important?

A clear understanding of what global education involves requires knowledge of the different perspectives, conceptions and controversies regarding globalisation itself and related concepts such as internationalisation, citizenship, citizenship education and global citizenship. Globalisation is, itself, a contested field/terrain. On one side it is viewed as a process that is not ideologically neutral but a capitalist construct meant to perpetuate class and imperialist relations at the global level; a legitimation or an ideological cover that distorts reality (Gamage, 2015). It is regarded as an international extension of capitalist social relations meant to serve the interests of some particular groups (el-Ojeili and Hayden, 2006) or something benefitting a few elites (the rich) of the world. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO, 2010) notes that in some ways globalisation is viewed as an extension of the western hegemonic political, economic and social/cultural powers. Those who hold this view believe that, in some cases, globalisation has provoked violent reactions or resistance in some parts of the world as locals refuse 'foreign ideas' imposed on them as part of the globalisation process. With regards to globalisation and education policy, Ball (2012) observes that because of globalisation education programmes and policies are now being exported, bought and sold as profitable commodities whether or not these are relevant to recipient societies. These policies are not neutral but have 'ideological functions' of transmitting dominant cultures globally and, therefore, have become 'sites

of constant contests and struggles' (Ball, 2012). On the other hand, there are those who see globalisation as a process that raises living standards, a process characterised by greater democracy and increased levels of mutual understanding (el-Ojeili and Hayden, 2006). Globalisation is seen as important in increasing an awareness of the reality of the world beyond the local level.

This diversity of opposing views about globalisation has to be taught in schools as it affects how things happen in the classroom, at the school level and education policy (Peterson, 2020). UNESCO (2010) advises that young people need to develop critical insights concerning the social, cultural, environmental and political impacts of globalisation. They need to develop capacities to assess the costs and benefits of globalisation in their own lives and lives of people in the local and global communities. The development of such capacities in young people is what global education is expected to be about (Shaddock, 2014). It is about education for global citizenship, development education, peace education, inter-cultural understanding and environmental education at the global level (Gordon, 2014; DeNobile, Kleeman and Zarkos, 2014). Society expects students to be 'globally competent' in a number of areas, including being inter-culturally competent in terms of learning languages, cultural norms and being empathetic (Gordon, 2014). Yet studies elsewhere have shown that the quality and success of global education in schools is, to a large extent, dependent on the teacher's content knowledge, attitudes and pedagogy; and the learning space (school) provided by the teacher (Dyer, 2005; DeNobile, Kleeman and Zarkos, 2014).

Global Education in Australia, Zimbabwe and Beyond

Despite the differing views at policy level, global education is still viewed as a necessary inclusion in the curriculum of a number of countries. In Australia, the Global Education Project (GEP) has made it possible for global issues to be incorporated into programmes at the higher education level, especially in the teacher education curriculum. The Melbourne Declaration (MCEETYA, 2008) and the Australian government point out that young people need to consider global implications of their education since global education "enables young people to participate in shaping a better shared future for the world" (Commonwealth of Australia, 2008, p.2). The provision of Global Education in schools is viewed as one way to achieve this goal. However, in the case of Zimbabwe, there is no specific official document on Global Education, instead, topics dealing with global education issues are integrated in syllabuses at different education system levels but are not referred to specifically as global education. Global education is also mentioned in the citizenship education document proposed by the Presidential Commission (1999) but was, however, never implemented.

At the international level, beyond Australia and Zimbabwe, global education is taught at different education levels in a number of countries (Reynolds, Brown, Bradbery, Donnelly, Ferguson-Patrick and Macqueen, 2012). However, as Lin (2013) notes, teachers' competence concerning global education is a key factor in deciding whether or not schooling could prepare young people as responsible global citizens (see also Reynolds et al., 2012). Other previous studies elsewhere have also shown that most teachers lacked the knowledge and skills to teach global education values (Holden and Hicks, 2007). However, some more recent studies in Australia (Peterson 2020; Shaddock 2014) indicate that, unlike the above, teachers in that country are knowledgeable about and capable of teaching global education

in schools. This means that if the current aim of global education is to be successful all global education teachers need to be adequately prepared so that they have a good understanding of what global education is, and how to teach it effectively (Ferguson-Patrick, Macqueen and Reynolds, 2012). Teacher competence in the area of global education is essential and should start at the teacher education level. Global education is an area that "develops a world consciousness where learners see themselves as local, national and world citizens" (Hoepper, 2011, p.22). In support of this view Lin's (2013) study in Taiwan showed that pre-service teachers who have participated in a global education programme were better equipped to teach the subject in schools than those who had not done so. However, in another study, Ferguson-Patrick, Macqueen and Reynolds (2012) note that the increasingly crowdedness of the school curriculum makes it difficult for pre-service teachers to implement global education in schools, as noted on the following quote:

> "Teacher education programs are, like school curricula, increasingly crowded. Pre-service teachers must learn content, theory, programming and assessment skills, classroom management strategies and communication skills. They must become proficient with technology for administrative, learning and teaching purposes. How and when do they learn how to implement global education foci?" (p.3)

Results from a similar study undertaken in Scotland have shown that pre-service teachers who might have had global education studies in their training still had problems transmitting this knowledge at the classroom level as they lacked the confidence to do so (Britton and Blee cited in Wisely, Barr and King, 2010). Pre-service teachers needed more support and clearly defined learning and teaching strategies that include "direct involvement, first-hand messages, eye witness accounts and inspirational speakers to raise awareness on global issues" (Miller, Wakefield and Dunn cited in Wisely, Barr and King 2010, p.99). They also need resources and collective responsibility that involves policy makers, teacher educators and local education authorities. There is also need for political support at both the local and national levels (Fenwick and Munro in Wisely, Barr and King, 2010). These strategies are likely to raise pre-service teachers' confidence and autonomy in teaching global education at the classroom level. As McLean and Reimer (2009) point out, sometimes the conceptual complexity of global education "leaves room for confusion and uncertainty making a universal consistent understanding of global education virtually unattainable" (p.903).

Characteristics of countries, in terms of political ideologies, economic development, cultural diversity and others have, in many ways, significant influences on pre-service teacher positions and attitudes regarding globalisation and global education (Burbules and Torres, 2000). Australia and Zimbabwe, countries from which participants for this study were sampled are, in many ways, at such different positions - politically, economically and culturally.

The study context and significance

The study reported in this paper is significant for global education educators in Australia, Zimbabwe and elsewhere. In Australia's case one of the five thematic research priorities of the institution where this study was conducted concerns "Our communities, our neighbours, regional and rural development, sustainability, prosperity and peace" (UNE, 2015) and has implications for global education. The

institution encourages collaborative research networks at the local, national and international levels in its study areas including education. The study reported here was interdisciplinary since global issues are not limited to one discipline. The institution encourages research partnerships that contribute to economic, social and cultural development; and innovation at the regional, national and international levels. At the Australian national level, this study links well with one of the country's National Research Priorities including the associated goals of 'understanding our region and the world' and "enhancing Australia's capacity to interpret and engage with its regional and global environment through a greater understanding of languages, societies, politics and cultures" (Australia National Research Priorities, 2015). These are issues relevant to global education and teachers and young people in schools in Australia, Zimbabwe and elsewhere. The study adds to existing knowledge on global education at the teacher education level especially given that data were collected from participants across different cultural groups operating in different political, economic and social contexts, that is, Zimbabwe and Australia.

The School of Education at the Australian institution offers under-graduate and post-graduate courses to prepare students to teach in Australian primary (5 – 12 year olds) and secondary (13 – 18 year olds). In these courses global education issues are integrated across most social science subjects. The majority of the institution's initial teacher education students study off-campus (on-line). The Teacher Education Department at the Zimbabwean institution offers a Bachelor of Education degree programme in Geography to pre-service teachers. It is in this area that global education issues are covered. Data at this institution were collected from on-campus final year pre-service teachers majoring in Geography. As noted earlier on, global education in Zimbabwe is mentioned in the Civics and Citizenship Education document proposed by the Presidential Commission (1999) which has not been implemented.

Aim and objectives of the study

The study aimed to compare pre-service teachers' views on globalisation and global education. It focused on the 'five global education learning emphases' identified by the Commonwealth of Australia's document (2008, p.5), that is: interdependence and globalisation; identity and cultural diversity; social justice and human rights; peace building and conflict resolution; and sustainable futures. The objective of the study was to investigate views of pre-service teachers from the two countries on:

1. Globalisation and global education in general
2. Global education programmes at the teacher and school education levels in their countries
3. Collaborations with institutions outside their countries on global education programmes.

Methods

A qualitative research design was used in sampling participants and in data collection, analysis and presentation of findings. Ethics approval (HE14-031) was obtained from the university's Research Ethics Committee.

Sampling participants

For this study all teacher education students taking social science subjects at the teacher education level and in which global education issues were covered were identified as possible participants though

not all of them volunteered to take part. The Australian sample involved thirty-nine (39) primary education participants most of whom were studying on-campus and fifteen (15) online secondary education participants (total: fifty-four participants) (University of New England, UNE). These students were variedly distributed across the range of social science subjects, with the majority, forty-four (44), at the undergraduate level and ten (10) at the post-graduate level. In Zimbabwe, sixty-five (65) final year Bachelor of Education pre-service teachers, majoring in Geography, were selected for the study (Midlands State University, MSU). In total the sample from the two countries was one hundred and nineteen (119) participants.

Data collection, analysis and presentation of findings

This study used a qualitative approach to collect data through an open-ended survey questionnaire (through Qualtrics software for the Australian sample and hard copies for Zimbabwean participants where internet facilities were not available). Gerring and Christenson (2017) and Beins (2019) recommend the use of questionnaires in research studies such as the current one. These authorities see questionnaires as important in delivering in-depth qualitative data from participants. Only a few demographic data items required quantitative responses.

Beins (2019) describes content analysis as one of the most commonly used data analysis techniques in qualitative research in social sciences. For this study, content analysis involved reading through copies of participant responses and identifying major themes, areas of participant shared opinions and where they differed. Where statistical (quantitative) data were provided, these were added up to determine participant distributions for the item. Much of the data are in response to the key objectives stated above and presented in narrative form supported by quotations from participants. This assists in a better understanding of participants' thinking on issues investigated.

Findings

Findings on this study are presented following the order of the three research objectives (questions) raised above. The study investigated initial teacher education students' (pre-service teachers') understanding of globalisation and global education; perspectives about global education programmes at the teacher and school education levels; and views regarding collaborations with institutions outside their own countries on global education programmes. As explained above, participant quotations cited at different points are a useful evidence of their views on these issues. Denscombe (2007) makes a clear distinction between generalizability and transferability of findings from sample sizes such as those involved in this study. It is, however, expected that the qualitative results from this study have added to existing knowledge about this topic.

Participants' understanding of globalisation and global education

The majority of Australian and Zimbabwean participants knew and clearly expressed their views on what 'globalisation' and 'global education' are about. Only one Zimbabwean and two Australian participants indicated they did not know what these concepts meant; another two from Australia indicated they were unsure.

In an attempt to support their claims some Zimbabwean participants provided a narrow view of global education. Participants thought global education was about developing personal skills that were marketable globally (economic empowerment of learner). A characteristic comment which illustrates this is:

> "It is education which is done worldwide…if I do a degree in Zimbabwe, I can get a job in the UK because I have knowledge which is global…if I have knowledge in computers, I can go to the UK."

The above comment from the Zimbabwean participant was, perhaps, arising from the economic difficulties that participants faced in the country at the time of this study and their wish to be economically empowered and to migrate abroad. Australian participants, on the other hand, maintained that global education was about personal skills that help resolve social problems at a global level. The following is typical of responses to this question:

> "It is a philosophy that seeks to inculcate global values of social justice and living together in harmony…to educate students so that they become global citizens…to try and foster responsibilities of global citizenship."

These differences highlight the need for consistence in the teaching of content covered on this subject at different levels and countries globally.

Knowledge of concepts and ideas related to globalisation and global education

With regards to the idea of 'taking a global perspective on issues' responses from both groups (Australians and Zimbabweans) demonstrated an understanding of this statement. The following are some common phrases from the participants' responses: "looking at issues from a global community level"; "world at large"; "global village"; "thinking globally"; "viewing issues with international considerations". Some more specific statements were:

> "Understanding how seemingly local issues could have global consequences, or at least involve other nations."

> "To me this means looking at issues and asking what it means for the whole world, not just small snippets."

> "Looking at things on a worldwide scale."

Generally, there were no clear differences between responses from the two groups, that is, the Australian and Zimbabwean participants appeared to share the same viewpoint.

Both groups clearly and accurately expressed their views on the question regarding the meaning of and link between 'interdependence and globalization'. Only one participant from the Zimbabwean sample did not know the link between interdependence and globalisation. Common key expressions from both groups (Australian and Zimbabwean) included: "Co-existence of nations"; "reliance and sharing of economic, social and cultural resources"; "nations cannot survive in isolation"; "global village means becoming one". However, as with other issues on this study, participants from both countries were not being critical, for example, they did not seem to recognise that some countries are more dependent

than others – economically and politically, that is, the subordination of some nations or social groups on others rather than equitably interdependent relationships. The following are some examples of the above:

> "The reliance individuals, communities and nations have on one another for goods and services; and for social interactions throughout the world."

> "Due to globalization economies and countries are now interdependent."

There were no clear differences between responses from participants from the two countries.

On the phrase 'action and participation' and with regards to globalisation and global education participants generally recognised that this is about learners getting involved in activities that benefit those in need at the local, national and global community levels. However, compared to Australian participants only a few Zimbabweans linked these concepts to global education. The majority of Zimbabweans provided simple dictionary definitions of these concepts with little connection to global education, for example,

> "…taking or being involved in something and contributing to something."

All participants from both countries responded to the item on what they thought was meant by the phrase 'peace building and conflict resolution' in globalization and global education. The following were common from both groups: "promoting tolerance among nations"; "harmony and tranquillity in society through dialogue"; "resolving disputes amicably; making efforts to promote and remain peaceful; promoting understanding and cooperation between cultures"; "planning and taking preventive measures on recurrent conflicts". While the majority had these positive ideas one Australian participant disagreed and viewed military intervention as a necessary approach when diplomacy fails. This Australian participant gave examples of conflicts in northern Nigeria involving Boko Haram and the Nigerian government. The participant said:

> "A stark example would be the recent acts of violence…and the need to recognize that diplomacy in this situation would not be as effective as military intervention."

There are many cases where military action has been used as suggested by the above participant. However, in some situations this has not brought about peace. Would this be the best approach to resolving national and global conflicts? Even where military action has been justified, in most cases it is innocent civilians who suffer.

On the question of 'identity and cultural diversity' and with regards to globalisation and global education participants associated these concepts with ethnicity, or belonging to different ethnic groups (in terms of values, norms and beliefs). One Australian participant warned that globalisation can, in fact,

> "….water down cultural identity although it can also increase cultural diversity as people move across the globe."

There is, therefore, a need to recognise different cultures at the global level, participants advised. Australian participants also cited examples of multi-culturalism in the Australian society as indicating the need to recognise the existence of cultural diversity at the global level, for example:

> "In a country like Australia, it is too easy for 'mainstream' students to feel that their identity is the 'national default' and that students of other cultures are somehow exotic and need to make accommodations in order to fit in."

Australian participants also recognised and cited the importance of Aboriginal indigenous studies in young people's awareness of cultural identity and diversity. However, one Australian participant noted:

> "cultural identity and diversity, as social constructs, can be used to divide or unite society/nation."

On the concept 'sustainable futures' in studies of globalisation and global education the majority of participants (over eighty percent), from both Australia and Zimbabwe, were of the view that this meant "a wise use of resources for future generations". For example, two participants had this to say:

> "The idea of leaving a place in the same way or better for future generations. Also, not using up all of the resources that are unable to be replenished."

> "Implementing strategies to ensure that the earth's resources are sustained and replenished in order for a better future."

Only a few Australian participants (less than twenty percent) had reservations, with one of them providing the following advice:

> "Sustainable futures are totally possible but unlikely to be achieved because people are greedy and selfish. Stop reproducing is the only way to guarantee sustainable futures."

The United Nations' Decade of Education for Sustainable Development provides a statement on sustainability both for the present and future; and how education can play a role on this (Commonwealth of Australia, 2008, p.12; 2014, p.5).

Each of the participants from both Australia and Zimbabwe felt that there was need to include 'human rights and social justice' issues in globalisation and global education studies. The link between the two was quite clear: "Respect of human rights at all global levels and for all people is an aspect of social justice". Two Australians highlighted the contestable nature of these concepts which arise from cultural differences and therefore the need to be cautious when discussing human rights and social justice issues.

> "…they (human rights) are subjective; they are contestable. Social justice is also subjective and therefore contestable. They are both based on deeply held beliefs and ideologies."

> "This is difficult to understand within a global context. Different cultures have different understandings of these principles."

In some cases, differences in cultural beliefs have led to abuses of the same human rights that are to be respected. Would respect for such cultures not mean a tolerance of abuse of the same human rights and social justice being advocated? Participants did not seem to be aware of or recognise this dilemma.

Responses from both groups regarding the idea of 'active/global citizens' were brief and only a few Zimbabwean participants shared similar views with the Australian sample on this. There were also some interesting views from both groups about what it means to be 'an active global citizen'; for example:

> "People who travel a lot." (*Australian participant*)

> "Changing the world leadership." (*Australian participant*)

> "An individual who is free to travel all over the world." (*Zimbabwean participant*)

> "People who participate and contribute to the betterment of society whether it be on a national or international scale, global citizens work toward improving conditions and relations in society." (*Zimbabwean participant*)

> "Someone who is physically and emotionally active to a global event or issue like taking part in Red Cross in the storm affected areas of Manila; or the Ukraine/Russia crisis." (*Australian participant*)

For most participants from both Australia and Zimbabwe on this study, it appears that knowledge of the content of Global Education as a subject need to be matched with knowledge of approaches to teaching that content to young people in schools which is what most participants complained about. The following section provides some evidence about this.

Global Education at Teacher Education Level

How is global education important to you as a future teacher?

Both groups were positive about global education to them as future teachers. A number of reasons were provided including the following: that "global events need to be taught locally"; "global education connects education systems and teaching methods from different parts of the globe"; "to be able to teach young people to be global citizens"; "it enables teachers to teach in different parts of world". One Zimbabwean participant emphasized this last reason by saying:

> "It makes me suite very well in any education system in any country, yah, so I would say it's very important."

Two Australian participants had this to say:

> "I don't feel I have grounds to make judgment at this stage."

> "I don't believe that global education is important to students, at least not currently. The only way we as teachers can make global education important to students is to make it relatable and interesting. If we can give global education meaning and value, then it will be important to students."

How is global education important to students you will teach in schools?

A majority of participants from both countries was unanimous that teaching global education is important in preparing young people as global citizens who would participate at the global level. One Australian participant added:

> "Yes, they are being affected with issues of globalisation and internet; learners should be made aware that life does not start and end within their locality. The world is there to be explored by students."

However, one Zimbabwean participant disagreed, adding:

> "No, to a larger extent it can brainwash them of their national value."

'How well prepared have you been from your studies to be able to teach Global Education in schools?'

A majority of participants from both groups felt they had not been adequately prepared to teach the subject in schools, especially Australian participants from the primary education programme. Others felt that global issues had been learnt just from experience outside university. Two Australian participants had this to say:

> "It is more something that is taught through experiences and passion."

> "Online learning does not prepare you to be able to implement your plans. There is not enough support from the university; the DET or teachers in schools need to be able to deliver the kind of education that is needed to make students active global citizens."

Areas cited as in need of some attention include subject content and teaching resources especially for the Zimbabwean sample. Only a few from both samples said they had been adequately prepared in the Geography area, with History as an addition for the Australian sample who said:

> "My studies in this unit have adequately prepared me to teach global education, but only in some areas…so while I am prepared, I am not fully prepared."

Global Education at the School Level

How well known is Global Education in schools?

In schools where pre-service teachers went for teaching practice the majority of participants from both samples were convinced that this subject is not well known and not openly taught. For one Australian participant global education issues covered included:

> "Issues connected with cultural identity and power relations at different levels of society, accidentally taught in other subjects, not as a Global Education subject. There wasn't really anything that I saw at the whole school level, though."

However, one Zimbabwean participant noted that the topic on climate change covered in schools is part of global education.

> "We have issues like climate change, it is being implemented and pupils are studying it, so they have got some knowledge about it, so Global Education is implemented, is known."

The Zimbabwe sample had some detailed comments on this item. Some felt urban schools were better placed to cover global education issues than rural ones. The reasoning had to do with technology availability: the conception that Global Education has to do with information communication technology (computers, internet, cell phones, television- media). In addition, in Zimbabwe some immigrants who can help by talking about their countries as invited guests in schools often stay in specific elite locations of the country's urban areas and often do not interact much with locals – especially rural locals. Teachers were also to blame for lacking knowledge about global issues or for moving away from rural to urban schools.

What suggestions do you have concerning the best approaches to teaching Global Education in schools (considering skills to be learnt, approaches and resources used)?

Areas of common opinion for both groups included the need to improve Information Communication Technology (ICT) infrastructure, student exchange programmes worldwide and improvements in teacher education that takes account of global issues (content). The Zimbabwe sample still noted the rural/urban divide in terms of ICT and electricity provision that made it difficult to access knowledge of global issues in rural areas. The Australian sample further noted the need to connect university programmes with school experiences of pre-service teachers. Teaching/learning approaches on global issues need to be practical and across the curriculum, as the following quote from one Australian participant shows:

> "There is a serious lack of connection with what we learn in university and opportunity to implement it in the classroom. Moving towards more theory based postgraduate studies is wrong. Pre-service teachers should be in the classroom as much as possible where they can test their material and refine it instead of having one shot at it."

Much of the Australian group's advice is directed towards teacher education designers and the implementation of global education – that, generally, more practice in real school situations is preferably to university theory. Suggested topics to be taught in schools included those covered on this study, that is, global perspectives; peace building and conflict resolution; identity and cultural diversity; sustainable futures; human rights and social justice; and active global citizens. These are to be taught across the curriculum. A majority of Australian participants believe that not much has been done to prepare young Australians to be active global citizens in spite of current projects in and outside the education system. This is linked to responses on another item concerning the effectiveness of teaching global education in Australian educational institutions. As a means of addressing this 'gap' Australian participants pointed at the need for support from government, not just at local school levels, but also establishing links with schools in other parts of the world so that global citizenship/education becomes a reality.

These statements express some discontent with the top-down nature of the system that allows little opportunity for implementers, such as teachers, to demonstrate their expertise and express their desires too.

What would you prefer: assessment or no assessment of Global Education in education institutions (universities and schools)?

All Zimbabwean and a majority of Australian participants felt that Global Education has to be assessed because it may not be taken seriously if not assessed. Assessment could take the following forms: written examinations like other subjects; participation in society, locally and globally, in partnership with other schools; students independently undertaking projects in communities, as one Australian participant put it:

> "Involving students in some authentic assessment - real life situations of meeting other cultures and how the students respond. See if the students are open to other peoples' perspectives and maybe invite families along too."

A few Australian participants objected to Global Education being assessed as they maintained that this takes away the focus from the life-long practical application of Global Education ideas to focus on marks (see also Sigauke, 2011).

Possible Future Collaborations with Other Institutions

Possible areas for future collaborations with pre-service teachers in other countries

Both groups suggested several areas for collaboration. The Australian group had the following: a common curriculum; student exchanges; studies on global social, political and economic factors that contribute to perpetuating poverty for the most oppressed and marginalised around the globe. The Zimbabwean group had the following: HIV and AIDS education; social justice and human rights; environmental issues, especially climate change and information technology. Others suggested working together in trying to understand concepts and ideas related to global education.

How best to collaborate with pre-service teachers abroad

In response to this statement there was a diversity of responses from the Australian sample such as: university initiatives to help establish contacts and links; the internet; exchange programs; video/tele-conference; combined student activities; online/social media; increase opportunities for international placement for practicums; visiting in person when possible; Google partnerships with global buddy schools; making personal connections. Responses from Zimbabwean sample focused on: exchange programmes (a majority of Zimbabwean participants mentioned this); use of the internet for communication and sharing of ideas; posting information on social network such as face book, tweeter and e-mail; using e-mails and WhatsApp; virtual learning. Only one Zimbabwean participant said he was not sure and another did not know.

This study is being carried out in another country abroad. What would you want pre-service teachers in that country know about Global Education at your institution?

The following are examples of responses from one Zimbabwean and two Australian participants.

> "The programme often helps students of the dominant social group to perceive systems of dominance and the unearned advantage that accrues to us because of our racial and/or social group." (Zimbabwean participant)

"I hope the pre-service teachers in Zimbabwe have had the opportunity to implement their teaching strategies in the classroom in a more effective way than external online students at UNE have had. As far as in the schools, I am sure the students in Zimbabwe are better behaved than the students in low-income areas in Australia and so their teachers may have had more success with them. It's a nice idea to be able to communicate across the globe with teachers from different cultures but as I said, you need time to devote to it." (Australian participant)

"I would want pre-service teachers in Zimbabwe to take global education seriously, and to learn all they can to help themselves and empower their students, especially women." (Australian participant)

The above quotes reflect participant views about social power relations, programme delivery approaches, student behaviour and the need for the empowerment of the disadvantaged at the global social level; "especially women", says the last quote.

Discussions and Conclusions

The study determined several areas of agreement and differences between the two groups on issues investigated. Differences in participant views, as noted in the findings section, most likely resulted from differences in social, political and economic contexts in which participants were located – a developing and a developed country; a country where global education is officially recognised and integrated in the learning areas of the education system and another where this is not the case. These findings are discussed in the following sections, then conclusions are drawn based on participant views on issues investigated.

Participants' knowledge about globalization and concepts related to Global Education

Findings from this study indicated that generally pre-service teachers from the two countries were knowledgeable about what globalisation and global education involves. Teacher knowledge of and skills for teaching and promotion of global education are important to its successful implementation in schools (Peterson, 2020; Shaddock, 2014; Holden and Hicks, 2007). There was, however, a clear distinction between responses from the two groups with more detailed responses from the Australian participants compared to the Zimbabwean sample. This has likely resulted from the fact that Australian participants study subject areas where global education issues are identified and covered in some more detail than is the case for the Zimbabwean sample. It is important to note that if global education is to be successfully covered at the teacher education level, global issues need to be incorporated in some specific subject areas or be taught as a distinct separate subject known as Global Education. Lack of clarity and differences among teachers in their understanding of global education issues can lead to differences in pedagogical practices that may disadvantage learners; "…then global education may lose a cohesive structure that can be used to distinguish it from other fields" (Mangram and Watson, 2011, p.95).

There is need for resources on global education if it is to be successfully covered the education system. In Australia, the Global Education Project (GEP) has distributed resources to social science education programmes at universities including a resource book on global education (Commonwealth of Australia, 2014). These resources cover a number of issues central to global education. Findings from the

Zimbabwean sample show that resources on global education were not available unlike was the case in Australia. This is one of the reasons for the differences noted between participant views on this study. Except in a few cases the majority of participants from both countries need to critically question the often taken-for-granted conceptions of some ideas about globalisation, for instance, the extent to which nations are interdependent, as some nations are more dependent than others. The position of politically powerful vis-à-vis weaker nations in the peace building and conflict resolution processes also needs to be questioned; so is the participation of nations who are at different developmental stages in global issues and resource exploitation vis-à-vis resource sustainability. The extent to which education can be central in training learners to be global citizens in the implementation of human rights and social justice at the global level also needs to be critically evaluated. In spite of current realities concerning human rights abuses and social injustices at the global level, participants from both Australia and Zimbabwe in this study do not seem to question these issues. This is perhaps why Papastephanou, Christou and Gregoriou (2013) recommend a curriculum that trains teachers to be critical thinkers. Teachers need to think critically about existing discourses and ideologies so that they may be able to use 'disruptive knowledge' in their pedagogical practices (Mangram and Watson, 2011, p.111). These ideas are relevant to teachers in other developed and developing countries beyond those involved in this study.

Global Education at the teacher education level
The second focus area for this study was on participants' experiences of global education at the higher education and school levels. UNESCO (2014) highlights the importance of teacher education in the area of Global Citizenship Education including approaches such as the use of ICT, sports- and arts-based approaches, community-based approaches and youth-led initiatives. In the current study, while a majority of participants from both countries felt that, in theory, global education is important to them as future teachers the same majority felt that their institutions had not prepared them enough to teach this subject in schools (see also Britton and Blee, 2010; Ferguson-Patrick, Macqueen and Reynolds, 2012). This, again, was especially so with Zimbabwean participants who were taking Geography as a major area of study but did not feel this area had anything to do with global education. The online delivery approach at the Australian institution was cited as a problem as it made it difficult for participants to physically practice global education activities in schools and beyond. While the Australian group cited Geography as an area that could cover global education issues in much more detail than other areas, Zimbabwean participants studying this subject do not see it as the solution. For some Australian participants, it is only through attachment at schools that they maintained pre-service teachers can practice what global education requires. In schools there are more opportunities for them to practice global education activities than is the case at university level (see also Miller, Wakefield and Dunn, 2010).

Global Education at the school level
Participants from both countries (Australia and Zimbabwe) noted that at the school level global education is not a well-known subject area (see also Sigauke, 2013). Similar to the situation at the higher education level, not all learning areas at the school level are viewed as suitable for teaching and learning about globalisation and global education. For the Australian sample, a few suitable areas were

cited including Geography, History, Society and Culture, Economics and Aboriginal Studies. Even in these subject areas more practical approaches are recommended so that students in schools find global education more practical than just theoretical – focusing on and solving real life problems and making links at the global level. While Australia is making attempts to incorporate global education issues in learning areas through the Global Education Project (GEP) and other agencies, participants from the Australian institution in this study do not feel enough is being done at the national and state government levels; at higher education and schools. Rather than making this an assessable subject, global education should be a general life-long subject, integrated across the curriculum. However, this is strongly objected to by Zimbabwean participants who suggest that global education be assessed in schools if it is to be taken seriously, which is not the case at the moment.

Collaborations with other institutions at the global level

Both participant groups believe that collaboration with other institutions at the global level should be central to global education. This would involve sharing of relevant content to be taught at both the teacher education and school levels; sharing ideas about teaching approaches and resources through information communication technology (ICT) devices and techniques; and student/staff exchange programmes which, in fact, is in support of the UNESCO (2014) recommendations. Again, this should go beyond the university and school levels to involve national and state governments with the aim of empowering the disadvantaged in society at the local community, national and global levels.

Recommendations

This section makes the following recommendations based on findings from the study.

1. This study recommends that, in spite of differences between programmes at the two institutions, global education issues at these and other local and international institutions, be given depth of coverage for all pre-service teachers so that they are equipped sufficiently to teach these ideas at the school level at any location, globally, when they graduate from their institutions.

2. These findings should be useful guidelines to higher education institutions, not only in these two countries (Australia and Zimbabwe) but also internationally, on what may or may not be included in global education programmes at the teacher education level.

3. University teacher education designers of global education programmes need to consider the advantages and disadvantages of on-line and face-to-face delivery approaches in teaching global education. They also need to work together with teachers at the school level who are likely to be supervisors of pre-service teachers in the area of global education when they go on teaching practice. There is also need to consider increasing the depth of coverage of global education strands. In the modern era of information communication technology, it would be important to link local and other institutions globally on issues to do with global education such as those investigated in this study.

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