

Global Dimension in the Northern Ireland Curriculum: School approaches, teaching and learning

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Executive Summary

Introduction

The Global Dimension in Schools (Northern Ireland) is a three year programme aiming to embed the Global Dimension in formal education. The research team was commissioned to monitor and evaluate the programme over a two year period using a range of research methods.

Context

Northern Ireland provides a highly relevant case study to examine the conceptualisations and practices of the Global Dimension in education due to its history of identity-based conflict, segregated school system, recently increasing ethnic minority population and tradition of educational initiatives to address issues of community relations and conflict. A Global Dimension is implicitly included as a statutory element in Primary school curricula in Northern Ireland, mainly within the themes *World Around Us* and *Personal Development and Mutual Understanding* and within the Post-primary school curriculum within *Learning for Life and Work* and *Local and Global Citizenship* though it is intended to infuse all other subject areas of the Curricula (CCEA, 2007a, 2007b).

Research Aims and Design

The research employed qualitative and quantitative research methods and focused on teachers, student teachers and pupils.

The research objectives were:

1. To identify organisational strategies employed by schools and teaching strategies and resources perceived as beneficial for learning about global issues.
2. To explore teachers', student teachers' and pupils' understandings of the Global Dimension and their attitudes to related issues.
3. To investigate the extent to which pupils learn about issues related to the Global Dimension in schools and to compare this to their attitudes and reported activist behaviours.

Conclusions

Organisational strategies employed by schools, teaching strategies and resources perceived as beneficial for learning about global issues

- There was clear evidence that much relevant and valuable work was carried out in schools under the banner of the Global Dimension. Few schools adopted a structured approach to the implementation of the Global Dimension in the curriculum. Strong curricular links (e.g. *The World around us* or *Learning for Life and Work*) and, in Post-primary schools, subject links (*Local and Global Citizenship*, History, Geography) were noted and in some schools other subjects, such as Music, Physical Education or Religious Education were identified as most actively promoting the Global Dimension. In many schools, specific projects (such as Comenius, International School Awards) catalysed the incorporation of the Global Dimension into the curriculum. The non assessed nature of the Global Dimension however was seen by some as a sign that it may be vulnerable to being pushed off the agenda by assessed subjects. Teachers saw the support from management, the ELBs and from other schools as crucial. Teaching about the Global Dimension also appeared to be highly dependent on the background, training and/or enthusiasm of individual teachers.
- At an applied level, lack of time for teaching, researching and reflection was seen as a major impediment to implementing the Global Dimension effectively. Resources were seen as easily accessible by some, but teachers from subject areas which are traditionally not aligned with teaching the Global Dimension found it challenging to identify suitable

materials. For teachers in Irish Medium and Special Schools resource identification and adaptation presented its own problems, though their approaches and strategies did not differ from those implemented in other school sectors.

- Follow-up interviews clearly demonstrated that teachers had varying experiences over the school year, depending on changes within their own schools, in the curriculum and in their own understandings, sometimes as a result of their teaching or projects related to the Global Dimension. Most teachers noted that the Global Dimension is becoming more embedded in the curriculum and that pupils would benefit, at the very least, from having their horizons widened.
- This survey was not representative and generalisations across school sectors cannot be made on the basis of the results. However there was a consistent pattern of differences between school types relating to reported learning about the Global Dimension. Teacher interviews indicated differences in emphasis between school sectors, for example integrated schools viewed the Global Dimension as an extension of their community relations work and their teaching approach based on an embrace of diversity in general. Maintained schools centred their approach on their traditional involvement in international charitable work. Controlled schools appeared to concentrate on the development of international projects and collaborative partnerships with other schools. These differences in approaches were corroborated by findings from the pupil survey. The common curriculum for Northern Ireland entitles all pupils to the same learning and current findings indicate that this may not be the case in

relation to the Global Dimension. While all approaches may entail a critical engagement with global issues and thereby promote positive attitudes to global issues, unless such differences across school sectors are addressed, the approaches taken by different school sectors may mean that the Global Dimension has correspondingly different influences on pupils from different community contexts in Northern Ireland.

Teachers' and student teachers' understandings and attitudes

- Awareness raising was seen as the main goal in teaching about the Global Dimension. Interviewees agreed that pupils may display 'acceptable' attitudes in the classroom, while outside it they may think and behave differently.
- Environmental issues appeared to have a universal appeal, which may point to the potential role of the environment as a model for introducing the concept of interdependence, which was viewed as more problematic than other key concepts, particularly for younger children.
- Teaching about respect for diversity and other cultures was regarded as central to the Global Dimension, relating to the global and local contexts, though the latter often reflected concerns about racism rather than sectarianism.
- In contrast to the environment, trade, consumerism and debt appeared to be relatively underdeveloped concepts, with the exception of Fair Trade.
- Understandings varied between teachers and schools in relation to some issues. The level of critical engagement with issues of equality, social justice and power relations varied from critical reflections on the complexities of global North/South relationships to more Eurocentric or

Western approaches, based on a perceived need for charitable action. Some teachers regarded addressing differences and conflict as essential, while others concentrated on similarities and common humanity. Where interdependence was addressed, some teachers started with the local context and connected it to global issues, while others felt the opposite approach was more effective.

- Some concerns were raised about distressing younger pupils with pessimistic world views and about upsetting parents, who may have divergent opinions. Fears were also expressed regarding the potential consequences of addressing the Northern Ireland conflict in the classroom as debates about controversial issues could strengthen divisive identities and, in turn, worsen community relations.
- The school context was clearly seen as a factor in what issues should or could be addressed in the classroom, which may limit the extent to which teachers believe it possible to take a more critical approach addressing controversial issues.

Pupils' understandings, attitudes and behaviours

- The research clearly highlights pupils' interest in global issues and motivation to learn more about them. Pupils were concerned about global issues and willing to engage actively in change to make the world a better place.
- Pupils recognised a lot of learning related to global issues taking place in schools and saw these issues as important. Pupils' perception that most of their learning about global issues takes place during school lessons clearly underlines the importance of incorporating a Global Dimension in the curriculum.

- A wide range of relevant knowledge emerged from pupils responses. However evidence of critical engagement with the issues, attitudes and behaviours was more limited, reflecting relatively limited teacher expectations. As such, their understandings of the causes of global poverty for example were limited. Pupils' understandings of the Global Dimension thus mapped closely to those that teachers outlined.
- Pupils' discussions often reflected a teaching approach involving brief exploration of unfamiliar cultures and experiences of 'the other', in a way that had reinforced stereotypical assumptions and without any introspective examination of the pupils' own culture.
- Pupils generally supported pacifist means of conflict resolution and values underpinning Human Rights frameworks.
- They saw the value in activism for change relating to the environment, economy and poverty, and expressed a strong sense of their own responsibility in making change, especially in relation to the environment. While this shows a commitment to consider the global impact of action and a responsibility to "think global and act local", pupils also admitted to weighing up their individual liberty and comfort against the perceived benefits of activism.
- While a "Northern Irish" identity proved to be popular amongst pupils, identification as Europeans and Global Citizens remained peripheral to pupils in the research. Their readily accepted conceptions of themselves as inhabitants of a global eco-system did not translate into social identities which incorporate both local and global aspects of citizenship.
- Attitudes to immigrants were positive although a sizeable minority of

respondents demonstrated less liberal attitudes to immigrants from both Europe and Africa, underlining the importance of educational initiatives which address diversity at local and global levels.

- Findings clearly indicated a developmental dimension to critical engagement with global issues. Thus Primary pupils were less well equipped in terms of conceptual frameworks relating to the Global Dimension and more optimistic about the effectiveness of individual and collective activism than Post-primary pupils, who appeared to be less naive in their views and better able to understand more complex issues relating to interdependence.

Recommendations for Policy Makers

1. The Department of Education should produce, in consultation with stakeholders, a policy document providing clear guidance for teachers on how the Global Dimension should be implemented through the Northern Ireland Curriculum, including guidelines on effective whole school implementation and advice on its pedagogical, social and economic importance.
(Teachers were generally unsure as to where the Global Dimension fits into their teaching, why it is important pedagogically and why it is important in an increasingly globalised society and education sectors clearly differed in their approaches.)
2. The Department of Education, the Council of Curriculum Examinations and Assessment, Education and Library Boards, in conjunction with key stakeholders in the educational sectors, clearly need to continue their efforts

towards mainstreaming and awareness raising about the role of the Global Dimension, in particular with regards to those that are subject specific, and appropriate for particular age and ability groups as well as for Irish language teaching.

(Teachers were often unclear about the role of the Global Dimension and either found appropriate resources difficult to locate or to sort through and adapt, contributing to inconsistency in implementation.)

3. In all sectors of the education system, Initial Teacher Education and In-Service Training for teachers in all subject areas should foster a critical discourse about the Global Dimension, including local and global identities in order to achieve a more consistent approach to its implementation.

(Different approaches across school sectors were evident in the research findings from both pupils and teachers.)

4. Training and support should enable teachers to develop more critical approaches to promoting action beyond work that traditionally has a charitable or school linking focus.

(Unless managed carefully, charitable and school linking approaches did not empower teachers to address issues of global inequality in the classroom and potentially reinforced negative stereotypes of the Global South in pupils.)

5. Training and support should be provided for teachers to empower them to address controversial issues within the Global Dimension and to link the local and the global in order to address gaps in pupils' learning.

(Pupils wanted to learn more about sensitive issues such as global politics and conflict but this was not reflected in

their experiences of the Curriculum. Additionally, there was a clear lack of understanding of, and critical engagement with, interdependence relating to the causes and consequences of global inequality.)

Recommendations for Practitioners

1. In addition to sharing knowledge and good practice within schools, appropriate review processes should be put in place to share experiences with and seek advice from identified professionals and resources (see references), in order to ensure that their approaches to teaching the Global Dimension are effective in challenging stereotypes.

(While teachers already disseminate information from training within their schools, uptake of services and resources from NGOs was less consistent.)

2. Schools should support teachers, through training and allocated time for critical reflection, in ongoing efforts to address issues such as racism and conflict in the classroom.

(While attitudes to immigrants were generally positive amongst pupils, a significant proportion of them demonstrated negative views. Additionally, pupils reported limited learning about conflict and conflict resolution in schools but clearly expressed the wish to learn more about these, which emphasises the need for teachers to continue to incorporate such issues.)

3. In teaching about interdependence, practitioners should build on their existing teaching models (e.g. relating to the environment) to focus on other aspects of the Global Dimension.

(While many teachers particularly in Primary schools expressed doubts about the ability of younger children to understand interdependence as a concept, they all reported that teaching about the environment did not present such difficulties and that pupils were engaged by the topic.)

4. Teachers should develop more critical approaches to promoting action, beyond work that traditionally has a charitable or school linking focus.

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5. Teachers should address controversial issues within the Global Dimension and link the local and the global in order to address gaps in pupils' learning.

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6. In-Service Training providers should incorporate the skills, values, knowledge and understanding in their training that can enable teachers to critically engage with key social and economic issues that underpin globalisation and social inequalities.

(Many teachers indicated uncertainty about what exactly to include in their teaching about the Global Dimension and how to engage with the issues effectively.)

7. Initial Teacher Education Institutions should continue to ensure that student teachers in all disciplines have the opportunity to introduce a global dimension to their teaching practice as part of their Initial Teacher Education (Student teachers clearly highlighted the importance of exposure to global learning methodologies and issues while developing their teaching practice.)

Recommendations for NGOs

1. NGOs should put in place appropriate review processes to evaluate and continuously improve collaboration with schools and resources.

(The research indicated variation in perceived provision.)

2. When providing services to schools, NGOs should ensure that educational support provided to teachers is clearly differentiated from support for fundraising activities and that a balance between the two is maintained, thereby increasing the potential for a more critical approach to be adopted.

(Teachers and pupils in some schools regarded fundraising as a major focus for the Global Dimension, thereby neglecting more critical perspectives on global issues.)

3. When providing educational support in schools, where possible co-teaching or team teaching should be encouraged both to foster the professional development of teachers and to ensure a sustainable level of teacher expertise and pupil learning.

(There was evidence that some teachers lacked confidence and preferred to hand over a class to NGO experts rather than to co-teach.)

4. A coordinated approach to the delivery of educational activities should be taken by NGOs in order to facilitate schools in planning the involvement of NGOs and to avoid duplication of effort and the over-burdening of schools.
(Findings clearly highlighted that many teachers found it difficult to evaluate existing resources and NGO activities and to identify those most relevant to them.)

Introduction

Globalisation has become one of the buzz words of public discourse over the past thirty years and refers to the interconnectedness of local and national phenomena and their transformation into global issues. Globalisation can be seen as "international integration", which can be interpreted as a force which unites all people in the world as human beings and which puts people at the forefront of political agendas, transcending group and national interests. Alternatively, globalisation can be considered as a process, which facilitates the flow of power, capital, trade, technology and migration (Vale, 2004). As such, globalisation may present either a threat to social cohesion (by increasing power differentials, inequality and social injustice) or an opportunity, which unites economies and people around the world (DEA, 2001). Considering the relationship between local and global contexts, Arnove and Torres (1999) write about the "dialectic of the global and the local", the interdependence of both contexts and the ever evolving nature of their relationship to each other.

Reviewing research relating to globalization and education, Spring (2008) concludes that much of such research is interdisciplinary and relates to discourses, processes and institutions which influence local educational practices. Spring notes the influence of an increasingly global economy on education, which, for example, is evidenced in convergence between national curricula, the production of standard international assessment instruments and exercises such as PISA and PIRLS, and a marked emphasis on equipping learners with generic skills (rather than knowledge) that will enable them to become productive workers in a global economy. Spring proposes four interpretations of this process. Firstly, a global culture perspective

suggests that global society promotes a model of education, which is based on Western ideas and viewed as best practice, and which is therefore emulated by countries in the Global South wishing to compete in a global economy. Secondly, world system perspective suggests that education functions to legitimise the power of the 'core zone' (i.e. the United States, the European Union and Japan) and the peripheral status of rest of the world. Thirdly, a postcolonial interpretation involving analyses of historical issues and power relations suggests that converging educational curricula represent cultural imperialism by former colonial powers. Finally, a culturalist interpretation assumes that there is an increasing flow of educational ideas in a globalised world, facilitated by factors such as communications technology, particularly the internet, and migration. Acknowledging overlaps between such interpretations, Spring (2008) notes that discourses such as the knowledge economy and technology, the brain drain (or gain, or circulation, with concomitant concerns, such as the impact of migration on both home and host countries) and social cohesion are integral to the globalisation of education. These discourses are evident in a wide range of policy documents that have been produced since the inception of DfID, and have filtered down through successive layers of educational policy at regional level, and into UK curricula. These curricula are thus intended to prepare young people for living in an increasingly global and interconnected world, where they contribute to the local and global economy, negotiate different cultures and values, understand and stand up for issues related to equality, power and justice and to resolve conflicts in peaceful ways (Osler & Vincent, 2002). As such, they aim to challenge power imbalances, negotiate identities and, ultimately, to achieve greater equality, justice and democracy via societal and individual

transformation, aims reminiscent of the works of influential radical thinkers such as Freire (1970).

The Global Dimension (GD) in today's educational curricula could be seen as originating in a range of different perspectives, including Global Education which emphasizes participation, politics, global social justice and human rights; Development Education which has been more concerned with issues relating to sustainable development and the environment; and Global Citizenship Education with its emphasis on identity, responsibility and rights (compare with Davies & Reid, 2005; Marshall, 2005/2007; Pike, 2008). While the terms have often been used interchangeably in the literature, there is some consensus that the Global Dimension taps into areas ranging from sustainability and environment; economy, trade and debt; diversity and identity; equality, power relations and social justice; human rights, political system awareness and activism, conflict resolution to interdependence. These issues are supposed to be explored in relation to their interdependent influence at local, national and global level (e.g. Department for International Development (DfID), 2005; Osler & Vincent, 2002; Pigozzi, 2006). DfID (2005) thus proposes eight key concepts of the Global Dimension, which are reflected in elements of the national curricula in England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland:

1. Global citizenship
2. Interdependence
3. Conflict resolution
4. Social justice
5. Diversity
6. Sustainable development
7. Human rights
8. Values and world views

Similar to educational policy elsewhere, the Global Dimension is consequently now implicitly and/or explicitly embedded within UK curricula,

and a DfES report published in 2004 recommends instilling "...a strong Global Dimension into the learning experience of all children and young people" (p. 3). Although it is often seen as having a natural home in Citizenship Education (Marshall, 2005), Geography (Walkington, 1999) or more recently History (Sachsenmaier, 2006), it has been conceptualised as a cross-curricular theme which spans all disciplines, including humanities and natural sciences as well as social sciences (DfID, 2005). It has been suggested that the development of a Global Dimension in schools may entail policies and practices such as curricular initiatives, including for example citizenship and language learning, international visit(or)s, global seminars/days/weeks, collaboration with schools abroad, NGOs and other agencies, staff training, etc (Marshall, 2005). It is supposed to address cognitive, affective and behavioural dimensions as well as identity, and the GD thus includes the transmission of knowledge and values as well as the development of skills, such as critical thinking, evaluating evidence, perspective taking etc.

While the theoretical benefits of effective education for the Global Dimension have been frequently acknowledged, research also highlights weaknesses in its implementation and how it is taught in schools, for failing to effectively empower young people to affect change in the context of a hierarchically structured educational system and to promote a process-oriented approach, which is based on critical enquiry of social and political institutions, hegemonic beliefs and practices (Cameron & Fairbrass, 2004; Jansen, Chioncel & Dekker, 2006). Internationally, schools' approaches to the Global Dimension often focus on the organisation of one-off events or activities (Development Education Forum, 2006), and in the UK research indicated that schools tend to use fundraising activities for good

causes as the most prominent form of community level engagement (Kerr, 2005). A school case study by Marshall (2007) in the United Kingdom shows that teachers were particularly concerned about their lack of familiarity with global issues and understanding of the core concepts. Similarly, a survey of development education in schools across Europe also indicated a lack of knowledge and experience as one of the main impediments for teachers aiming to address global issues within their subject areas (Development Education Forum, 2006). In Northern Ireland, a survey of the GD in schools equally found that there was a lack of knowledge amongst a substantial proportion of primary school teachers (Reynolds, Knipe & Milner, 2004). While the emotional component of the Global Dimension has been recognized, critics also highlight that feelings, like empathy and sympathy, are not sufficient for knowledge to be translated into actions, unless they are accompanied by feelings of "outrage" about injustice to ensure "that motivations for change are high" (Davies, 2006, p. 7). The active and participatory element of the Global Dimension in practice often takes place in schools as institutions, which are hierarchically structured and mainly undemocratic, which in turn may hinder the effective empowerment of young people (Leonard, 2007).

Educationalists highlighted the need for curricular policies and documents that do not merely provide practical advice to teachers, but allow the space for a critical engagement with the hegemonic beliefs underpinning the agenda for the Global Dimension, which is by its nature political (Winter, 2007). This may be particularly relevant as teachers have been found to avoid critical engagement with controversial issues, especially in socio-political contexts where community tensions or conflict are high (Bickmore, 2007), which may inhibit the development

of links between global and local contexts. It has thus been emphasized that teachers need to challenge post-colonial perspectives, which preserve Western interests and retain North/South inequalities. Roman (2003) argues that the Global Dimension is often misunderstood as a form of internationalisation, where Western superiority is maintained through voyeurism of foreign cultures, consumerism of cultural difference, which is regarded as a resource and business opportunity, and democratic nation-building, which may re-establish group boundaries and stereotypes. Similarly, Andreotti (2006) warns that education needs to take account of issues of power, culture and economics, and proposes post-colonial theory as a tool to understand and develop our ideas about the GD. Rather than to anchor the GD in values of the 'common good' and individuals' moral responsibility to help others in need (soft or compassionate model of global education, Andreotti, 2006; 2007), it has been suggested that it should aim to challenge the injustice of unequal resource distribution (Linklater, 1998, Parekh, 2003), which has been described as a critical approach (Andreotti, 2006; 2007). Furthermore, Davies (2005) suggests that a Global Dimension, which includes critical engagement with causes and consequences of conflict, war, reconciliation and peace, may also help to broaden divided local identities and thereby to break through a cycle of community conflict closer to home.

Research evidence clearly demonstrates that children and young people are interested in global issues, such as the environment, poverty and conflict, and wish to better understand the causes and consequences of these and to learn how to promote social justice effectively (Davies, 2004; Holden, 2006) and if this is what school curricula aim to promote, then it is important to explore the challenges and benefits from the perspectives of the main stakeholders: Pupils and teachers.

Context

As such, Northern Ireland provides a highly relevant case study to examine the conceptualisations and practices of those delivering the Global Dimension through the Northern Ireland Curriculum due to its history of identity-based conflict (Muldoon et al, 2007) and recently increasing ethnic minority population (Jarman, 2005), as well as historical experiences of a colonial past, famine and under-development. There is also a tradition of educational initiatives to address issues of community relations and conflict (Smith, 2003) within a highly segregated education system, where most pupils from a Protestant background attend Controlled schools and most from a Catholic background attend Maintained schools, with only around 5% attending Integrated schools catering for both communities. Initial teacher education is similarly segregated, and the majority of teachers have been educated in a context congruent with their own community background. A Global Dimension is implicitly included as a statutory element in Primary school curricula in Northern Ireland, mainly within the themes *World around us* and *Personal Development and Mutual Understanding* and within the Post-primary school curriculum within *Learning for Life and Work* and *Local and Global Citizenship* and is intended to infuse all other subject strands (CCEA, 2007a, 2007b).

Educational resources and training to support teachers and schools have been produced by various organizations with an emphasis on content as well as good practice relating to collaboration with NGOs and schools globally. Of particular note are the DEA produced website on the 'Global Dimension in Your Classroom' which offers subject and topic specific information; Oxfam Global Dimension Guide, including the 'Education for Global Citizenship: A Guide for Schools' (2006), 'Building Successful School Partnerships' (2007), the

DfID guide on Global School Partnerships (Najda & Bojang, 2007) and the DEA (2010) guidance for teachers on fundraising with young people; as well as the GDSNI website for tips on working with NGOs.

Research Aims and Design

Based on the considerations outlined above, the present research aimed to firstly identify organisational strategies employed by schools, and teaching strategies and resources perceived as beneficial for learning about global issues. Secondly, the research aimed to explore teachers', student teachers' and pupils' understandings of the Global Dimension and their attitudes to related issues. Thirdly, it was intended to investigate the extent to which pupils learn about issues related to the Global Dimension in schools and to compare this to their attitudes and reported activist behaviours.

The research design was therefore based on qualitative and quantitative research methods and involved pupils, teachers and principals from Primary and Post-primary schools across Northern Ireland, as well as student teachers preparing for teaching in Primary and Post-primary sectors from relevant Initial Teacher Education (ITE) institutions.

In the following sections, research methods are described and results are presented firstly for focus groups conducted with ITE students, secondly for qualitative data collected in schools, including interviews and focus groups conducted with teachers and with pupils, and finally for the pupil survey. Each section concludes with a summary of the findings.

Initial Teacher Education: Student Focus Groups

In order to explore the role of the Global Dimension in teacher training in Northern Ireland, a number of focus groups were conducted with Initial Teacher Education (ITE) students at the end of their courses. Hence Northern Ireland's two Universities and two University Colleges were invited to participate in the study, and each agreed to invite ITE students with a specialism or interest in the Global Dimension to take part in focus groups. However, due to timetabling constraints it was only possible to recruit one Primary focus group and two Post-primary focus groups (all from Universities). In total nine PGCE Primary and 16 Post-primary students participated. The overall sample did not, therefore, include the views of B.Ed students as anticipated.

Focus groups were conducted in the Universities and lasted approximately one hour, with discussion facilitated by an experienced researcher. Discussion was guided by a schedule aiming to explore ITE students' experience of and attitudes to the inclusion of a Global Dimension in their teaching. All sessions were recorded and data were transcribed for thematic analysis.

Primary ITE student results

Primary ITE students linked the GD very closely to the curriculum and in particular to the *World around us* and readily identified how it could be worked into all subjects and into the curriculum in general, reflecting the relatively unified nature of the Primary curriculum. Nevertheless individual subjects, such as Religious Education, were mentioned as were a range of NGOs which had provided training and/or materials. In general the GD had featured largely in their ITE *from day one* and they had access to a range of resources. Despite this they readily identified a number of challenges

involved in incorporating a GD in their teaching, which included having sufficient knowledge and answering challenging questions from pupils. Being sensitive and inclusive of all groups represented in the classroom was also of concern, as was finding enough time in a packed school timetable to include a GD which might not be as important as other areas of the curriculum. They were also concerned about interpreting difficult global concepts for younger children and making their teaching interactive and meaningful for their pupils. Another perceived challenge was where home values may not be consistent with teaching, e.g. where recycling was encouraged at school but not practiced at home. Issues of differing cultures and religions in increasingly diverse classrooms were also seen as potentially challenging.

However these perceived challenges were matched by a number of perceived benefits and foremost amongst these was the development of independent learning, including interactive learning, learning outside the classroom and learning linked to home. The potential of GD to connect with all areas of the curriculum was also appreciated. Opportunities for greater understanding of current affairs and greater moral awareness were mentioned as was introducing the concept of consequence, which could be applied to individual or collective action, to pupils.

In terms of delivering a GD they agreed that the starting point was pupils' interest and existing knowledge. However it was also noted that the character of the school could have an influence on this, for example schools in socially disadvantaged areas may have particular issues such as substance abuse that need to be addressed in the classroom. When discussing the need to connect the local and the global, there were divided opinions as to which was likely to be more practical and effective and it was agreed that it depended on the

topic and it depended on the pupils (including their age), but the important thing was to present both the local and the global perspectives.

Perceived impact of a GD on pupils included that it would “shape them as people of the future”, endow them with “better judgement and thinking skills and maybe behaviour”, and give them “some responsibility for the world around them”. Research skills and problem solving along with development of empathy, respect and a broader outlook were also mentioned. There was extended discussion of how to address religious differences and acknowledgement that pupil behaviour inside and outside the classroom could be very different. In terms of behaviour change and activism, most of the discussion was around school-based projects, links, environmental projects and charities.

When discussing the role of the GD in their future careers, the Primary ITE students concentrated on continuing professional development opportunities, speculating that further training as well as more time resources would be useful. However all were agreed that given the centrality of the *World around us* to the curriculum it would continue to develop in importance.

Post-primary ITE student results

Post-primary ITE students brought a variety of experiences to their teaching of the Global Dimension including their primary degree content, experience with specific initiatives and international experience, but their main resource in this respect was their PGCE course and placements. However, placement experience was not uniform and this emphasizes the importance of the GD focus in PGCE courses. Moreover while the curriculum was seen as less global than their training, they nevertheless valued this because it provided them with a framework within which to approach the GD and a

safety net for discussing sensitive issues. They were very satisfied with resources available to them on their courses but their placement schools had been less well resourced leading to the conclusion that the GD was not seen as important in schools as in PGCE courses. All believed that their PGCE tutors provided excellent support for the GD within the course. In terms of challenges, some believed that not having learned about the GD themselves at school was a disadvantage in learning how to teach it, and the abstract nature of the concept was also seen as an issue, needing to be made relevant to pupils by linking the global to the local. Interestingly there were perceived differences between grammar and non-selective schools in the challenges encountered, with selective schools being sometimes less interested in what was perceived as a less academic subject, although some were thought to be better funded to deliver the GD. In addition some believed that a different approach was needed in schools, where for example poverty was a relevant issue than in schools where pupils had very limited experience of poverty. There was agreement that teaching the GD involved a whole school approach and that disinterested teachers would not do a good job, but while some participants believed that newly qualified teachers were relatively powerless to change a school culture, others believed new teachers could model a positive approach to the subject. Rewards of teaching the GD included: raising pupil awareness, creating links between school and home, and improving self esteem and team working.

The importance of commitment and developing a GD to all teaching was emphasized, as was the need to make it relevant to pupils. This was felt to be difficult in Northern Ireland not least because of the sensitivity of some issues such as sectarianism and immigration. Opinions differed on whether it was best to

begin with a local perspective and connect that to the global or vice versa and this was to some extent related to what was being taught. There was a somewhat pessimistic view of the potential to change attitudes and behaviours however, and a recognition that while Post-primary pupils are already aware of what are acceptable responses in the classroom context, they may think and behave very differently in the context of their own homes and communities. Thus, the ITE students believed that the impact of the GD on pupils was mainly on skills such as critical thinking, articulating opinions, interpersonal skills and problem solving. While all participants believed that the GD would play a significant role in their careers, some also noted that it could lead to careers outside teaching and all believed that it would play an increasingly important role in education for the foreseeable future

Summary

Some differences emerged between the Primary and Post-primary ITE students' views which can be linked to the differences between the two curricula they deliver in their teaching. For example there was a much more integrated view of the GD in the Primary group which saw the *World around us* very much as a focus for all of their teaching, relating to everything from literacy to values. In the Post-primary groups there was more consideration with how GD fitted with specific subject areas again consistent with the structure of the Post-primary curriculum. It was interesting that it was the Primary group which expressed concern over their own knowledge when delivering the GD, while Post-primary ITE students seemed unconcerned with this and this may reflect their own relatively specific, subject based training and teaching experience as well as the experience of many, although by no means all, Post-primary teachers. Another difference evident in Post-primary

discussions was the perceived differences between grammar and non-selective schools, the former seen as more academically driven and hence likely to diminish the value of the GD, but also to be better funded and therefore better able to address the GD. Non-selective schools were seen as more likely to embrace the GD and citizenship as a way to enhance opportunities for less able students to excel.

However there were also some interesting similarities between Primary and Post-primary ITE students' views, for example the importance they placed on the nature of the school as a factor in what issues they should or could address and how they would approach these issues. This sensitivity to context is in one sense essential and laudable but may also be seen as limiting the extent to which teachers believe it possible to take a more critical approach to the GD in their teaching, which would involve addressing controversial issues. Both Primary and Post-primary participants also agreed that pupils often are able to display 'acceptable' attitudes in the classroom while outside it they may think and behave very differently and thus they seemed to be resigned that the most they could achieve by their teaching was awareness raising, rather than genuine behavioural change. Again this realistic approach, based on experience and perceptions, may be viewed as pragmatic but it may limit their ambitions to the extent that they accept a soft approach to the GD in their practice. However, perhaps the most encouraging similarity between the Primary and Post-primary ITE students' views was that they believed that the GD will remain an important aspect of their careers.

Qualitative Data Collected in Schools

Methodology

Interviews and focus group discussions were aimed at eliciting information on conceptual issues and in the case of teachers, practical issues and challenges in delivering a Global Dimension. In the case of pupils, learning experiences were discussed as well as concepts. Focus groups and interviews were audio recorded and the data transcribed before being subjected to thematic analysis, in the first instance conducted independently by both researchers and then synthesised in an iterative process until consensus was reached. The researchers, both white females, one German and one Northern Irish, conducted the focus groups and it is worth noting that this factor may have had an influence on the data collected. The Eurocentrism of the participants may have been challenged, for example, had one or both of the researchers been of African rather than European origin.

Procedure

Ethical approval for the study was granted in advance of its commencement by the School of Education Research Ethics Committee, Queen's University Belfast. Schools were approached in writing, including an information sheet and once agreement was obtained from the Principal to participate in the project, informed consent was obtained from all teachers and from parents of all participating pupils. Pupil assent was confirmed verbally at the start of each pupil focus group session. While focus groups had been planned with teachers leading the Global Dimension, individual interviews were found to be more practical, and similarly for practical reasons most focus groups and interviews

lasted one school period, usually 30 to 40 minutes.

Follow-up interviews and focus groups were carried out in all of the schools (except two) about one year on to explore possible changes in schools' approaches to the Global Dimension as well as pupils and teachers' attitudes to and their understandings of it.

Sample

Initially, semi-structured interviews were conducted with teachers and principals from 17 schools, who were considered responsible for the organisation and/or delivery of the Global Dimension. Additionally, nine discussion groups were held in schools with teachers from a range of subject areas, which were not designated responsibility for the Global Dimension. The number of participants in the discussion groups varied substantially and ranged from two to 16 teachers, with a total of over 60 teachers participating from a total of 26 schools.

Interview and focus group participants were selected to cover a range of school types in rural and urban areas, including the following:

- Primary
- Post-primary schools differentiated by achievement
 - o Secondary
 - o Grammar
- School type differentiated by religious denomination:
 - o Controlled (mainly Protestant)
 - o Maintained (Mainly Catholic)
 - o Integrated (Catholics, Protestants, and others)
 - o Irish Language Medium School
 - o Special Educational Needs.

For the follow-up interviews and focus groups with teachers, seven teacher focus groups and 18 interviews were conducted in total, in 23 of the same

schools as for Phase one of the project, in order to explore changes in the way their schools were delivering the GD over the past year. Interview and focus group schedules therefore covered similar questions to those used in Phase One, with a focus on how delivery of the GD might have changed in the schools.

Additionally, nine focus groups were conducted with pupils in four Primary (year 5, mostly aged 8 or 9 years) and five Post-primary schools (year 9, mostly aged 12 or 13 years). The number of participants in each group was 8 to 12 pupils and they were all white and from Northern Ireland. In total, the pupil focus groups thus comprised more than 90 pupils. These schools incorporated the most prevalent school types in Northern Ireland:

- Primary
- Post-primary schools differentiated by achievement
 - o Secondary
 - o Grammar
- School type (differentiated by religious denomination or language of instruction):
 - o Controlled (mainly Protestant)
 - o Maintained (Mainly Catholic)
 - o Integrated (Catholics, Protestants, and others)
 - o Irish Language Medium School.

In Phase two of the research, eight focus groups were conducted with the same pupils who participated in the initial phase of the research, enabling consideration of how learning about the Global Dimension had developed over the course of approximately one year. To this end a similar focus group schedule to that designed for Phase One of the research was used with an emphasis on exploring any such developments.

Teacher Interviews and Focus Groups

Results are presented in detail first for the initial phase of the research (Phase One) and followed by the analysis of the changes emerging from follow-up interviews and focus groups (Phase Two).

Phase One: Teacher interviews and focus groups

Thematic analysis of the first phase of teacher interviews and focus groups resulted in seven main themes as indicated below:

1. School organisation of the Global Dimension and teacher backgrounds
2. Awareness raising
3. Global North/South relationships and interdependence
4. Respect, cultural diversity and racism
5. Respect, community relations and sectarianism
6. Rights, responsibilities and activism
7. Environment

1. School organisation of the Global Dimension and teacher backgrounds

There was a distinct lack of specific training relating to the Global Dimension and interviewees were not always clear on what kind of training would be appropriate.

TEACHER: *I don't know what kind of training is available.* (Integrated Post-primary school)

While some teachers regretted not having had further specific training, this lack of training was not necessarily seen as negative as one teacher explained:

TEACHER: *But, specific training, no, nothing is available that I'm aware*

of. We just muddle through ourselves and, and try and progress and bring in as many ideas together. But we're confident, we don't feel under supported, we feel we are happy, I think there's a lot out there, with the European Council and with the British Council, that we can use. (Controlled Grammar school)

When asked about their motivation to become involved in the Global Dimension, interviewees referred to personal interests and experience coupled with strong curricular links with the primary school curriculum (*World around us, Personal Development & Mutual Understanding*) or with their main subject areas in Post-primary schools respectively (*Learning for Life & Work* and especially *Local and Global Citizenship*). However, some teachers and schools also entered the area through subjects traditionally less associated with global issues, such as Physical Education or Physics.

Schools' approach and organisation of the Global Dimension in schools was frequently based on an analysis of what was already being done in different subject areas anyway.

TEACHER: *They [pupils] are doing it anyway because in Geography certainly they get in 2nd Form they have a unit which is on the EU and they also get to research a particular European country. And they do it again in RE when they study world religions.* (Controlled Grammar school)

The alignment of the Global Dimension with the curriculum and ongoing school activities was seen as important to avoid resistance from teaching staff who may already feel overburdened with an abundance of new educational initiatives

and the recent introduction of the revised curriculum. One teacher explained:

TEACHER: *If I can assure the staff that this is not an extra workload that they have to do, if I can show them by doing the audit that they are automatically doing it anyway within their class, they may have to teach slightly different to achieve what I am trying to get them to do. But I mean they are already covering, the work's already being done, so we just need them maybe to make the pupils more aware of where or how it is connecting globally.* (Maintained Grammar school)

While this approach, whereby ongoing teaching and learning were considered through a 'Global Dimension lens' was seen to alleviate staff concerns, it usually incorporated any learning about global issues and there was limited evidence that teachers considered these activities in the light of key concepts and theoretical frameworks underpinning the Global Dimension.

Comenius and other projects, such as the International School Award (DfID), Rights Respecting Schools (UNIFEC), and training events, such as citizenship and school councils training or individual teachers' academic qualifications, often provided the impetus for schools and teachers to embed a Global Dimension in teaching and learning. Only a few schools took a strategic approach, mostly an unplanned, ad-hoc approach was taken, characterised by specific activities and connections that teachers had established with other schools, organisations and initiatives.

TEACHER: *Well how it came to be was really just very ad hoc, if a teacher sees an interest or a project you know, they can bring it to the attention of the school leadership*

group. I had always been interested in the Comenius work and so that started a European link... So really that was the start of our International links, and from there ... I saw information about Global Partnerships, and they were looking at schools in Africa. And I knew of a teacher who had been to Africa because her sister was doing some help with missionaries, so I went to her and asked her if she would be interested in making a formal connection. So she has a link with a school in Tanzania. So it's quite ad hoc like that, we will put it on our school development plan but it's really dependant on the enthusiasm of the staff, you know, and whether they take up a link or explore it. (Maintained Primary school)

In those schools, where a more strategic curricular and extra-curricular approach was taken, it was seen as more effective and successful in the long-term.

Interviewees mentioned support from senior management, ELB advisers as well as the British Council and other organisations. Interestingly, a number of interviewees also highlighted the support they received from other schools, either in the local area or through international schools links, as one teacher explains:

TEACHER: *We are in a small cluster of similar sized primary schools in the area, I would ask other principals 'What have you got, what have you used, have you got anything on?' I would take that approach.* (Maintained Primary school)

Overall, schools' approaches clearly showed differences in emphasis, organisation and training opportunities, which were partly regarded as a benefit allowing increased flexibility in the

development of learning activities, but also potentially producing a lack of consistency between and within schools and insecurity in relation to what exactly the Global Dimension was supposed to entail.

Interviewees raised a number of issues that they found particularly challenging in the planning and delivery of the Global Dimension.

There was some concern about the non-assessed nature of the Global Dimension and it therefore not being given an appropriate status. As such, one teacher questioned the sustainability of the Global Dimension in the curriculum in the future. Some interviewees also expressed a strong concern about the overloaded nature of the current curriculum and were sceptical about any attempts to introduce the Global Dimension as an additional subject or initiative for which they would be accountable.

As to be expected, lack of time was one of the most frequently reported challenges and this referred to time to identify relevant resources and training opportunities as well as lack of time for critical reflection and exchange of experiences with colleagues within their own school and institutions. As a consequence of these time constraints, many teachers bemoaned the lack of tailored lesson plans, which could be simply implemented with minimal preparation on their part.

While some teachers indicated difficulties with sourcing materials, others felt that there were too many resources out there and that there needed to be a database which collates them in an accessible format, which indicated that not all teachers were aware yet of the resource databank provided by the Centre for Global Education. Others again highlighted that resources were often not suitable for the ability levels of their pupils and that they needed to be substantially adapted to be useful in their contexts. Some of them,

teaching in areas which are not traditionally associated with the Global Dimension (e.g. Maths, PE), expressed the view that materials within their subject areas were difficult to obtain and that they would like subject-specific materials to be more readily available.

There were also some teachers who did not feel that resources were an issue for them and who reported that they had no difficulties sourcing relevant materials. However, even those teachers who were happy to seek out resources independently could find it difficult to retrieve resources that they believed portrayed a balanced image of the Global South, as the following teacher explained:

TEACHER: *The first year that I did it in my class, I had done quite a lot on the fact there was street children in Brazil, and then we got some books. And after I had read one of them, one of the children said to me 'That book's not right.' I said 'Why not?,' he said 'The tourist brochures, there's nothing about poor people.' And you know, it's trying to get books that don't give them this false idea that South America is all sambas and beaches, but also show them there are many sides to it, it's not all poverty and despair.*
(Maintained Primary school)

2. Awareness raising

Almost all interviewees emphasised the "very insular" nature of Northern Ireland, which was particularly prevalent in rural schools. Teachers saw the main goal of the Global Dimension as raising pupils' awareness of the global context and there was an expressed hope that this in turn could lead to opening pupils' attitudes to other people, cultures and countries.

TEACHER: *But I think it's more rewarding than challenging [teaching the Global Dimension] because any little bit, even if it's*

only a small fraction, you are opening their eyes and opening their ears and opening all their senses to other cultures and if you can only give a fraction of that, because quite often it's not happening at home, it's not happening outside in their community, so, if we can give them only a fraction of that within the school, be that once a week, once a month, once a year, if they go home with something that makes them challenge, question or appreciate I think that makes it worthwhile.
(Controlled Grammar school)

While most teachers thought that the Global Dimension would have a positive impact on pupils' attitudes to diversity in the local and global context, there was also recognition amongst a few interviewees that for some pupils an increased awareness about related issues could also backfire and reaffirm stereotypical views:

TEACHER: Yeah, I think they generally become a wee bit more freethinking, a wee bit more liberal [...] definitely, definitely less conservative in their ideas in most cases. At the same time, I think there is a very small element that this has heightened their conservatism or heightened their sectarian views because they are maybe more aware of what other people think and get that kind of sense 'I don't think that's right because this is my background and I am going to be very protective of that'.

(Maintained Grammar school)

3. Global North/South relationships and interdependence

Issues of global interdependence in terms of trade, consumerism and debt emerged rarely unprompted and even if questioned,

the most commonly mentioned issue was fair trade. However, global economy was associated with a sense of pupils visiting other countries as part of holidays, studies or work in the future, and preparing them for life as an individual in a global context. One of the reasons given for the global economy not being addressed as prominently was that it was a complex issue regarded as more suitable for older pupils in terms of their ability to both understand the concepts and relate it to their own behaviour.

TEACHER: Pupils would look at entrepreneurship, they would look at, you know, third world countries and they would discuss debt and whose responsibility is it, and they would look at fair trading and fair trading produce and discuss the benefits and the negative impacts of that. So, it would be discussed. That's normally further on up the school when pupils are more mature to understand, you know, their rights- their responsibility as a consumer. (Maintained Grammar school)

Teachers' conceptualisations and delivery of power relationships between countries varied substantially. In many schools, the Global Dimension initially started with their involvement in European exchange programmes and in some interviews, there was a clear emphasis on the European context, language transmission and cultural tourism. Within this context, political knowledge about and participation in European institutions were mentioned by some teachers as important tools to engage students with political structures. While some interviewees did not query the focus on Europe, others acknowledged its limitations and expressed a desire to widen the scope to include other countries around the world.

TEACHER: *Em, I think that to some extent Europe has been a comfort zone because it's relatively close and it's relatively similar and so on. Ehm, and what I would like us to do, em, is maybe to start and think about taking part in... a north/south project..*

(Controlled Primary school)

When the Global Dimension was connected to the Global South, it was almost always associated with fundraising activities, notions of poverty and the desire to help and support those in need in such countries.

TEACHER: *My ideal would be that we would have a firm partnership with an African or South East Asian school, that we would both gain from the initial link and that we would take on a supportive role towards that school. That fundraising would go in the direction of an African school... And I always thought it would be nice to have that sort of strong link with another school somewhere in Africa that we could support in some sort of way.* (Controlled Primary school)

As Roman (2003) and Andreotti (2006) argue, such conceptualisations clearly highlight the potential for perpetuating stereotypical thinking and Eurocentric assumptions.

Interdependence was not evident in all teachers' conceptualisations and there often appeared to be a lack of articulation between the local and the Global Dimension, which was equally evident in pupil focus groups. Some teachers also saw interconnectedness as complex and difficult to understand for pupils and perceived older pupils to be better able to grasp this concept.

TEACHER A: *I think that to an extent, especially the younger ones,*

it's somewhere else, it doesn't matter, it's not going to affect them. They very much live in a small world.

INTERVIEWER: *So they are not really getting the idea of interdependence?*

TEACHER B: *No.*

(Maintained Grammar school)

While some teachers found it easier to start local and move to the wider context, others preferred to start at a global level in order to capture interest and then to relate this to the local context. Such preferences partly appeared to depend on teachers' assessment of the sensitivity of local versus global issues, which varied substantially between local communities.

TEACHER: *...it seems easier on a global level, but in school now we have 'Learning For Life and Work' where pupils actually have a period a week and that is designated to themes like diversity, democracy, human rights, citizenship, racism, you know, so pupils are discussing in an open forum and they are really investigating and we can get a great debate going on. So, on a local level I think school provides an excellent opportunity and a safe environment for that discussion to take place, because if you go into a global level sometimes there's another level of fear, people are afraid to express their opinion because someone may be offended, someone may not accept it, there may be violence as a consequence.* (Maintained Grammar school in relatively peaceful rural location)

TEACHER: *I have no problem teaching any kid about global issues. But a local issue would be a more difficult topic to teach here because of the political*

connotations that would come with it. (Maintained Grammar school in town which experienced substantial levels of sectarian violence)

It is interesting to note that some teachers did view the teaching of global issues as controversial. In the past researchers in Northern Ireland assumed that teachers tend to prefer teaching about global issues in order to avoid sensitive local issues (CCEA, 2005). According to this study, it appears that the teaching of global issues might be relatively superficial and that teachers may equally avoid teaching sensitive global issues, involving social justice, equality and human rights.

4. Respect, cultural diversity and racism

By far the most prevalent issue that teachers included in their conceptualisations of the Global Dimension was respect for other cultures. This mainly referred to other countries around the world or to immigrants in Northern Ireland, but only in a few cases was associated with Catholic/ Protestant relations. As such, breaking down stereotypes was seen as a main outcome of the Global Dimension whereby pupils from minority ethnic or language backgrounds were often seen as a “resource” and the lack of access to this resource was specifically lamented in rural schools.

Teachers expressed different views on the effects of a monocultural school environment on pupils’ learning about other cultures, with some teachers finding it more difficult to teach in a diverse classroom while others thought it was easier. One teacher in an inner-city school highlighted that it did not matter if the classroom appeared monocultural as diversity through family connections and friendship could be invisible and care always needed to be taken to ensure that nobody from whatever background could be offended. However in a small rural

school, an interviewee indicated clearly that while he/she would welcome ethnic diversity, the local community was less tolerant.

TEACHER: *It is a small inward looking community, I would have to say. It is not [...] terribly tolerant of outsiders. We have to do a certain amount [...] we had no immigrant children and there aren't as far as I know any immigrant families living within the village. There were some individuals who were encouraged to leave the community. (Controlled Primary school)*

Some teachers also appeared to lack the confidence in teaching issues related to the Global Dimension and found the controversial elements of it emotionally challenging. One teacher in a school within a deprived urban area stated poignantly:

TEACHER: *I do say, from a personal point of view, that I do struggle with a number of the issues that we put across because their views are often very different to my views and they do have views that they bring from home and the outside world that, in terms of whether, you know.. beliefs that they hold about different countries and nationalities that ethically sit very sharply with me.. I find it very uncomfortable.. it's not something that I sometimes enjoy teaching because of the views that they hold and.. (Controlled Secondary school)*

Other teachers felt that teaching about global issues may also be sensitive in terms of parental reactions. Although few teachers reported that they had experienced negative responses from parents, a number of interviewees acknowledged that they would keep parental attitudes in mind when deciding which topics they would or would not

teach. Additionally, some teachers were worried about potentially causing a clash between attitudes promoted by the school and those pupils experience at home and in the community. When asked about the main challenge of teaching GD, a teacher from a rural primary school in a very traditional area thought:

TEACHER: *Obviously you're not wanting to say, you know, to say, well your daddy or mummy's wrong. You know, so it's just really maybe changing attitudes of older folk. That would be just one of the [challenges].* (Controlled Primary school)

A teacher from a different school agreed:

TEACHER: *They [parents] seemed to feel, or some of them felt anyway, we did all the giving, that other people were taking from our culture. And I personally wouldn't agree with that. I would feel that we gain much more from beliefs beyond XX [town] than we ever contributed..* (Controlled Primary school)

A number of interviewees expressed a sense that the changing demographics in Northern Ireland, the new curriculum and school approaches to addressing diversity are more conducive to addressing the Global Dimension and diversity than was formerly the case.

TEACHER: *So I think there is an underlying current of fear to explore and to express [attitudes to other cultures], but I think gradually it is being overcome.*

(Maintained Grammar school)

TEACHER: *Sometimes it can cause pupils to not want to vocalise their opinions on other cultures because we have that tension in our own country, because if we vocalise*

sometimes it's not accepted. So there is that little fear I think, but now as society moves forward, it's much more positive than it would have been. I think pupils now feel they have the space to express their opinion and be accepted so I think that is a positive thing. And, I think it makes pupils as well more aware of how we need to recognise other cultures because they can see what happened, as the next generation, they can see what happened when we did not respect other cultures. So now they want to learn, and want to grow and want to move on. (Controlled Grammar school)

5. Respect, community relations and sectarianism

There was a dichotomy between people who felt that it was essential to address the Northern Ireland conflict and those who avoided it and who focussed instead on respect, common humanity and finding similarities rather than differences between cultures. Some teachers felt that teaching about the conflict was easier in areas which had been relatively untouched by the political violence, in comparison to interface areas. Ironically, despite the fact that single identity neighbourhoods may have been strongholds for local paramilitaries, this was not seen as an issue that should be tackled by the teacher.

It was therefore clear that in a context of political conflict, even if it is in the past, practice cannot be disentangled from the complex nexus of tacit understandings of the rules, norms and mores that characterise intra and inter-community relationships. One teacher from a rural Maintained Primary school situated in an area relatively untouched by the conflict explained:

TEACHER: *The thing about sectarianism is we have started a few of those things but without*

being blasé, in this area, there isn't a problem, we find that when we start doing a few things, it was nearly like we were putting ideas into their head, we were making them question things they had never questioned before, and bringing up issues they had never considered as an issue before. So, we kinda did to a certain extent step back a little bit from that, because we thought we don't want to be making problems when there aren't problems, because in general, even in the Troubles, XX [town] was very quiet and people got on well. So it maybe isn't as big an issue for us as in other areas. (Maintained Primary school)

A teacher from a different Maintained Primary school in an urban interface area felt that controversy was part and parcel of teaching and learning in any case:

TEACHER: I think there are times you have to be controversial and you have to show the children 'No, life isn't always just sweet and nice,' you have to look at what's causing controversy. Children fighting in the classroom, there's controversy how do we resolve this conflict. So you are doing it on a daily basis anyway. (Maintained Primary school)

There was evidence that some teachers used conflicts in other countries to address the Troubles in Northern Ireland and they felt that this was a useful way in introducing pupils to the idea of a more balanced outlook.

TEACHER: I think on a whole school level our ethos is respect for other cultures, so we would never deliver one mind set in the classroom. It's very important to give both sides, but for myself for example as a

teacher of Spanish I would, you know, discuss very explicitly with the pupils the difference between the Spanish culture and the separatist Basque area and their struggle for independence. So, we would compare that to the Northern Irish versus UK, Irish conflict. (Maintained Grammar school)

Although we cannot generalise from the sample, the data also suggested that different school sectors approached the Global Dimension from slightly different perspectives. Within the Integrated school sector, there was a view that the Global Dimension fitted into the ethos of promoting diversity and respect for different cultures, including first and foremost Catholic and Protestant relations, but extending to incorporate other minority cultures within Northern Ireland. One teacher from an Integrated Post-primary school explained:

TEACHER: Our school, though we try to encourage children, to, by the very nature of being integrated, we acknowledge differences, we accept differences and we celebrate sameness as well as diversity... (Integrated Post-primary school)

In the Maintained Catholic sector, as well as an awareness of a historical association with international missionary work and charitable traditions, there has been recent emphasis on the inclusion of ethnic minority pupils in Northern Ireland. When asked if they were aware of global issues in their school, a teacher from a Maintained Primary school replied:

TEACHER: Yes. Historically, because this is a Catholic Maintained school, historically we would have had mission activity and agencies such as Trócaire and Concern. (Maintained Primary school)

Another Maintained Primary school teacher saw the teaching of global issues inextricably linked to religion:

TEACHER: *It fits into it because we would be very much doing it through our religion program. But it fits in obviously because there has to be a GD to it; you know the religion bit comes first, the GD second.*

INTERVIEWER: *Why's that?*

TEACHER: *I don't know but it's just [...] I suppose it's part of your religion program to do that throughout Lent, to make children aware that there are people suffering out there, so it comes from the religious aspect first in respect of Christianity. Then as a Christian you have a duty to look after these other people and yes it is done on a GD.*

(Maintained Primary school)

Within the Controlled Protestant sector, there was an emphasis on the development of international links and projects but less consistent evidence that the sector as a whole aims to address diversity closer to home.

TEACHER: *We have had two extremely successful Comenius projects working with European schools; we have some work done via the Internet with American schools, some years ago, in the early years of the Internet. And we have had links with an Australian school via the Internet in the past. I would love to find the time to do an African or Asian link but I don't seem to be able to find the time to do that..*

(Controlled Primary school)

However, when asked about teaching relating to the conflict in Northern Ireland, the same teacher felt reluctant to

address those issues and was not entirely sure if they were still relevant in Northern Ireland today:

TEACHER: *To be honest perhaps I am addressing those issues [...] well firstly I am divided that Northern Ireland has moved away from a conflict situation, and our children, rural children, they weren't terribly aware of it. But maybe I would be reluctant to go back towards that..*
(Controlled Primary school)

In a divided educational system it may only to be expected that different sectors will approach the Global Dimension in ways that are consistent with existing practices. While this might present the potential for exacerbating community divisions due to the different nature of learning, these differences in expertise could usefully complement each other and clearly present opportunities for collaborative work between all types of schools to learn from each others' approaches. While most collaborative work takes place between schools within the same school sector (School of Education, Queen's University Belfast, 2008), the opportunities presented by partnerships between schools in different sectors, should not be neglected.

Such collaborations have been used by some interviewees who highlighted their benefits for their own practice as well as pupils experiences.

TEACHER: *Em, we have stayed very good friends, but all that [school collaboration] has been beneficial for us ... who are at different schools in the same town, it gave us opportunities to walk in and out of each other's schools, you know, and bring students across to each other's schools, so it helps break down some of those barriers.*

(Integrated Post-primary school)

Within Primary schools, some teachers expressed a wariness of exploring sectarianism and the Northern Ireland conflict as they feared it may put ideas into pupils' heads. Teachers in Primary and Post-primary schools addressed controversial issues either explicitly or implicitly. One teacher explained:

TEACHER: *Even the big issues like racism and bigotry and anything, how do you deal with that without scaring children or putting ideas in their head when they are not aware of them.* (Controlled Primary School)

Some interviewees highlighted the need for sensitivity when dealing with the Northern Ireland conflict which in some communities remains an extremely relevant issue. Children, who may not have directly experienced it and who may have little knowledge of what went on, nevertheless may retain a strong sense of community identity and concomitant feelings about historical and current events. Other teachers addressed issues of conflict theoretically, teaching children about the rights and wrongs of treating people from other backgrounds external to Northern Ireland, but clearly expecting the pupils themselves to extend and connect such learning to apply it to Catholic/Protestant relationships in Northern Ireland.

6. Rights, responsibilities and activism

Human rights were not mentioned by all of the interviewees and, if prompted, only a few teachers actually referred to specific human rights instruments or materials, which are seen as a crucial element of human rights education (McEvoy, 2007).

TEACHER: *We look at the Convention on Human Rights... the European CHR is part of the GCSE spec, UN and their role and we look at that; what are their [the pupils']*

rights. (Controlled Secondary school)

Despite the fact that human rights are sometimes seen as too complicated an issue for younger children (Kohlberg, 1984), human rights teaching was not limited to Post-primary schools and in one Primary school for example pupils learnt about human rights as part of a cross-community project :

TEACHER: *And, we are incorporating some work from the Amnesty International materials, you know the Lift Off. That would be done a little bit ad hoc as well in that we have some links with a school from the Controlled sector and so we do a lot of cross community work there, and we've tried to use some of the human rights education units in that Lift Off material, you know to get the children to work together.* (Maintained Primary school)

This reflects findings by Ruck et al (1998), whose research indicated that "by 10 years of age children are able to hold both concrete and at least rudimentary abstract views about various aspects of rights" (p. 285) and confirms the capacity of even younger children to engage with complex, abstract issues given appropriate teaching approaches and resources.

A number of teachers emphasised the importance of learning about and accepting one's responsibilities in a global context and this referred to political participation, healthy living, consumerism and the environment. One interviewee for example described the focus of a Comenius project within his school:

TEACHER: *The overall, eh, theme for the current project eh, is about children taking more responsibility for, eh, their lives in the widest possible sense. So eh, it will involve*

looking at things like, em, the (...) the emphasis that different countries put on different sorts of lifestyles. So there'll be a healthy living element to it. But there'll also be ... an environmental aspect to it where part of it will be 'how do we act responsibly in terms of looking after the environment?' (Controlled Primary school)

In defining global citizenship, Davies (2006) outlines the relationship between an understanding of other people's plight, knowledge about factors contributing to it and people's motivation to act. She claims that "there must be 'outrage', so that motivations for change are high" (p. 7). In a similar vein, when talking about the hope that learning about issues such as Fair Trade would manifest itself in a willingness to become actively involved and generalise to other areas, one teacher stated:

TEACHER: You would hope that it would be built on as they get older and tackle the more difficult issues. That they would understand the underlying reasons for e.g. poverty in certain countries and that it's not just because the country is mismanaged, there is a lot more to do with it, and that would leave some sense of outrage in some, and a desire to be involved. (Maintained Primary school)

Encouraging and providing pupils with the skills and motivation to engage actively with these issues, even on a small scale, was perceived to be highly rewarding for teachers.

TEACHER: Yeah and even if it something so small like turning around and saying 'why are you doing that?, why are you dropping that piece of litter in our school?' That kinda small scale is far more rewarding than even the ones who

are going and joining Belfast Youth Forum or going joining different organisations, NGOs. It's far more rewarding seeing that because that is the everyday child not the child who is going to do the extra mile. (Maintained Grammar school)

In fact, it was noteworthy that many teachers mentioned extra-curricular yet school-based activities and clubs such as eco-clubs, environmental awareness groups and NGO supported school-based support groups, in relation to activism thereby highlighting the central role of the school in developing activism outside as well as through the curriculum.

7. Environment

All of the interviewees reported that environmental issues were part of the curricular and extra-curricular activities within the school. There was little divergence or evidence of controversy in the data regarding environmental issues and they were seen as equally popular at both Primary and Post-primary school levels. While in some Primary schools there was a focus on traditional 'nature studies', other Primary school teachers stated that they used environmentalism as a lens to introduce the notion of global interdependence:

TEACHER: ... the older children, around P6 and P7 would be very aware of the Greenhouse Effect. The P7s do quite an in depth study of the rainforest and discovering how we need it, that we rely on it. And P6s would be looking at Polar Regions and then looking at the impact that we are having globally on the whole environment. So we would do very much, but then further up the school because they only begin to understand it then. And they [the pupils] love it. (Maintained Primary school)

One teacher explained that global warming was “a fairly easy aspect, to make children [aware] and various agencies are keen to come in and deliver on it” (Controlled Primary school). Clearly the perception that this was an easy way of introducing pupils to a global perspective coupled with the convenience of NGO input made teaching about the environment appealing to teachers in this school. While Dobson (2003) even suggests that “the curriculum injunction to teach ‘Education for Sustainable Development’ may profitably be regarded as a vehicle for teaching the citizenship curriculum as a whole” (Dobson, 2003, p. 195), it appears that in Northern Ireland at least, teachers’ tendency towards such an approach may be based on perceptions of its relatively uncontroversial nature.

Environmentalism was also seen as a way for pupils to develop skills, which could be transferred to other areas:

TEACHER: *They have got to decide, for example, I was teaching about Antarctica, looking at the different issues there and they have to decide whether they are for or against, abuse or exploit or conserve... So you are always teaching them the facts first... and then getting them to think beyond that. What’s fact or opinion - looking at who is for conserving Antarctica, who is going to exploit it..* (Controlled Secondary school)

Talking about international collaborations between schools, one teacher suggested that these could be used to “to learn and share with each other” approaches to addressing environmental issues:

TEACHER: *In Holland, for example, the Dutch school, em, I would say probably seventy to maybe ninety percent of the children will either*

walk or ride to school. (Controlled Primary school)

One teacher suggested that the lack of funding and direct policy on environmental issues meant that they were not as influential in terms of their impact on pupils. *“There is no direct line of policy on the issues”* (Maintained Grammar school)

Phase Two: Teacher interviews and focus groups

About twelve months later, follow up interviews and focus groups were conducted in the same schools to explore potential changes over time. While in some schools little had changed over the year, others reported changes associated with their own organisation (for example one school had moved to a new building, while others had introduced a new strategy for delivering the GD or had experienced significant staff changes or growing pupil numbers), or changes associated with the introduction of new examinations. While these individual factors may have impacted specifically on those particular schools, some of the issues discussed were clearly more general.

What is delivered and how

As in Phase One many schools reported relevant awards, projects and schemes with an international dimension which provided a focus for some of their delivery of the GD. There was awareness, however, that, with funding becoming more difficult to get in the current economic climate, efforts in this direction would need to be redoubled if they were to maintain these activities. This was related to the perennial issue of the time needed for preparing applications in an already packed schedule, however on the whole they remained optimistic that they would maintain their success in these

activities. A few schools had experienced difficulties with individual projects, such as being unable to find a partner or a project faltering due to lack of co-ordination, but these were not general experiences.

With regard to the content of the GD delivered in schools, once again there was an emphasis on relating issues to current affairs such as Haiti or the British election campaign and thereby making the broader issues more relevant to pupils. This was the case across the sample, as was the emphasis on active learning methodologies associated with the GD. Once again, at Primary level the GD was strongly related to the *World around us*, while at Post-primary level links drawn with specific subject areas such as *Learning for Life and Work* and *Local and Global Citizenship*. As in Phase One, there continued to be a perceived affinity between the GD and some subjects such as Geography, History, Politics, English, Religious Education, Social Sciences generally and a perceived lack of such an affinity with subjects such as Maths and Science.

Approaches to delivering the GD had not changed in some schools and tended to be either general, ad hoc and/or opportunistic, or strategic and planned. At Primary level most schools had not changed their approach in the past year

TEACHER: *No, we're still, we're pretty much on the same, same areas, because they tie in with other things basically that we're doing, so we've just kind of kept them more or less the same.* (Maintained Primary school, urban)

However at Post-primary level, one teacher reported that the school had recently adopted a much more strategic approach with a core team delivering citizenship and working towards the GCSE and believed that this had assured the status of the GD and citizenship among

teachers, pupils and parents. Another reported similar benefits from the recent creation of a co-ordinator role in the school, albeit no timetable allowance was made for this, it had enabled attendance at conferences and training days which had been invaluable. Two further Post-primary teachers reported similar more strategic approaches. However, there was uncertainty expressed about what exactly was supposed to be included in the Global Dimension as one Primary teacher stated:

TEACHER: *Government wise, I think they kind of want us to do it, but there's very little direction, it's kind of put out there as, like, a big wish, we would like you to bring the Global Dimension in, but they're not specifically saying do this, do that, do you know, whatever, and that's ok, and I know it is good in one way in that your given your head to decide I want to do this, and I don't want to do that, but in another way it's an awful awful big area, and maybe if there was more specifics (...) people would be more likely to do it.* (Maintained Primary school, urban)

Training and resources

While some teachers had attended relevant training almost all noted that it was difficult to get time to attend sessions, and several schools disseminated training attended by a single teacher to colleagues throughout the school. Training which included the provision of materials, and in particular lesson plans that could be used or adapted, was viewed as being particularly useful. One teacher at an Integrated Post-primary school had attended training and a conference in London and thought that the materials available there were not available locally, and that the links with NGOs were not as well developed locally, although that teacher had not actually attended any

training in Northern Ireland. Another school had developed its own internal support website for staff. Most teachers agreed that the GD was becoming much more embedded in all available training and that resources were readily available, although as in Phase One there was also mention of the difficulties of having time to review and if necessary adapt materials. Only three of the 23 teachers interviewed had been aware of the GDNI website resource and several asked for this URL which was supplied by the researchers.

In terms of management, support varied from freedom for teachers to incorporate a GD into their teaching in any way they liked, to active support in terms of timetabled roles and budget allocations, although the former was more common:

TEACHER: *It's not dictated to us from above what we should do. So yeah I think it probably is better, even though it wouldn't be high up on the agenda for management that we would include that into our schemes but maybe it's just our subject areas lend themselves to that.* (Maintained Grammar school)

TEACHER: *Well it [GD] is a priority now, it is in the school development plan. Um the projects we are seeking accreditation through the international school award so that has really been the drive.* (Controlled Grammar school)

Differences between schools

As in Phase One, there were indications that Maintained schools tended to consider their charitable activities as simply part of a general Catholic ethos, and that Integrated schools viewed addressing diversity as part of their core activity. However perhaps more interesting were differences that emerged between schools that were not simply linked to the type of school, but appeared to be related to the school's

specific context and to their own experiences. For example, one teacher commented that after involvement in projects with schools in the Middle East, they would prefer to link with schools from a more similar culture to their own:

TEACHER: *Yeah maybe we can identify more with those folk [in America]. I mean I can't identify what teaching and learning is like in Jordan.* TEACHER: *It is very very different massive cultural difference.* (Controlled Grammar school)

However, another took a different view on this issue,

TEACHER: *And sometimes, you know, sometimes people don't have a great attitude towards someone of, of a vastly different culture and I think that would be one of the benefits that come from working closely with, with a school in Africa or India, you know, whatever. Em, and I know that, again through the British Council, that there are projects available but it's a matter of you have to find the energy and time, em, to take that forward and you know, we haven't arrived at that yet.* (Controlled Primary school)

Some teachers talked of the need to politicise issues such as poverty and take a more critical approach to the GD:

TEACHER: *Yeah I think it's changing the emphasis from, you know, giving to charity to we shouldn't have to be doing this, these people that are in, in living in poverty, actually their own countries have enough, you know, they have plenty of riches, but they have no control over them. And it's changing that emphasis from 'aren't we doing great, you know, by having red nose*

days and buying goats' and that there which is very important, it is absolutely important but it's, it's moving away from that sort of self satisfied approach to what we're doing is only a drop in the ocean and, you know, it's for everyone. Because, you know, injustice changes when the idea of injustice no longer is acceptable and that only happens when enough people come together and say 'nah, this isn't, this isn't on'. (Maintained Grammar school)

Others, however, were content to continue with a relatively soft approach, sometimes out of concern for younger children's sensitivities:

TEACHER: Well you are saying about that but you have to watch your class emotionally because some of the wee ones go home and worry themselves stupid. You have to strike again a balance; you can't go too far, there are some that just couldn't care. So emotionally you have to watch what to say and what not to say. Just be responsible. (Maintained Primary school)

Another teacher noted how staff in his/her school had changed their approach as they themselves had developed their understanding of global issues:

TEACHER: I think personally, as well, that I would have probably taught a lot of the likes Africa, Asia concentrate on the negative whereas again there are middle class and there are rich people and the continent of Africa as well, whereas I would have done it as a mud huts aspect of it, which is wrong, you know, so I think for me personally, for me that's one area you know I've probably changed my

own opinion and the way I would teach that to the children so. (Controlled Primary school)

One issue where there was a range of views was on the relevance of the Northern Irish conflict as a backdrop to teaching about issues such as conflict and conflict resolution. Clearly the Troubles were seen as more relevant in some schools than in others, depending on the age of the pupils and the location of the school itself, which both impacted on teachers' approaches to teaching of controversial issues.

TEACHER: I think we are a bit afraid to tackle the political side of things because obviously we don't want to bias the children one way or another, like I just don't go onto that at all. (Maintained Primary school, area of high violence)

Others however believed that although the pupils may not have personally experienced the conflict, there was nevertheless an impact of it in the classroom:

TEACHER: I find at times, you know, sometimes kids come in, you know, with strong views one way or the other, religious views at times and especially about the troubles and stuff like that and we had the (Bloody Sunday Report) quite recently and a lot of the kids, they didn't live through the troubles, but yet they feel very passionate about the issues that surrounded it and whilst it may affect some of them at home, it doesn't affect the majority of them and I, I just find that really mind blowing, that kids, their parents went through this hardship and yet they are still living it at home instead of trying to move on and take the kids out of that mindset, because you kind of think,

you wouldn't want your kids to go through what you went through, but they are still holding onto, well maybe not they are, but the kids are certainly coming in with, with strong views. (Integrated Post-primary school, area of high violence)

Another teacher noted that the GD was not as well covered in resources and guidelines provided by CCEA as PDMU and related this to a possible motivation to avoid potentially sensitive issues:

TEACHER: I know that the Global Dimension should fall into PDMU, it should fall into the nice little folders, you know, that we got, and they're lovely, and they're great, but I don't think the Global Dimension is tackled as well in it as the, you know, Personal Development, and Mutual Understanding, and I don't know whether that was a conscious decision because of the past History of Northern Ireland to focus more on mutual understanding and not so much on the Global Dimension of it all. (Maintained Primary school)

Summary of qualitative data collected from teachers

There was clear evidence from teacher interviews and focus groups that there was much relevant and valuable work carried out in schools under the banner of the Global Dimension. Although some schools adopted a structured approach, most adopted an ad hoc approach to the implementation of the Global Dimension in the curriculum. Interviewees highlighted strong curricular links (e.g. *The World around us* or *Learning for Life and Work*)

and, in Post-primary schools, subject links (*Local and Global Citizenship*, History, Geography). However, it was also evident that subjects traditionally less associated with the local dimension were also included (e.g. Physical Education). In many schools, specific projects (such as Comenius, International School Awards etc) provided a catalyst for incorporating the Global Dimension into the curriculum. In some cases, individuals' engagement in Continued Professional Development (e.g. Citizenship training or a Masters) could also provide an impetus for involvement. Interviewees highlighted the importance of support from management, the ELBs and from other schools as crucial for the effective implementation of the Global Dimension. Teachers reported a wide range of backgrounds and training (including none – '*We trained ourselves!*'). In the vast majority of cases, teaching about the Global Dimension appeared to be highly dependent on the enthusiasm of individual teachers and this was clearly acknowledged by interviewees.

All teachers viewed awareness raising as the main goal of teaching about the Global Dimension. Environmental issues were mentioned by all interviewees as important aspects of the Global Dimension and appeared to have a universal appeal in all schools. As such it may be possible to consider the potential role of the environment as an entry point for introducing the concept of interdependence. Issues of trade, consumerism and debt appeared to be underdeveloped in relation to their integration into the curriculum under the heading of the Global Dimension, and such issues emerged usually through prompted discussions and focused on Fair Trade.

All interviewees saw teaching about respect for diversity and other cultures as a central element of the Global Dimension. Other cultures referred to the global context but also included the local context,

though it locally often reflected concerns about racism rather than sectarianism. In this context, ethnic minorities were often seen “*as resources*” to illustrate other cultures. There appeared to be a dichotomy between those teachers, who regarded addressing different views and conflict as essential, and those who preferred to concentrate on finding similarities and common humanity. The interviews indicated potential differences in emphasis between school sectors. As such, Integrated schools viewed the Global Dimension as an extension of their community relations work and their teaching approach based on an embrace of diversity in general. Maintained schools centred their approach to the Global Dimension on their traditional involvement in international charitable work. Controlled schools appeared to concentrate on the development of international projects and collaborative partnerships with other schools.

Interviewees’ understandings of the Global Dimension also varied with regards to their focus on human rights, political system awareness and activism. If their role was emphasized more prominently, teaching and learning of such issues was often supported by external agencies or resources. Findings indicated that much work needs to be done in relation to articulating the relationship between local and global dimensions, especially in relation to issues such as conflict and human rights.

Interviewees’ conceptualisations of equality, social justice and power relations at a global level varied in the extent to which they indicated a critical engagement with these issues. While there were some critical reflections on North/South relationships and their complexities, there were also some more Eurocentric approaches to the Global Dimension, which highlighted the need for charitable action and/or the more developed nature of Western nations. There was limited evidence of interviewees conceptualising

interdependence within the framework of the Global Dimension, except for discussions in a few focus groups. Interdependence was often seen as a highly complex issue that would be difficult to teach to younger pupils. Interviewees also had different views about how to teach it effectively. Some teachers felt it was best to start with the local context and to connect it then to global issues. Others felt the opposite approach was more effective (start global and connect to local).

Some teachers expressed concerns about distressing or frightening pupils with pessimistic world views and to upset parents, who may have divergent opinions. Fears were also expressed regarding the potential consequences of addressing the Northern Ireland conflict in the classroom, as debates about controversial issues could strengthen divisive identities and, in turn, worsen community relations.

At an applied level, lack of time for teaching, researching and reflection was seen as major impediment to implementing the Global Dimension effectively. Resources were seen as easily accessible by some but as challenging to find by others. In particular, teachers from subject areas which are traditionally not aligned with teaching the Global Dimension found it challenging to identify suitable materials. The non-assessed nature of the Global Dimension was seen by some as a sign that the subject may be vulnerable to being replaced by other agendas.

The follow-up interviews clearly demonstrated that the teachers who were involved in the research had varying experiences of delivering the GD over the past year. Influences on their experiences included changes within their own schools, changes in the curriculum and changes in their own understandings, which were sometimes related to their experience of teaching the GD or GD related projects. As in Phase One of the project, differences related to school types were also evident.

However most teachers expressed the view that the GD is becoming ever more embedded in the curriculum and accessible to teachers, and that pupils, whatever was taught and whether a soft or a critical approach was adopted, would benefit at the very least from having their horizons widened.

Pupil Focus Groups

Similar to the previous section, results are presented in detail first for the initial phase of the research and followed by the analysis of the changes emerging from follow-up interviews and focus groups.

Phase One: Pupil focus groups

Thematic analysis resulted in two main themes relating to understanding, attitudes and behaviours. These main themes were differentiated into seven sub-headings as indicated below:

1. Understandings:
 - Subject related learning
 - World as an eco-system
 - Rights and related issues
 - Interdependence
2. Attitudes and behaviours
 - Impact on attitudes
 - Impact on behaviours
 - Future intentions

1. Understandings

Subject related learning

Given the wide latitude available to schools in how they approach the GD, in some schools learning is organised around intense study of many aspects of an issue across a range of subject areas in a specific school year (for example Primary six classes focusing on India and looking at geography, weather, history, population, trade, literature etc) while in other schools a more ad hoc approach results in the study of a range of relatively independent, subject-specific issues (for example looking at extreme weather events in Geography, religious conflict in History, racism in English).

Focus groups highlighted a wide range of subject areas which the participants perceived to be related to the

GD, which reflect the variety and overlaps between the issues and contents mentioned. In Primary schools, there was less reference to specific subjects, which reflects the integrated nature of the Key Stage 1 and 2 curricula, though pupils did mention *The World around us* and *PDMU (Personal Development and Mutual Understanding)*. In Post-primary schools, pupils referred to *Learning for Life and Work*, and particularly *Local & Global Citizenship*, as well as subject areas like Geography, History, Religion, Languages as well as English/Literacy, Music (History of), Physics and Chemistry.

For example in modern languages, this included learning about culture in other countries, with many examples given of learning about customs, food, dance, movie stars and general information. This appeared to have provided interest in learning other languages and in visiting other countries, in a very clear illustration of Roman's (2003) concept of the GD as (in this case, literally) consumption of cultural difference.

PUPIL 1¹: *There was one time last year when we had French when our French teacher took us and made some French foods, like brioche and hot chocolate.*

PUPIL 2: *We did some presentations on like tourists and places people go, and the foods they eat and all the movie stars and stuff. About France. (Controlled Grammar school)*

Learning about other cultures appeared to raise pupils' curiosity about going to other countries or meeting migrants within Northern Ireland in some instances, as explained in one focus group:

¹ Interviewer and Pupil 1, 2 etc used to signify speaker; where individual pupil voices could not be identified, designated as Pupil ?

INTERVIEWER: *So France and Spain feature highly [laughs]. Would it make you more curious about going to other countries too?*

PUPIL 6: *Yeah.*

INTERVIEWER: *Why?*

PUPIL 8: *Because the pictures in the textbook, it makes it look really, really nice, so it does. And the people sound friendly. (Controlled Grammar school)*

However, in other instances it seemed to have the opposite effect with pupils being put off visiting other countries because of the images of poverty, disaster and misery, though it may be difficult to disentangle whether this effect is due to school learning or more generally through media coverage and home influences.

A similar theme that pupils often mentioned was History, very often related to conflict, with topics as diverse as studies of ancient cultures such as the Egyptians, the Spanish Armada, World War II, slavery, the American Revolution, religious conflicts, including in one group the study of William of Orange and the Battle of the Boyne, and in another reference to King Henry VIII, as well as Shakespearean dramas such as *Romeo and Juliet*. These references reflected the Primary and Post-primary curriculum contents, but historical information had been gained from classes other than History, such as Literacy, again indicating the way in which the Global Dimension underpins a range of subject areas:

PUPIL: *I wrote about the Irish Famine*

INTERVIEWER: *The Irish Famine. Did you all learn about that too?*

ALL: *Yeah*

PUPIL: *It's in our [inaudible] book that we read.*

INTERVIEWER: *A book? A novel?*

PUPIL: *Under the Hawthorne Tree. (Integrated Primary school)*

There were some differences between schools in the content of discussions which indicated learning in the older age groups that could be seen as reinforcing sectarian perspectives and identities, for example King William of Orange and the Battle of the Boyne were mentioned in a Controlled school only. This is consistent with the findings of Barton and McCully (2005, p. 111) who noted that pupils identify more strongly with their community with increasing age and “appear to draw selectively from the school curriculum in order to bolster their developing understanding of partisan historical narratives”. The authors proposed that teachers needed to confront controversial issues relating to conflict and national history if the curriculum aim to develop informed, tolerant and respectful citizens is to be achieved (CCEA, 2007b). Arguably, this suggests that the ways in which teachers approach issues relevant to the Global Dimension, such as conflict (which could provide fertile ground on which to sow seeds of cross-cutting identities and mutual understanding) may fail to achieve their theoretical potential of bridging existing community divisions (Davies, 2006).

Geographical areas were also frequently mentioned and the Global South featured strongly in such discussions. For example, one group had been learning about Kenya and had been surprised to learn that not everyone in Kenya was poor, but that in fact there were some very rich people living there.

PUPIL 1: *We are doing Kenya in Geography..*

INTERVIEWER: *Kenya in Geography, Right? And what have you learnt about Kenyan culture? [...] anybody?*

PUPIL 1: *That there's a poor side and a rich side..*

INTERVIEWER: *So, there's a poor side and a rich side. Did you realise*

that before you started doing it in Geography?

ALL: No.

INTERVIEWER: *What did you think about Kenya before you started learning about it?*

PUPIL 2: *They were all poor...you would think that it is all poor..*

(Controlled secondary girls' school)

However, this example was rather atypical, in that rather than perpetuating stereotypes of the Global South it challenged them. In other instances there was strong evidence that such stereotypes remained unchallenged or were even reinforced, as in the following extract where there was clear indication of constructions of the global poor (they) as powerless and the rich (us) as powerful and privileged

INTERVIEWER: *Learning about all these different countries, what does it have to do with us?*

PUPIL 1: *Pardon?*

INTERVIEWER: *What does it have to do with us in Northern Ireland?*

PUPIL 1: *Just so we can help people [two other participants say yes]*

INTERVIEWER: *It's to help people...*

PUPIL 1: *We're the people that can make the change really. Because they can't do anything about how they're living.*

PUPIL 2: *Because they didn't get good education*

INTERVIEWER: *Because they don't have the education?*

PUPIL 2: *They don't have good jobs*
(Controlled Primary school)

This lack of a critical engagement with power imbalances characterising north/south relationship and the unchallenged acceptance of Western values clearly corresponds with Andreotti's (2006, p. 5) soft approach to global learning, which

may reinforce "eurocentrism and triumphalism".

The world as an ecosystem

A long list of topics emerged that pupils believed were about the Global Dimension, including learning about the world as an ecosystem, which included issues as diverse as climate and the environment, the seasons, extreme weather conditions and events such as flooding, tsunami and earthquakes, global warming, recycling, endangered species and even dinosaurs. This theme was prevalent across all groups and young people engaged well with not only the issues but their importance. In this theme, there were some indications that connections were being made between issues (for example recycling and global warming), behaviours (taking personal responsibility) and the future (in order to leave the planet for their own future or for future generations):

PUPIL 1: *Obviously, it's [...] we can save the environment for the people who come in the world after us.*

INTERVIEWER: *And would it make you act differently? Now than you did before?*

[*most of the group say yes*]: *All of you are nodding, in what way? What do you do differently now?*

PUPIL 2: *Recycle more*

PUPIL 3: *Stop throwing rubbish in the black bin* (Maintained Primary school)

It could well be that the prevalence of this theme reflects the ease with which teachers approach it, as well as its perceived relevance to young people. In addition, the nature of the material covered in this theme has the advantage of being largely uncontroversial, equally applicable in all types of school and relevant to all children and young people. Again perhaps because of the content of the theme, there was no evident eurocentricity in the

conversations, and the links between knowledge, attitudes and behaviour indicate that the children and young people participating in this study were able to make such links successfully and act on them.

Rights and related issues

A further theme was that of rights and related issues, such as Children's Rights, gender inequality, racism and apartheid, immigration rights and government, which were all linked in discussions and clearly regarded as related by the pupils, which could be interpreted as a positive indication of understanding that these issues are interconnected. However, specific Human Rights legislation was not mentioned in any of the focus groups, and hence this linking of the issues could be interpreted as a sign of confusion on the part of the pupils around the legal and values-related facets of human rights. This may well be related to the approach taken in many schools to the teaching of rights, where raising of awareness is considered to be the main goal (Reilly & Niens, 2005), although the conflation of human rights as a values base and as a legislative framework has been heavily criticised (McEvoy, 2007). Moreover, as the following exchange shows, when discussing these issues there were indications of stereotyping which were particularly prevalent among Primary school participants, including positive stereotyping of the Global South.

INTERVIEWER: *Human rights? So that's children rights, human rights, and in some countries you don't have them at all? Does it make you think differently?*

PUPIL 1: *Yeah [three other people say yes]*

INTERVIEWER: *In what way?*

PUPIL 1: *Over here we are all greedy and over there they're not. Over in Africa.*

(Integrated Primary school)

Issues of rights and inequalities were strongly related to current affairs, including discussions on Iraq, Afghanistan, Fair Trade, Islam, Rwanda, the credit crunch, politics and personalities such as Nelson Mandela and, reflecting recent media coverage which had evidently provided teachers with a useful basis for classroom discussion, Barack Obama.

In line with the differences between schools relating to History learning, a notable variation was the mention of Gaza in two Primary schools, both with pupils mainly from the Catholic/Nationalist tradition, reflecting the broad tendency of that community to support Palestine while the Protestant/Unionist community has traditionally been more sympathetic to Israel. The caveat relating to the unrepresentative nature of the sample notwithstanding, these findings do suggest that teachers' own values and interests, shaped by their own community backgrounds, are reflected in how they address the Global Dimension in their classrooms and may lead to reinforcement of pupils' attitudes rather than challenging them (Leonard, 2007). However, this is a difficult problem faced by all those involved in citizenship education in Northern Ireland, in that citizenship and identity are clearly inextricably intertwined and it is a task of enormous complexity to develop skills related to citizenship without reinforcing the negative aspects of community identity. Indeed, arguably the focus of this research on global issues has highlighted with tremendous clarity the challenge illustrated by one teacher who was interviewed in another strand of the study, namely that in teaching citizenship, global citizenship and multiculturalism, one's own cultural identity seemed inevitably threatened as it appeared to be subsumed under broader, superordinate categorisations, reflecting the 'zero sum' approach often observed in relation to politics in Northern Ireland (Aughey, 2005). If global citizenship is

designed to develop multiple and cross-cutting identities, then the perceived incompatibility of local or cultural identities with an overarching identity as a global citizen may impede such a development and needs to be addressed. Davies (2006) notes that the development of multiple identities often appears to be a “seemingly a taken-for-granted concept” and the challenge then may be to reconcile allegiances to particular and local cultures whilst also developing a sense of belonging to a global community. This may involve an analytical view of all cultures, including one’s own, to allow differentiation of their positive and negative aspects.

While most schools in the sample were mixed in terms of gender, one girls’ and one boys’ Post-primary schools were included and in comparing the data from these, some gender-related differences emerged. For example in the girls’ group one issue highlighted was restriction on women’s dress in some countries.

PUPIL 1: *In some countries you are not allowed to show your face.. they have to wear these big...[burqas]*

PUPIL 2: *They have to cover up their bodies... and you can only see their eyes..*

(Controlled Girls’ Secondary school)

While gender inequality was also raised in a mixed Primary school, the girls’ school group also believed that in a single sex school it was easier to learn about gendered rights issues:

INTERVIEWER: *Interesting you were talking about women’s rights, do you think being in an all-girl school makes it different learning about all of that stuff?*

ALL: *Yeah.*

INTERVIEWER: *Why is it different from a mixed school?*

PUPIL 1: *Because if you were in a mixed school, [it’s just] better to learn in one group.*

PUPIL 2: *Boys would take the men’s side while women take the women’s side.*

INTERVIEWER: *So do you think women learn more about human rights in an all-girl school than a mixed?*

PUPIL 1: *Yeah.* (Controlled Girls’ Secondary school)

These conversations clearly highlighted the students’ belief in the potential for gendered perspectives on citizenship related issues to develop differently in single or mixed sex school settings. As Arnot (2009) indicates, dealing with global issues of gender power relations can be highly controversial all be it less so in a single sex setting, which in Northern Ireland is more often than not also culturally homogenous.

Interdependence

Evidence for this particular theme was scant and what was absent in pupils’ conversations was almost more noteworthy than what was said.

Despite relevant questioning and probing there was little evidence that participants had a good understanding of global interdependence and there was a paucity of discussion, even when prompted on issues such as consumerism, global debt reduction, migration, or redistribution of wealth. There were few examples relating to the environment where pupils themselves indicated an awareness of how their own actions could impact at a global level and where they showed a strong willingness to act accordingly.

PUPIL 1: *I’ve started to turn off the red button on the sky and the TV. Because even leaving the LED on the TV wastes a lot of electricity.*

INTERVIEWER: *What difference does that make on bigger level? For people in India or Bangladesh?*

PUPIL 2: *Climate change. Like Global Warming and stuff.*

INTERVIEWER: *So it doesn't just help you but elsewhere as well?*

PUPIL 2: *Yeah.* (Controlled Grammar school)

The only example of an issue other than the environment being used to connect events at home to a global issue was the credit crunch, which was mentioned in several groups. In the discussion of one Secondary Controlled school, the blame for the credit crunch was placed squarely at the door of "the Americans" and they noted that this may result in them finding it harder to obtain jobs in the future. The same group of pupils praised Barack Obama, who had been elected as president of the US a few months earlier, and his apparent focus on real change and international involvement, which they felt was very different to the narrow and local focus taken by politicians in Northern Ireland:

PUPIL 1: *Is Barack Obama a politician?*

INTERVIEWER: *Yes.*

PUPIL 1: *He's the only one I know that is really trying to make a change [two other participants say yes], he made a speech about change.*

PUPIL 2: *He's like willing to make a difference..*

PUPIL 3: *He's trying...*

[Later]

INTERVIEWER: *So you like the idea that he [Obama] is looking at other countries?*

PUPIL 4: *Yeah..*

INTERVIEWER: *And do you not think that happens in Northern Ireland?*

PUPIL 3: *No...*

PUPIL 2: *They probably do but they just don't do it as much.*

(Controlled Secondary school)

This exchange illustrates some degree of pupils' learning about global issues being applied to a local context and demonstrates an appreciation of the role of politicians in effecting change and, later in the conversation, a comparison with local politicians who were seen to be less involved with other countries. While these evaluations may indicate relatively simplistic cause-effect interpretations of current affairs, they also show a differentiated understanding of institutional responsibility in different circumstances.

Interconnections with other issues were only made when prompted and remained nebulous. This lack of interconnectedness appeared to be accompanied by a reduced willingness to change relevant behaviours as indicated by the conversation about Fair Trade where a participant noted that if you are buying a bar of chocolate, you wanted the one that was best for your taste, regardless of the Fair Trade alternative.

INTERVIEWER: *But even with chocolate, sometimes there is a Fair Trade bar of chocolate there, and it doesn't look as nice. Do you ever think 'I should really buy the Fair Trade bar of chocolate rather than buy the [well-known brand]?'*

PUPIL 2: *No because buying the chocolate bar is a treat and you want the best one.*

INTERVIEWER: *So Fair Trade isn't always the first thing you think about?*

PUPIL 2: *No.* (Controlled Grammar school)

In terms of conflict, the preponderance of examples provided by the focus group participants was either historically, geographically and/or politically distanced from the Northern Ireland conflict. While these examples might have been used as a springboard to discuss local issues, participating pupils did not report

this to have been the case. In fact, there was very little reference at all to the Northern Ireland conflict and, where there was discussion of Northern Ireland, it tended to be in terms of racist rather than sectarian conflict and violence. This may to some extent reflect the fact that participants had not themselves directly experienced the recent conflict, but would have been aware of the considerable press focus on racism in recent years. Given that previous research has indicated that pupils in Northern Ireland often do wish to learn more about the "Troubles" (McGill, Smith & Hamber, 2009), it could also be a reflection of a failure to make comparisons between the local conflict and broader principles of conflict and conflict resolution at a global level.

Not surprisingly, findings revealed differences in the sophistication of conceptualisations of the Global Dimension in Primary and Post-primary school discussions. For example, Post-primary pupils raised issues in sequence, appeared to have a sense of general topic areas, under which they could be classified, and were able in some instances to provide examples of interdependence. In contrast, in the Primary school data, pupils defined issues relating to the Global Dimension very broadly, often providing many speedy responses including for example dinosaurs and astronomy as relevant issues, in almost a 'shotgun' approach, with very limited appreciation of interdependence. While the limitations of the sample need to be acknowledged, this may indicate that younger pupils have not yet developed conceptual frameworks to guide their judgements in the area and that it reflects their stage of cognitive development.

The scant evidence for this theme could be seen as reflecting its complex nature, which may require advanced cognitive abilities and thinking skills. The promotion of thinking skills however is one of the main goals of the Northern Ireland

curriculum, but except for one focus group there was limited evidence of pupils offering different responses to those they were likely to perceive as acceptable in the school context.. Leonard 2007, p. 496) warns that the potential for citizenship education to empower pupils may be curtailed as a consequence of teachers' more powerful position which may result in silencing pupils' voices and "producing politically correct answers". Presumably the same could be said for teaching and learning of global issues.

2. Attitudes and behaviours

Impact on attitudes

In terms of attitudes, behaviours and identities, there was evidence of raised awareness and importantly curiosity, perspective taking and empathy, which in some focus groups, in turn, appeared to impact on attitudes to immigrants in particular.

This was evident in terms of frequent discussions on how lucky this sort of learning made pupils feel, and how sad they feel when hearing about disadvantages experienced in the Global South. Again this relates to both negative (everyone in the north is greedy and powerful) and positive (everyone in the Global South is poor and powerless) stereotyping and to their emotional reaction and how they empathise with the feelings of those who are living with such disadvantage. In fact, several discussions demonstrated a high level of appreciation of the role of empathy in resolving conflict. However, while in one focus group there was confident discussion about prejudice in *Romeo and Juliet*, between the Montagues and the Capulets, indicating ease of applying the relevant principles and concepts across different contexts, their application to the political and sectarian divisions remaining in Northern Ireland society was not attempted

in any way, although one reference was made on a personal level:

PUPIL 1: *It's useful when we can see how other people think, if someone was prejudiced towards us we would know how they would feel.* (Controlled Girls' Secondary school)

Empathy was also seen as important in motivating participation in fundraising activities and in reducing racism and sectarianism, although the latter was directly mentioned in only one discussion and the focus quickly moved on to racism, reflecting current concerns in Northern Ireland:

PUPIL 1: *Sectarianism*

INTERVIEWER: *Dealing with conflict? Do you think that is important?*

PUPIL 1: *Yeah.. I think racism is also important cos there is a lot of different coloured people over here and they all get discriminated against.*

(Controlled Girls' Secondary school)

One group expressed a wish to learn more about how people in poor countries survive, are educated and why the world is divided in this way. There was also discussion of prejudice and racism and the need for empathy and conflict resolution skills though this was confined to one group.

Impact on behaviours

The most prevalent behavioural changes mentioned were the traditional fundraising and charity related activities as well as recycling and energy saving, which tended to be done both in school and at home. Charity related activities and fundraising were usually either associated with an NGO, such as Amnesty International, or a national campaign, such as Comic Relief, or they

focused on the school level where funds were raised for a specific partner school.

PUPIL 1: *We went to Mass one day with our teacher and on the way out we were allowed to take a wee envelope and when we got back to class we were allowed to make them a wee Trócaire box* (Maintained Primary school)

There was some indication of differences in the data that seemed to reflect the traditional divisions between the two main communities in Northern Ireland. For example, in relation to the charities mentioned, Trócaire and Concern were referred to by pupils in the Maintained sector and these are traditionally more associated with the Catholic Church and an Irish identity than the UK-wide campaigns mentioned by pupils in Controlled schools, such as Comic Relief or Red Nose Day (McMurray, 2010).

Energy saving and recycling were also frequently mentioned, both at school and at home, although clearly most participants had limited capacity to change parents' behaviours, while at least one was able to describe a highly environmentally friendly home context as a result of his parents' activities:

INTERVIEWER: *Have any of you changed anything you do as a result?*

PUPIL 1: *Umm only a little bit. My mum always recycles a lot of stuff because we get the bin thing...bin recycling*

PUPIL 2: *If you're not like using...like if something is plugged into the wall and switched on, if you are not using it, just switch it off.*

INTERVIEWER: *Anybody else doing anything differently?*

PUPIL 3: *Umm we already got solar tubes on the roof, we got a wood pellet boiler instead of an oil burner.* (Controlled Grammar school)

There was some discussion of Fair Trade goods being promoted by the school, and in general this was thought by the pupils to be a good thing, although the following indicates that there may be limits on the extent to which participants may be willing or able to modify their behaviour in this regard:

INTERVIEWER: *Have you ever heard of Fair Trade? [All: Yes] What have you heard about it?*

PUPIL 1: *It's about when people in the other country get a fair price for the goods they produce.*

INTERVIEWER: *And do you think that is positive?[two participants say yes] Would it be something that you would be looking out for?*

PUPIL 1: *Yes but not all products have Fair Trade on them. You can't always just [...] like some things you buy aren't Fair Trade but you don't have the option of going for it. But if it is there, yeah. (Controlled Grammar school)*

Motivations for this active participation included fun (many of the fundraising activities were designed with this in mind), feeling good about oneself as well as making a difference, or helping those in need:

PUPIL 1: *Like every year we have a special day where you bring in money to...*

PUPIL 2: *Last year we had a rock n' roll day!*

INTERVIEWER: *And what do you think about all of these charity days?*

PUPIL : *They are really fun.*

INTERVIEWER: *They are good fun.*

PUPIL : *Yeah*

INTERVIEWER: *Do you think they make a difference? [All: Yeah] In what way?*

PUPIL : *Because you don't have to do any work [laughs]*

INTERVIEWER: *So that's difference for you?*

PUPIL : *Yeah [laughs]*

INTERVIEWER: *Do you think it makes a difference for those people who get the money?*

PUPIL : *You can save all those lives and...*

PUPIL : *They get more medicine.*

PUPIL : *And they are getting the money to buy stuff. (Controlled Primary school)*

The above illustrates some important aspects of the theme in that the fun and the appreciation of a day away from academic work are clearly not altruistic motivating factors, and the simplistic relationship between aid and saving lives which is implicit in the conversation does not demonstrate a critical perspective, but again perpetuates stereotypical and postcolonial constructions of the distribution of wealth, power and agency between the global north and south. Activities such as fundraising and recycling would seem to be relatively innocuous and easily incorporated into school activities, not controversial in terms of parental or classroom management perspectives, and from a critical perspective may represent a relatively 'soft' approach to teaching of the Global Dimension, and hence limited in what may be learned.

Future intentions

When asked about political activism and future political participation, participants agreed that they were sceptical about the power of political participation to change things, viewed politicians as unable to change things and as untrustworthy, and largely viewed politics as lacking in transparency and hence perhaps in relevance to their lives:

PUPIL 1: *Politicians should get out to the people...they say that they are going to make a change and get*

on with these parties but whenever it comes to elections they are all badmouthing each other.. so like it's mixed signals.

INTERVIEWER: *Do you mean politics in Northern Ireland or generally?*

PUPIL 2: *Generally.*

INTERVIEWER: *So do you all think that most politicians aren't much use?*

PUPIL 3: *Gordon Brown, like everybody saying he's not done all this good stuff.. where like a couple of months ago they were saying he was brilliant, cos their debts are coming on they are looking for somebody to change... cos like they are looking for someone, like to blame it on.*

PUPIL 1: *They may be good but they just need to get their thoughts to us, let us know what they are actually trying to do... so that we are not all confused. So they probably are all good but I would like to know more about what they are actually trying to do.*
(Controlled Girls' Secondary school)

Some participants wanted to visit other countries as a result of having learned about them, because they found what they knew to be exciting, the weather to be warm and the people to seem friendly. However, for the majority their holiday experience abroad had been limited to tourist destinations and package holidays which had not afforded them the opportunity to experience the culture or the people. One participant had visited India and had found the experience uncomfortable in that seeing poverty and suffering first hand had been a shock. A few mentions were made about passing on what they had learned to their children and making the world a better place, preserving the planet for future generations etc.

Participants also mentioned continuing to donate or work for charities in the future would make them feel good about themselves.

Phase Two: Pupil Focus Groups

Focus groups with the same groups of pupils a year later indicated consistency in the findings, as well as some changes over the course of the year². Findings are organised for Primary and Post-primary focus groups to allow for differing complexity in responses.

Primary school findings

A charitable focus

Unprompted, the Primary pupil focus group discussions centred on similar issues to those which were evident in the initial stage of the research. Pupils had, over the course of the school year, learned more about the natural world (volcanoes, mountains), the environment (global warming, recycling), History (Vikings, Stone Age, World War II) and other countries and cultures (Spain, India):

PUPIL: Yeah we did different topics about travelling around the world every week. (Controlled Primary school)

As in the previous focus groups, again there was a strong focus on current events (e.g. earthquakes, Haiti appeal) and charity efforts to assist those affected by them. In fact, most of the pupils' understanding of how they could change the world centred around charity for those in need whether in their own country or

² Except for one primary school where follow-up focus groups could not be arranged.

abroad, and whether due to poverty, global warming or natural disaster:

INTERVIEWER: *Does it make a difference for people elsewhere in the world?*

PUPIL: *Like poor people?*

INTERVIEWER: *(makes noise of encouragement) Like poor people*

PUPIL: *You could recycle your clothes and they go to the poor people-*

PUPIL: *You could bring them to-*

PUPIL: *To a charity shop, you could bring them into the charity shop*
(Maintained Primary school)

Activism

In contrast to their enthusiasm for charity as a way of alleviating suffering, there were limits to the pupils' willingness to change their behaviours, for example while most talked of more recycling and switching off lights, they were much less willing to address global warming by walking instead of using the car:

INTERVIEWER: *And would you walk more now? Would you say to your mum, don't drive me to school I'd rather walk?*

PUPIL: *No, I say that I'd rather drive. (general laughter)*
(Controlled Primary school)

In terms of the knowledge and attitudes that the Global Dimension aims to foster, there was a general feeling of appreciating their own good fortune evident in some of the discussions:

PUPIL: *It kind of makes me feel more lucky, sometimes you feel like you are not lucky but then you realize that you are because compared with what other people have to do. (Controlled Primary school)*

However, across the groups there was little indication of having developed across the school year in terms of attitudes to racism or sectarianism, and most responses to prompts around issues of conflict were limited to or at least started with World War II, which was briefly related to current conflict in Pakistan in a Controlled Primary school group, and the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq in a Maintained group. There was, however, a strong sense that the pupils had learned a lot about diversity and the world in a general sense, for example one group mentioned a Human Rights based visit by the NSPCC and another related Human Rights to different religions:

PUPIL: *Like people having their own rights.*

INTERVIEWER: *People have their own rights (makes noise of encouragement)*

PUPIL: *That everyone is different, and all that there*

And later in the conversation:

INTERVIEWER: *You learnt about Protestantism (makes noise in agreement). Eh, what did you learn about that?*

PUPIL: *Em (...) that some Protestants believe in God...*
(Irish Medium school)

Some aspects of the GD appeared difficult to grasp, for example despite prompting, the concept of interdependence caused some confusion in one group which failed to connect issues such as litter, recycling and saving energy to people in other countries, and there was a sense of despair at the enormity of the task of addressing environmental issues:

PUPIL: *It's dying, pollution and all...*
(Maintained Primary school)

However on a more encouraging note, there was agreement in most of the groups that they had learned much over the

last year and that this included respect for other people:

INTERVIEWER: *So do you think, over the past year, did all this learning, did you learn loads of stuff in school about other countries and places?*

PUPIL: *Yeah.*

INTERVIEWER: *I mean did that, did that make you think differently about the world?*

(ALL PUPILS): *Yeah.*

INTERVIEWER: *In what way?*

PUPIL: *Everyone's the exact same.*

PUPIL: *Everyone had something in common.*

INTERVIEWER: *Everybody has something in common (makes noise of encouragement).*

PUPIL: *That even when someone looks different, that it means ()*

INTERVIEWER: *(makes noise of encouragement).*

PUPIL: *If they're disabled, or Jewish, they're still the same, they're still people.*

PUPIL: *Treat them, like treat people the same as ourselves.*

(Irish Medium school)

Post-primary findings

As with the Primary pupil focus groups there was a strong sense that much had been learned since the previous sessions. Pupils reported a range of topics that included the global fashion industry, gold mining, volcanoes, earthquakes, sport, tourism, elections, euthanasia, abortion, Fair Trade, racism and Human Rights. Once again these were addressed across a full range of subject areas.

Critical perspectives

There was clear evidence in most of the Post-primary focus groups that pupils were

developing a more critical perspective on their own environment, which in some cases was directed at the school. One group in a Controlled Secondary school discussed the perceived shortcomings of their School Council, which they believed to be relatively ineffective due to the power held by the teachers. However, criticisms were also raised about the extent to which teachers modelled environmentally responsible behaviour:

PUPIL: *Even when we are in Geography and it is 12 o'clock in the day, she [the teacher] turns on the lights. (Maintained Grammar school)*

A critical perspective was also evident in the ability of some, but not all groups, to consider several ways of looking at particular issues in their discussions, for example the same group went on to discuss sweatshop labour:

PUPIL: *But if these companies started losing money would they not start to pay their workers less? I think maybe they would, I don't know.*

PUPIL: *Yeah they would, or up their prices.*

PUPIL: *Well yes if less and less people bought from the sweatshops then there would be no demand for the sweatshops, so there would be no sweatshops and no one would have any jobs!*

(Maintained Grammar school)

Political awareness

There was much more discussions around political issues in the Post-primary groups than in the Primary, and these often reflected issues of difficulty in understanding politics in general, feelings of powerlessness related to being too young to vote, and the impression that politics in Northern Ireland is an additional burden of understanding for them to tackle:

PUPIL: *I don't agree that we are too young, I think we could make a change but ... what... you see these things on the news or you see them in your text book that has happened to other countries and you always feel unless it happens to you, you don't ever think it is going to affect you. And a lot of the time it doesn't, like we were learning about politics in our citizen classes and we were learning about the three English parties which are all in the [election] debate but really it was a bit irrelevant to us here because firstly we don't vote and second of all we can't vote for them anyway because we have a completely different set over here. So it is trying to find, to find.... learning about politics and the way government and society treats people, and treats people fairly it is a very difficult thing to do. It is very difficult especially because there is not really a lot we can do.*

PUPIL: *None of the things decided here at politics here at Stormont it's not quite... if... they can't make decisions about things like tax or how much money, and these things are quite important if people in Northern Ireland are to start to get going again, because I think it would be quite hard.*

(Maintained Grammar school)

However, similar remarks were made in relation to History, while there was a sense in some of the groups that it was important to know 'your own country's history' there was also agreement that it was easier to relate to relatively recent history that they could ask their parents about. There was also general agreement across groups that knowledge about the distant past, such as the ancient Egyptians,

was relatively unlikely to be of any use to them.

Negative effects of a Global Dimension

There was discussion in several groups in both phases of the study of how knowing more about other countries can deter one from visiting these, for reasons such as natural disaster, poverty, disease, lack of food, oppressive political systems. The Post-primary pupils largely intended to confine their future travel to interesting places, with lots of nice food and warm weather:

PUPIL: *Yeah. Because like, if you go to Africa or somewhere where's there's no food and stuff, and it's really like, bad you don't wanna go there because you know there's no food. And you want to go like, somewhere that's gonna be warm, and like, have loads of food and you know, it's nice. (Maintained Secondary school)*

Human Rights issues

Given the current economic climate there was discussion in several groups of migrant workers in relation to jobs, and here again there was evidence of some relatively balanced discussion, with one group arguing that while migrants may take what they have heard called 'British jobs for British workers' this is an equality issue:

PUPIL: *Yeah, but they're allowed into this country 'cos we're allowed go into theirs. (Controlled Grammar school)*

Most groups were able to discuss Human Rights issues in relation to issues such as racism, child labour, although in one school, pupils had compared a list of adult and children's rights but felt that this had been largely irrelevant:

PUPIL: *But we just got told like, if like anyone didn't have any of them*

like, to speak to the teacher because you should have them, some rights. (Controlled Grammar school)

Activism and change

In contrast to the Primary groups where charity was accepted as a major way in which to address global issues, the Post-primary groups were somewhat more sceptical. While some did discuss the possibility of going abroad to actively help in other countries, others were divided as to whether charitable donations could make a difference:

PUPIL: *Yeah and for a Christmas present it is nice to think that maybe you have done something.*

PUPIL: *Well giving someone a new toothbrush is that really going to make a difference?*

PUPIL: *Well yeah if you were getting nothing and then being given a tooth brush. Or getting your toys and all the rest so that is not a very optimistic view is it?*

PUPIL: *I know but is there not lots of other things that we could use to help them, not just make the best of it, but to get out [of poverty]?*

PUPIL: *We will give them money as well, like.*

PUPIL: *Good oral hygiene is key to a good life!*

PUPIL: *It's not just that, it is all about money exactly.* (Maintained Grammar school)

There was also appreciation of the need for more than individual efforts to effect global change:

PUPIL: *It would be easier to change something locally but you could do something globally but you probably wouldn't be able to do it by yourself you would need everyone.* (Controlled Grammar school)

Attitudes to diversity

In some discussions there was evidence that stereotypes had been eroded and that attitudes to diversity were being challenged in a number of ways:

PUPIL: *Sometimes like, we learned about (Islam) and before some people just assumed things about people of that religion and then we don't like [them].* (Integrated Post-primary school)

It was clear in one instance that attitudes to diversity were being related to subject knowledge in one discussion:

PUPIL: *Like everyone else's DNA is 99.9% similar to everyone else. But we are also learning about how like if it gets mutated somewhere and then they get cancer of some form or anything.*

PUPIL: *Like Chernobyl.*

PUPIL: *Like their children or anything could have extra limbs and stuff.* (Maintained Grammar school)

Summary of qualitative data collected from pupils

There was evidence of a wide range of relevant knowledge in the results from the pupil focus groups, but evidence of critical engagement with the issues, attitudes and behaviours was more limited. Pupils in this sample clearly appeared to enjoy learning about global issues and expressed an interest to learn more, consistent with previous research findings in Northern Ireland (Reynolds, Knipe & Milner, 2004).

Some indications of critical thinking were found but these were few and far between in comparison to the less critical views of the majority of participants, which often provided evidence of stereotypical thinking and perpetuation of Eurocentric assumptions as has been found in the UK

(Davies, 2006), and as criticised by postcolonial theorists (Andreotti, 2006; Roman, 2003). However, the age of the pupils involved may be a factor here and it was clear that the Primary pupils were less well equipped in terms of conceptual frameworks than the Post-primary pupils, as indicated by their lack of discrimination around issues that were and were not related to the Global Dimension. While the developmental stage of pupils appeared to influence the complexity of their conceptualisations, teachers' approaches to the GD and their tendency to avoid more in depth discussions of controversial issues such as conflict (McCully, 2006), as well as the peripheral status of the Global Dimension in many subject areas (Davies, 2006) may also have contributed to this.

In addition, all of the focus groups described what they had learnt and its impact largely in line with what Roman (2003) has termed the 'intellectual tourists' discourse, in that they make brief forays across boundaries to examine the unfamiliar cultures and experiences of 'the other', often in a way that reinforces stereotypical assumptions and moreover in the absence of any introspective examination of the students' own cultural milieu. The conversations also resonated with Roman's 'democratic civilisers and nation builders' discourse in that constructions of aid and charity donation lacked consideration of economic and political inequalities and structures. Andreotti (2006) makes a similar argument and dubs global citizenship education which fails to consider such issues 'soft' as opposed to critical.

There were some interesting findings in relation to differences between groups according to gender and community background, indicating that teachers may need to adopt slightly different approaches taking these factors into account. For example, tackling controversial issues relating to gender equality may feel less

threatening in the context of a single sex environment. However, the critical exploration of gender identities and power relations for both males and females involves a differentiated and contextualised consideration of both positive and negative issues relevant to both genders. While there is hence a need to address issues of gender and culture in all classrooms regardless of composition, clearly different strategies may be required according to context.

Likewise, differences between approaches taken in Maintained and Controlled schools could effectively generate two parallel discourses around the Global Dimension as it relates to citizenship. However, on a positive note the one theme on which most participants were not only knowledgeable but also appreciated the concept of interdependence and had changed their own behaviour was that of the world as an ecosystem. This theme appears to be one which has the potential to be used as a model for the development of a critical perspective more generally within the Global Dimension and within citizenship. However the findings also indicate that one of the major tasks for children and young people in relation to citizenship is the development of their readily accepted conceptions of themselves as inhabitants of a global eco-system into a social identity which incorporates both local and global aspects of citizenship.

Follow up focus groups provided evidence of much learning related to the Global Dimension in the Primary sector, often with a current affairs dimension, with a continued focus on charitable activity, little attention to more contentious issues, and what could be termed a soft approach to the delivery of the Global Dimension. Moreover, pupils had difficulty with concepts such as interdependence and how their own activity may impact on the rest of the world. However the Post-primary groups, while also learning much and

demonstrating a similar focus on current affairs, had developed a more critical awareness, being able to discuss issues in a more balanced way, and were also more sceptical about the efficacy of charity as a way of addressing many global issues such as poverty, child labour etc. It is interesting to note that this critical perspective was also applied to their own environment with issues such as school councils and teachers' behaviour being a focus for their debates in some cases. While there was little evidence of major attitudinal or behavioural change, there is a suggestion that as they move through the school system pupils in this research are developing some of the knowledge and skills that a Global Dimension in Education aims to foster.

Pupil Survey

Methodology

The questionnaire survey was intended to address issues relating to the Global Dimension and designed by the Centre for Global Education (CGE), with some advice from the researchers who also formatted the questionnaire. Sections were thus aimed at measuring themes such as global identity, attitudes to interdependence, environment and sustainable development, diversity and social justice, global economy and trade, as well as human rights. Additional items were included to enquire about the amount of learning about these issues in school, their perceived importance, learning taking place in school in comparison to other areas of life and demographic information. The Millennium Development Goals (Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger; Achieve universal Primary education; Promote gender equality and empower women; Reduce child mortality rate; Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria, and other diseases; Ensure environmental sustainability and Develop a global partnership for development, <http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/bkgd.shtml> accessed 5 October 2010) provided the backdrop for the construction of individual items within these themes.

Primary and Post-primary questionnaires were very similar, though the Post-primary one contained a few additional items, which were deemed difficult to understand for younger children.

Procedure

Ethical approval was granted for the questionnaire survey by the School of Education's Ethics Committee at Queen's University Belfast. Letters with information about the survey and consent forms were sent out to all Primary school principals in

the BELB area and all Post-primary schools in the BELB and NEELB areas. Where no response was received, letters were followed up with phone calls. Where only a small number of schools in specific categories responded to the initial requests, invitations were extended to other board areas (SEELB and WELB). Schools were offered two options, that a researcher would visit the school to hand out questionnaires or that teachers could distribute the survey themselves. All schools availed of the second option and were thus sent copies of questionnaires, parental consent letters and detailed instructions for questionnaire administration. Teachers were asked to return completed questionnaires in an addressed envelope provided.

Sample

A total of 401 pupils took part in the survey, 139 of which were male (35%) and 258 (65%) of which were female. A further three pupils did not indicate their gender on the questionnaire. Over half of respondents (53%) considered themselves to be Catholic, with a further 37% stating they were Protestant. 7% of the sample indicated that they belonged to no religion, with 4% stating 'other' as the religion they belonged to. 'Other' religions included responses such as 'Christian', 'Jehovah's Witness', 'Presbyterian', 'Sikh' and 'Church of Ireland'. Participants came from 22 Primary and Post-primary schools including all main sectors.

Results

In the following data for the pupil survey were analysed using SPSS for Windows. Firstly, results are presented as frequency statistics for the whole group, followed by analyses of statistical tests to explore possible differences relating to gender, age (Primary, Post-primary) and type of school (Maintained, Controlled, Integrated).

Identity

Pupils were asked to rank order from 1 to 5 how much they felt they belonged to a list of social groups (Irish, British, Northern Irish, European, and People of the World).

Ranking for how much each child felt they belonged to the 'Irish' group was quite spread out with 23% saying it was the group they felt they belonged to most, whilst 19% ranked it as the group they felt they belonged to least³. Again, ranking for how much each child felt they belonged to the 'British' group was distributed across the sample. Over half of the pupils (55%) ranked 'British' as the group they felt they belonged to either second or third; with almost 19% saying it was the group they felt they belonged to least. Over half (53%) of pupils ranked 'Northern Irish' as the group they felt they belonged to most, with only 2% ranking it as the group they belonged to least.

A low percentage (4%) of children ranked 'European people' as the group they felt they belonged to most, with the highest percentage (41%) ranking it as the group they felt they belonged to fourth out of the five possible groups. 'People of the world' was ranked as the group that children felt they belonged to least with 41% of those who answered, and a further 20% ranking it as the group they felt they belonged to fourth out of the five possible groupings.

Similar to findings from the representative Northern Ireland Life & Times Survey, which found identification with the category Northern Irish gaining increasing importance among young people over the past ten years, this category proved popular among respondents in this survey. While the category "Northern Irish" has been described as a "common, superordinate ingroup" that unites Catholics and Protestants (Schmid et al., 2009, p. 464) research also indicates

that Catholics' and Protestants' affiliation to this category does not alter their support for a United Ireland and the Union with Great Britain respectively (Trew, 1998). However, superordinate identities such as European and Global Citizen have clearly not replaced local identities in the case of pupils responding to this survey.

Activism: Interdependence and Global Citizenship

Generally, respondents seemed to see the value in activism for change relating to the environment, economy and poverty, and were prepared to change their own life style to make a positive contribution to these issues.

When asked whether people should choose to lead their own lives without worrying about how this will affect those in other countries 58% of pupils either disagreed or strongly disagreed. Similarly, 56% of the sample indicated they agreed or strongly agreed that they need to change some of their attitudes to become a global citizen, whilst 13% did not know whether or not they needed to change their attitudes in order to become a global citizen. A high proportion of the sample (81%) agreed or strongly agreed that they had to look at their own lifestyle and consider how it affects others if they wanted to change the world.

For many of the pupils, there also appeared to be a strong sense of appreciation of their own responsibility in making change. While this shows a commitment to consider global impact and a responsibility to "think global and act local", opposing views from about one third of the sample also indicate a tension between individual liberty and comfort, and global responsibility.

Activism: Environment

In relation to the environment, the vast majority of children (94%) either agreed or

³ For all tables, due to rounding of figures there may be a 1% variation in totals

strongly agreed that recycling rubbish makes a difference for the environment locally and globally. Similarly, a high percentage of children (79%) indicated that they agreed or strongly agreed that saving water makes a difference for the environment.

When the question was posed negatively, 59% of the sample disagreed or strongly disagreed that cycling to school would not make enough difference to be worth the bother. The slightly lower number of respondents being willing to cycle to school may imply that pupils weigh up the inconvenience of such a contribution against its gains.

Activism: Economy

In relation to the economy, about two thirds of the sample (68%) agreed or strongly agreed that buying Fair Trade chocolate helps to improve someone's life. 60% of children indicated that they disagreed or disagreed strongly that if they took part in a demonstration against child labour in other countries, it wouldn't change anything anyway. Further to this, 16% of children indicated that they didn't know whether or not taking part in a demonstration against child labour in other countries would change anything or not. A high percentage of children (84%) indicated that they agreed or strongly agreed that donating money for a country in crisis makes a difference for the people there.

Pupils' responses to the economic questions indicate their assessment of the effectiveness of economic and alternative responses to global poverty. While lifestyle changes are seen as essential to make an impact, they believe most strongly in the effect of charity donations and less so in the impact of demonstrations or fair trade.

Conflict resolution

Respondents were presented with four possible ways to solve conflict between

groups or nations and to rank order them according to their effectiveness.

Pupils' responses strongly indicated a belief in pacifist means with the vast majority of the sample stating that fighting between the countries involved (80%) and other countries getting involved in war (85%) should not be used at all as a way of settling conflict. Instead, a high proportion of the sample (95%) stated that the best or second option for settling conflicts between countries was by having discussions between the countries involved in the conflict. 75% of the sample considered other countries getting involved in discussions to help settle the conflicts between different countries as either the best or second best option. However, 18% of pupils stated that this should not be an option at all, clearly indicating unease with international involvement for some pupils. The survey indicated that the sample was divided over whether or not it was the responsibility of the international community to solve conflicts between groups or nations, with 49% of the sample agreeing or strongly agreeing, and 34% disagreeing or strongly disagreeing with the statement. A similar pattern of responses emerged when asked if it was the responsibility of 'our government' to solve such conflicts, with 34% disagreeing and 36% agreeing that government should be responsible.

The majority of respondents (77%) either agreed or strongly agreed that it is everybody's responsibility to support peace when there is conflict between groups or nations. However, a similarly high proportion of the sample (70%) also indicated that individuals cannot do anything against such conflicts. More than half of the sample (58%) indicated that they disagreed or strongly disagreed that if there is conflict between groups or nations we should leave them to sort it out themselves, while only 26% agreed and 7% agreed strongly with the statement. However,

when asked whether we should leave groups or nations to sort out their conflicts by themselves unless it is advantageous to intervene, there was considerably more agreement. 45% of respondents agreed or agreed strongly with the statement, while 44% disagreed or disagreed strongly.

Responses to the question of conflict resolution clearly illustrate the complexity of the issue with wide consensus on the avoidance of war and the need for discussion between the parties involved, but divided opinions about the intervention of third parties such as the international community. Similar to the pupils' sense of responsibility relating to the environment and the economy, they seemed to accept individuals' responsibility in relation to peace and conflict though they were less optimistic about the impact of individual action. Reflecting the public debates about possible justifications for recent conflict interventions (e.g. in Iraq), there was a tendency for some pupils to consider vested interests as a rationale to intervene in other countries.

Poverty and social justice

Asked about the cause of poverty in many areas of the world, about a third of the respondents did not believe that debts, war, the colonial occupation or history of deprivation were causes of poverty. In contrast, only 10% of respondents did not believe bad governance to be a cause of poverty at all. Bad governance was regarded as the most or second most important cause of poverty by 60% of respondents. This was followed by war (40%), debts (35%), history of deprivation (27%), and colonial occupation (24%). As such, there appeared to be an element of blame attributed to national poverty whereby incompetence in governance was seen as the most important factor contributing to deprivation. Furthermore, about a third of respondents failed to acknowledge contributing factors which

implicate global responsibility for national poverty.

In relation to potential solutions to poverty, 69% of respondents indicated that stopping wars and conflicts was the best or second best way to help poor countries, followed by over half of the pupils (57%) who rated increased trade of goods as the best or second best way. 51% of respondents considered that giving poor countries money or cancelling debts was the best or second best way to help them. 26% of respondents considered that allowing more people to move to rich countries was not a way to help poor countries at all, whilst most other pupils saw it as a possible, but not preferred solution. Reflecting pupils' previous responses relating to a sense of global duty, a high proportion (69%) of pupils indicated that leaving poor countries to sort out their own difficulties was not a way of helping them. Only 6% of pupils considered this to be the best or second best way of helping poor countries.

Despite the belief of many respondents that factors such as debts, conflicts, etc, did not contribute significantly to poverty, they clearly felt that poverty could be alleviated by addressing these factors. While this may appear contradictory, it may also be a reflection of the questionnaire not incorporating a possible solution to poverty which would have addressed bad governance in such countries.

Attitudes to Diversity

Interestingly, questions regarding European and African immigrants produced very similar results. 73% of pupils said any European should be allowed to come to Northern Ireland or Europeans should be allowed to come to Northern Ireland if there are jobs, whilst 72% indicated the same responses for Africans coming to Northern Ireland.

In general, attitudes to immigrants moving into Northern Ireland were very positive with about 40% of respondents stating that they supported free entry to the country. However, a sizeable minority of about a quarter of respondents demonstrated less liberal attitudes to both groups. Given the increased (reported) percentage of violence motivated by racism in Northern Ireland, this underlines the importance and potential benefit of educational initiatives which address diversity at local and at global levels.

Sustainable development

Results clearly indicated awareness of environmental issues at a global scale and an appreciation for the need to protect the environment in general.

70% of the sample either disagreed or strongly disagreed that climate change is nothing new and there is too much fuss about it. 91% agreed or strongly agreed that pollution needs to be reduced to avoid global warming. High proportions of the sample (95%) also agreed or strongly agreed that rainforests need to be protected and that more ways need to be found to grow enough food for everyone.

Human Rights

With regards to attitudes to issues related to Human Rights, there was wide consensus amongst respondents that the suggested improvements would make the world a better place.

The vast majority of participants agreed or strongly agreed that it would make the world a better place if wars and conflicts were stopped (95%), the environment was protected (96%), everyone received an education (96%), proper health care (99%), men and women are treated equally (97%) and children were properly looked after (99%). The only question, which divided opinions referred to redistribution of wealth. Thoughts of whether giving everyone more money to

make the world a better place were evenly distributed, with 46% disagreed or disagreed strongly with this, whilst 48% agreed or agreed strongly with it.

The strong agreement on almost of the issues listed could be seen as mirroring an acceptance of the value framework which underpins Human Rights legislation. However, as with research relating to values in general, people's general agreement with these statements does not provide any indication of their priorities and decisions in situations where there is a conflict of values.

Learning in school

When asked how much they learnt in school about various global issues, the environment and Human Rights were indicated as issues which 45% and 41% of pupils respectively reported they had learnt a lot about.

Learning about people in other European countries, unfair treatment and diversity were indicated by about one third of pupils as topics they had learnt a lot about in school (31%, 34%, 30%). The least number of respondents reported that they had learnt a lot about people in other continents and resolving conflict respectively (20% for each item). In contrast, only 1% of participants indicated that they had learnt nothing at all about the environment in school. 5% of pupils reported they had learnt nothing about people in other European countries and 6% of the sample stated the same regarding learning about diversity and how people live in other continents. While 7% of pupils reported that they had learnt nothing about unfair treatment and Human Rights, 9% stated the same about international trade. The highest percentage of pupils (10%) reported to have learnt nothing about conflict resolution.

When comparing the mean ratings of importance for these issues, Human Rights, unfair treatment and the

environment were seen as most important, followed in that order by conflict resolution, diversity, people living in Europe, people living in other continents and international trade.

Generally, pupils recognised a lot of learning related to global issues taking place in schools and saw these issues as important.

Learning contexts

Learning about global issues was primarily located in school lessons with 89% of respondents reporting that they learnt 'a bit' or 'a lot' in this context. This was closely followed by learning through watching TV programmes and news, which was seen as providing a lot or a bit of learning by 84% of students. The majority of pupils indicated that they learn either a bit or a lot about global issues by talking to parents (77%), to friends (67%) or through self study (68%). While 76% of students reported that they learnt about global issues through presentations in school, only 56% of students reported the same in relation to extra-curricular activities.

Pupils' acknowledgement of a substantial amount of learning about global issues in school is corroborated with this question, and the fact that they perceive most learning about global issues to take place during school lessons clearly underlines the importance of incorporating a Global Dimension in the curriculum.

Behavioural changes

With regards to behavioural changes, pupils reported to have already changed their behaviour relating to the environment (77%), charity work (69%), unfair treatment of others (65%) and international trade (46%). When those pupils who had not yet changed their behaviour were asked if they were planning to do so in the future, the majority of them were hoping to change. Behavioural changes or intentions are thus reported by a majority of pupils. While it

needs to be remembered that self-reported behaviour is influenced by social desirability and other factors and may not be acted out in reality as reported, at the very least it provides further evidence that pupils consider these behaviours as positive and of high value.

Enjoyment and engagement in general

Survey responses clearly indicated pupils' enjoyment of and engagement with global issues with 75% of respondents reporting that they enjoyed it a bit or a lot and 80% stating that they sometimes or often think about how people live in other parts of the world.

Gender differences

All appropriate questions were analysed for potential gender differences using independent sample t-tests or Pearson chi-square tests as appropriate. In the following, only significant results will be reported.

No significant gender differences emerged in relation to identity, except for the category British. In comparison to female respondents, males identified significantly more strongly with being British.

With regards to global citizenship, girls were more likely than boys to agree that they need to look at their own lifestyle if they want to change the world.

To explore participants' attitudes to conflict resolution, responses were recoded into a dichotomous variable with the categories 'possible solution to conflict' (ranked as 1-4) or 'no solution to it'. Significantly more girls than boys indicated that war between countries and other countries getting involved in war were not solutions to conflict. Regarding respondents' perceptions about the responsibility for resolving conflict, in comparison to girls, boys were significantly

more likely to state that countries should be left to their own devices in the case of conflict.

With regards to the causes of poverty, responses were recoded into dichotomous variables with the categories 'cause of poverty' (ranked as 1-6) or 'no cause of it'. Analysis indicated that female respondents were less likely to consider poor countries being badly governed as a cause of poverty than their male counterparts. In contrast, boys were less likely than girls to perceive a history of poverty as a cause of conflict.

A similar recoding procedure was followed for responses to potential solutions for world poverty. The only significant gender difference was in relation to leaving countries to sort their own difficulties, which more girls than boys saw as a solution to poverty.

In relation to inclusive attitudes towards Europeans and Africans, female respondents were more likely than males to demonstrate inclusive attitudes towards Europeans.

Significant gender differences emerged with regards to Human Rights based questions. Females were more likely than males to agree that to make the world a better place everyone should have an education and healthcare, wars and conflicts should be stopped, men and women should be treated equally and children should be properly looked after.

No significant gender differences emerged in relation to the amount of learning about global issues in school and the importance pupils attributed to it, except for male respondents rating learning about international trade as more important than their female counterparts. When asked where pupils had learnt about global issues, the only significant gender differences emerging were in relation to girls reporting that they had learnt more by talking with friends and self study than boys.

In relation to behavioural changes, girls were more likely than boys to report that they had already changed their behaviour towards charity work and that they were planning to do so in the future. Additionally, more girls than boys responded that they wanted to change their behaviour relating to unfair treatment of others in the future.

Age Differences

All appropriate questions were analysed for potential differences between responses given by Primary and Post-primary children using independent samples t-tests or Pearson Chi-Square. In the following, only significant results will be reported.

In relation to respondents' attitudes to the environment, Primary school children were significantly more likely than Post-primary pupils to agree that recycling rubbish and saving water would make a difference around the world and that rainforests need to be protected. In general, younger pupils were more likely than the older children to agree that protecting the environment was a way of making the world a better place.

Younger children were also more likely than their older counterparts to agree that to make the world a better place children needed to be looked after properly and that demonstrating against child labour would make a difference. In contrast, Post-primary pupils were more likely than their younger counterparts to agree that treating men and women equally would help to make the world a better place.

For pupils' ratings of best solutions to conflict, responses were recoded as dichotomous variables according to whether or not they viewed a strategy as a possible solution. In contrast to younger respondents, older children were significantly less likely to see war as a solution. When asked if conflict should be solved by discussions between the

countries involved, Post-primary pupils were more likely than Primary pupils to propose this as an option.

Pupils' rankings of the causes of global poverty and its possible solutions were recoded in the same way as described above, and differences between Primary and Post-primary children were explored. Older children were significantly more likely to regard war and debts as causes of poverty than younger children. In contrast, younger children were more likely to discard bad governance as a cause of poverty than older children. When asked to indicate possible solutions to global poverty, older children were more likely than younger respondents to state that giving poor countries money, increasing trade and stopping wars were possible solutions. In contrast, older children were significantly less likely to consider allowing people from poor countries to move to rich states as a solution.

Younger pupils were more likely than older children to agree that giving everyone more money would make the world a better place.

When asked about their thoughts on people coming from other European countries to live in Northern Ireland, Primary school pupils were more likely than Post-primary pupils to say that everybody should be allowed to come.

Significant differences were found between Primary and Post-primary responses in relation to how much learning about global issues took place in school. Post-primary pupils indicated more learning than Primary pupils with regards to international trade, Human Rights and unfair treatment. Younger children stated that it was more important to learn about the environment and how people live in other European countries as well as in other continents than older children.

When asked about where they learnt about global issues, younger pupils reported they had learnt more through

extracurricular activities, looking things up in their own time and by talking to their parents than Post-primary pupils. Post-primary respondents however, were more likely than Primary school respondents to say they learnt by talking with friends.

In comparison to older respondents, younger children were more likely to state they had already changed their behaviour towards the environment and charity work. In addition, younger children were more likely than their older counterparts to indicate that they plan to change their behaviour in relation to the environment, international trade and unfair treatment in the future.

Primary pupils were more likely than Post-primary pupils to indicate that they enjoy learning about global issues and that they often think about how other people live around the world.

Denominational school type differences

Analysis of variance (ANOVA) or Pearson chi-square tests were carried out to investigate potential differences between pupils from Controlled, Maintained and Integrated schools. In the following, only significant results will be reported.

In relation to the ranking of pupils' identification with the categories Irish, British, Northern Irish, European and World Citizen, results indicated significant differences between the groups for all of the variables, except identification as European. As to be expected, post hoc analysis indicated that pupils from Maintained schools were more likely to associate with the category Irish and less likely to identify with the category British than pupils from Controlled or Integrated schools. In comparison to pupils from Maintained schools, pupils from Controlled schools were significantly more likely to identify as Northern Irish but less likely to identify as World citizen.

Significant differences were also found in relation to attitudes to global citizenship. In comparison to pupils from Controlled schools, pupils from Maintained schools were significantly more likely to agree that they had to change their attitudes to become a global citizen and to look at their lifestyle if they wanted to change the world. Regarding ways of settling conflicts between countries, a significant difference emerged between denominational school types for one of the variables. Pupils from Integrated Schools were significantly less likely to regard other countries' involvement in discussions as an option than pupils from Controlled and Maintained schools.

Significant differences between Controlled and Maintained schools in particular were apparent in response to questions about the responsibility for conflict resolution. In comparison to pupils from Controlled schools, pupils from Maintained schools were more likely to view the international community, the government and every individual as responsible for solving conflict and supporting peace. On the other hand, pupils from Controlled schools were more likely than their counterparts in Integrated and Maintained schools to agree that individuals cannot do anything to contribute to conflict resolution worldwide.

To analyse questions regarding the assumed causes of poverty, responses were recoded into dichotomous variables with two categories ('not a cause of poverty', ranked cause of poverty). Results revealed significant differences between responses from pupils from Controlled, Maintained and Integrated schools. Respondents from Controlled schools were more likely to consider a lack of resources and a history of poverty as possible causes of poverty. When asked about solutions to global poverty, pupils from different school types did not differ significantly in their responses.

Significant differences were apparent on the issue of people from other European countries coming to live in Northern Ireland. In comparison to their counterparts in Controlled and Integrated schools, children from Maintained schools were more likely to indicate that everybody from other European and African countries should be allowed to live in Northern Ireland.

Significant differences emerged in relation to pupils' responses to the environment. Pupils from Maintained schools were more likely than pupils from Controlled schools to agree that recycling makes a difference to the environment, and were also more likely than pupils from both Controlled and Integrated schools to agree that saving water makes a difference to the environment. In contrast, pupils from Controlled schools were less likely than pupils from Maintained and Integrated schools to agree that it is important to reduce pollution in order to avoid global warming, and that there has been too much fuss about climate change.

Analyses indicated few differences between pupils from different school sectors regarding Human Rights related issues. In contrast to pupils from Controlled and Maintained schools, those from Integrated schools were less likely to agree that proper health care for everybody would make the world a better place. Additionally, pupils from Maintained schools were significantly more likely than respondents from Controlled schools to agree that equal gender treatment and donating money for countries in crisis would make a difference.

When asked about the amount of learning about global issues in school, pupils from Maintained schools were more likely than pupils from Controlled and Integrated schools to indicate that they learnt a lot about other European countries and Human Rights. Pupils from Maintained schools were also more likely than pupils from

Controlled schools to report that they learnt about unfair treatment in school.

When asked how important they regarded learning about these issues in schools, respondents from Maintained and Integrated schools rated learning about African countries and diversity as more important than their counterparts from Controlled schools. In comparison to Controlled school respondents, pupils from Maintained schools also rated learning about other European countries, Human Rights and unfair treatment as more important. Additionally, Integrated school participants saw conflict resolution as more important than those from Controlled schools.

Tests revealed no significant differences between school types for responses relating to where students learnt about global issues, except for those questions referring to school learning. In comparison to students from Controlled and Integrated schools, those from Maintained schools reported that they had learnt significantly more during lessons and presentations in school.

Pupils from different types of schools differed significantly in their report of behavioural changes relating to global issues. In comparison to pupils from Controlled and Integrated schools, pupils from Maintained schools were significantly more likely to state that they had already changed their behaviour in relation to the environment, international trade, unfair treatment of others and charitable work. In relation to future behaviour, no significant differences emerged.

Summary of pupils survey results

In general, the findings from the pupil survey reflect previous research on children's interest and concerns, which shows that children and young people are motivated to learn more about global

issues, concerned about them and willing to engage actively in change to make the world a better place (Davies, 2004, Holden, 2006).

Current survey findings do not support the idea that the Global Dimension as implemented in educational practice promotes the development of a superordinate global identity which may bridge community divisions. While identification with the shared category "Northern Irish" proved to be popular amongst pupils, it may be debatable to what extent this category actually unites pupils in their political and cultural affiliations (Trew, 1998). In the case of pupils responding to this survey, superordinate identities such as European and Global Citizen have clearly not complemented or superseded local identities and thereby the Global Dimension may not achieve its theoretical potential to positively impact on community relations in Northern Ireland.

In general, attitudes to immigrants moving into Northern Ireland were very positive and did not differentiate between people of European and African origin. However, a sizeable minority of respondents demonstrated less liberal attitudes to both groups. Given the increased (reported) percentage of violence motivated by racism in Northern Ireland (Jarman & Monaghan, 2004), this underlines the importance of educational initiatives which address diversity at local and at global levels.

There was clear evidence for pupils believing in pacifist means of conflict resolution. Responses to the question of conflict resolution clearly illustrate the complexity of the issue with wide consensus on the avoidance of war and the need for discussion between the parties involved but divided opinions about the intervention of 3rd parties such as the international community. Similar to the pupils' sense of responsibility relating to the

environment and the economy, they seemed to accept individuals' responsibility in relation to peace and conflict though they were less optimistic about the impact of individual action. Reflecting the public debates about possible justifications for recent conflict interventions (e.g. in Iraq), there was a tendency for some pupils to consider vested interests as a rationale to intervene in other countries.

There appeared to be some naivety in pupils' understandings relating to the causes of global poverty and an element of blame attributed to national poverty, whereby incompetence in governance was seen as the most important factor contributing to deprivation. Furthermore, about a third of respondents failed to acknowledge contributing factors which implicate global responsibility for national poverty. Despite the belief of many respondents that factors, such as debts, conflicts etc, did not contribute significantly to poverty, they clearly felt that poverty could be alleviated by addressing these factors. While this may appear contradictory, it may also be a reflection of the questionnaire not incorporating a possible solution to poverty which would have addressed bad governance in such countries.

Results indicated support for values underpinning Human Rights frameworks and pupils seemed to see the value in activism for change relating to the environment, economy and poverty and expressed a strong sense of appreciation of their own responsibility in making change, especially in relation to the environment. While this shows a commitment by many to consider the global impact of action and a responsibility to "think global and act local", opposing views from a minority of the students also indicate a perceived tension between individual liberty and global responsibility.

Generally, pupils recognised a lot of learning related to global issues taking place

in schools and saw these issues as important. Pupils' perception that most of their learning about global issues takes place during school lessons clearly underlines the importance of incorporating a Global Dimension in the curriculum.

Results indicated few systematic gender differences. However, there appeared to be a slight tendency for girls to demonstrate more favourable attitudes to peaceful conflict resolution, diversity, and actions which may be initiated globally to improve living conditions around the world as well as actions they might undertake themselves. While educational curricula addressing national and global citizenship have been criticised theoretically for potentially reproducing gender inequality and failing to prioritise gender injustices (e.g. Arnot, 2009), empirical evidence on gender differences relating to citizenship related attitudes and behaviours are mixed. Based on the findings of the IEA International Civic Education study conducted amongst 14 year olds in 28 countries, Torney-Purta et al (2001) conclude that gender differences are negligible in relation to civic knowledge though considerable in relation to some attitudinal dimensions, such as group rights etc. In terms of activism, research indicates women to be more active at local and less so at national level (Pizmony-Levy, 2006). As such, a lack of consistent gender differences revealed in this survey reflects wider research findings.

Survey findings indicated clear age differences with younger children expressing more optimism about the effectiveness of individual and collective activism than older children. In contrast, older children appeared to be less naive in their views and better able to understand more complex issues relating to interdependence.

While it needs to be remembered that this survey was not representative and does not allow for generalisations across

school sectors, evidence from this survey indicated a consistent pattern of differences between the denominational school types involved in the study relating to reported learning associated with the Global Dimension. Overall, pupils from Maintained schools reported significantly more learning about global issues and expressed more positive attitudes towards these than pupils from Controlled and Integrated schools. If this pattern was to be found to be more generally present in the school sectors, it could reflect the school type's ethos and approach to global issues. Qualitative findings clearly indicated that Maintained school teachers saw the Global Dimension as an extension of the charitable and missionary Catholic ethos of their schools, although this was often limited by a colonial and/or uncritical perspective on North/South relationships, which was also found in other school types. In contrast, even though these dimensions were not captured with the questionnaire survey, interviews showed that many Controlled school teachers prided themselves on having established extensive networks of international links with other schools, within Europe and beyond, and highlighted the multitude of opportunities offered for pupils to widen their horizons and to develop personally, socially and, in particular, academically. Interviews with teachers in Integrated school revealed that the Global Dimension here was seen as an extension of their community relations work beyond the borders of Northern Ireland, which they regarded as an opportunity to enable pupils to understand the political and social situation in their own country through the exploration of international examples. Quantitative and qualitative data gathered in this research thereby complement each other and reflect previous research findings which indicated that Controlled schools generally take a relatively neutral stance with regards to values education and emphasize academic

achievement instead, while the other two school sectors explicitly subscribed to Catholic or Christian values respectively (Montgomery & Smith, 1997).

The common curriculum for Northern Ireland assumes that all Primary and Post-primary school sectors entitle pupils to the same learning and the current findings indicate that this may not be the case in relation to the Global Dimension. Unless such differences in learning across school sectors are addressed, the Global Dimension may in fact have no impact on, or even may potentially increase divisions between communities in Northern Ireland, rather than ameliorate them. Furthermore, given that the Global Dimension does not appear to promote the development of a global, superordinate identity for pupils it may fail to achieve its theoretical potential to bridge divided local community identities and thereby to promote a sense of unity and peace.

Conclusions

The research aimed to monitor and evaluate teaching and learning related to the Global Dimension in Northern Ireland primary and post-primary school sectors. The objectives therefore were:

1. To identify organisational strategies employed by schools and teaching strategies and resources perceived as beneficial for learning.
2. To explore teachers', student teachers' and pupils' understandings of the Global Dimension and their attitudes to related issues.
3. To investigate the extent to which pupils learn about issues related to the Global Dimension in schools and to compare this to their attitudes and reported activist behaviours.

The research employed qualitative and quantitative research methods and focused on teachers and pupils. It thus involved interviews and focus groups with teachers as well as focus groups and a questionnaire survey with pupils. Using a two-phased approach the research explored potential changes over time as the introduction of the revised curriculum, as well as numerous other educational initiatives might alter the prominence and nature of the Global Dimension in schools. Ethical approval for the study was obtained by the School of Education Research Ethics Committee, Queen's University Belfast. In the following, results will be summarised to address the research objectives outlined above.

Identification of organisational and teaching strategies and resources perceived as beneficial for learning relating to the Global Dimension

The Global Dimension was perceived as highly relevant to teaching and learning as understood by many teachers in schools participating in this research. There was clear evidence from teacher interviews and focus groups that there was much relevant and valuable work carried out in schools under the banner of the Global Dimension. However, it needs to be noted that the initial recruitment of schools for the research proved to be difficult. Responses from principals indicated that there was confusion about the expected role and prominence of global issues in the curriculum; this confusion compounded by a lack of time for additional initiatives due to the implementation of the revised curriculum meant that many schools were reluctant to participate in the research. As such, the findings are likely to over-estimate the involvement of schools in the Global Dimension, as it is likely that those schools which agreed to participate are more concerned with such issues than those which declined.

With regards to their approach to the Global Dimension, the research indicated that some schools employed a structured approach, although most adopted an ad hoc approach to the implementation of the Global Dimension in the curriculum.

Curricular links were clearly highlighted (e.g. *The World around us* or *Learning for Life and Work*) and, in Post-primary schools, subject links (*Local & Global Citizenship*, History, Geography). Additionally, it was evident that subjects traditionally less associated with the Global Dimension were also included (e.g. Physical Education). While teachers and students teachers put forward a more integrated view of the Global Dimension in the primary sector, where the *World around us* was

seen as a basis for all teaching ranging from literacy to values education, in the Post-primary sector there was more consideration of how the Global Dimension fitted into specific subject areas; consistent with the structure of the Primary and Post-primary curricula. This is in line with an evaluation of good practice relating to sustainable development in Northern Ireland's schools, which found that interconnected and cross-curricular learning relating to the environment was more effective in Primary than in Post-primary schools and that *PDMU* and *Local and Global Citizenship* were highlighted as particularly relevant areas for the Global Dimension (Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI), 2010).

In many schools, specific projects (such as Comenius, International School Awards etc) catalysed a focus on the Global Dimension into the curriculum. In some cases, individuals' engagement in Continued Professional Development (e.g. Citizenship training or a Masters) provided the impetus for involvement, although teachers reported a wide range of backgrounds and training. In the vast majority of cases, teaching about the Global Dimension appeared to be highly dependent on the enthusiasm of individual teachers and this was clearly acknowledged by interviewees. This supports findings from a consultancy project on key stakeholders' views of the Global Dimension in Northern Ireland, which similarly highlights the role of individuals' engagement and motivation in promoting the Global Dimension in Education (GDSNI, 2010). Support from management, the ELBs and from other schools were seen as essential for the effective implementation of the Global Dimension.

Inter-school exchanges were regarded as a focal point for the Global Dimension in many schools, involving a lot of activities, which enthused teachers as much as students. Apart from expected

academic benefits, exchanges with partner schools in Europe and beyond were seen by teachers as an opportunity for pupils to experience other cultures, and to dispel stereotypes. However, there was also evidence that exchange programmes with schools in impoverished partner countries could be fraught with particular difficulties and may actually reinforce stereotypes if not managed carefully, as expectations of teachers often differed and the communication processes were slowed down. Educational resources and training to support teachers and schools to collaborate with schools globally may be particularly useful (see Oxfam, 2007, Najda & Bojang, 2007).

Other schools anchored the Global Dimension in their tradition of charity work and many schools were engaged in a range of fundraising activities as well as collaborations with NGOs. These were seen as opportunities to raise awareness of poverty in the Global South and to engage actively with global issues. However, the research clearly indicated that, unless managed carefully, such approaches can equally have disadvantages and may fail to empower teachers to address issues of global inequality themselves and may reinforce negative stereotypes of the Global South in pupils. Awareness raising of educational resources and training to support teachers and schools are thus crucial to ensure effective teaching and learning related to the Global Dimension, including the DEA (2010) guidance for teachers on fundraising with young people as well as the GDSNI website for tips on working with NGOs. Teachers and student teachers placed high importance on the nature of the school as a factor in what issues they should (or could) address in relation to the Global Dimension and how they would approach these issues. This sensitivity to context is in one sense essential and laudable but may also be seen as limiting the extent to which teachers

believe it possible to take a more critical approach to the GD in their teaching, which would involve addressing controversial issues. At an applied level, lack of time for teaching, researching and reflection was seen as major impediment to implementing the Global Dimension effectively (compare with GDSNI, 2010). Resources were mainly located through internet searches, curricular guidelines and specific initiatives that teachers became involved in (e.g. Rights Respecting Schools, British Council etc). There was no evidence of specific sets of resources that were used consistently throughout the schools. While some teachers reported that resources were relatively easy to find, many teachers from subject areas which are traditionally not aligned with teaching the Global Dimension found it challenging to identify suitable resources. 'The Global Dimension Thematic Unit' for Key Stage 3 developed in collaboration with GDSNI and CCEA for History, Science and Citizenship might therefore be particularly useful, as well as the DEA produced website on the 'Global Dimension in Your Classroom' which offers subject and topic specific information, and the 'Education for Global Citizenship: A Guide for Schools' (Oxfam, 2006). For teachers in Irish Medium and Special Schools resource identification and adaptation presented its own problems, though their approaches and strategies did not differ from those taken in other school sectors. The non-assessed nature of the Global Dimension was seen by some as a sign that the subject may be vulnerable to being replaced by other agendas.

The follow-up interviews clearly demonstrated that the teachers who were involved in the research had varying experiences of delivering the GD over the past year. Influences on their experiences included changes within their own schools, changes in the curriculum, and changes in their own understandings which were sometimes related to training programmes

(e.g. as provided by Global Dimension in Schools NI) or their experience of teaching the GD or the GD related projects. While there was evidence that the increasing emphasis on Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) detracted from areas such as the Global Dimension, many teachers felt that the GD was becoming ever more embedded in the curriculum and accessible to teachers and that pupils.

Exploration of teachers' and student teachers' understandings of the Global Dimension and their attitudes to related issues

There was a high level of awareness and a wide range of relevant knowledge relating to key concepts incorporated in the Global Dimension (e.g. environment, diversity, equality, human rights, etc; DfID, 2005) amongst teachers and student teachers.

Teachers and student teachers viewed awareness raising as the main goal of teaching about the Global Dimension. These narrow expectations were reflected in the limitations of pupils' understandings.

Conceptually, understandings of key issues incorporated under the Global Dimension varied substantially between individuals and schools. This reflects previous research on stakeholders' views of the Global Dimension in Northern Ireland's schools, where a similar range of perspectives was found (GDSNI, 2010). While issues of trade, consumerism and debt appeared to be underdeveloped in the curriculum, there was consensus that environmental issues were important aspects of the Global Dimension which appeared to have a universal appeal in all schools. A recent evaluation of sustainable development education in schools concluded that pupils (and teachers) were able to connect local and global issues and to understand the concept of interdependence (ETI, 2010), this understanding did not appear to transcend

other key concepts related to the Global Dimension. The ease with which teachers addressed complex and sensitive issues relating to the environment and environmental interdependence at a global level could be used to commence the development of models that could be equally applied to other key concepts. Teaching about diversity was generally seen as central to the Global Dimension, but the emphasis on other issues, such as Human Rights, equality and activism, varied. Interdependence was often regarded as a highly complex issue that was (too) difficult to teach to pupils. A lack of interconnectedness between local and global issues indicated that work needs to be done in relation to articulating the relationship between local and global dimensions, especially in relation to controversial issues, such as Human Rights and politics. There appeared to be a dichotomy between those, who regarded addressing different views and conflict as essential, and those, who preferred to concentrate on finding similarities and common humanity. As Bickmore (2007) suggests, teachers may avoid a critical engagement with controversial issues, especially in the context of societal division, which may inhibit the development of links between global and local contexts and, in turn, a more complex understanding of interconnectedness in pupils.

With regard to conceptualisations of equality, social justice and power relations at a global level, there were some critical reflections on North/South relationships and their complexities, as well as some more stereotypical and/or Eurocentric approaches to the Global Dimension, which highlighted the need for charitable action and/or the more developed nature of Western nations. In this sense, many teachers appeared to promote a soft rather than critical approach to the Global Dimension and while this may be appropriate as a first step it is important

to develop more critical engagement in order to ensure that teaching does not promote stereotypical attitudes and reinforce community divisions at a global level (Andreotti, 2007).

Teachers' confidence in tackling controversial issues was improved by teaching practice coupled with opportunities to reflect on implementation strategies, pedagogy and contents, as part of a team or individually, as well as further training focusing on the Global Dimension and its key concepts. These factors appeared to consolidate confidence and to allow teachers to develop more in depth and complex understanding of global inequality and interdependence.

The interviews with teachers indicated some differences in emphasis between school sectors. While very different responses were expected from Primary and Post-Primary sectors, these were not strongly reflected in the interviews, although it was acknowledged that teaching had to be adapted to the pupils' development, especially for very young children in the first few school years. There were, however, differences in approaches to the Global Dimension between denominational school types. As such, in Integrated schools the Global Dimension was regarded as an extension of community relations work and the teaching approach based on an embrace of diversity in general. In Maintained schools the approach to the Global Dimension was centred on their traditional involvement in international charitable work. In Controlled schools, there appeared to be a concentration on the development of international projects and collaborative partnerships with other schools. Different approaches taken in Maintained, Controlled and Integrated schools may reflect societal differences in perspectives on active citizenship and global issues, however, they may also effectively generate parallel

discourses around the Global Dimension for the future.

Investigation of pupils' understanding of the Global Dimension in School and the extent to which they learn about related issues and the relationship of such learning with their attitudes and reported activist behaviours

Pupils in this study clearly enjoyed learning about global issues and expressed an interest to learn more, consistent with previous research findings in Northern Ireland (Reynolds, Knipe & Milner, 2004) and beyond (Holden, 2006). Pupils acknowledged a lot of learning related to global issues taking place in schools and saw this as the most important influence on how they thought about global issues, which clearly underlines the importance of incorporating a Global Dimension into the curriculum.

While pupils clearly demonstrated a breadth of knowledge about global issues, evidence of critical engagement with the issues, attitudes and behaviours was more limited, especially in the younger year groups as expected. As such, learning about global issues and its impact frequently was described in terms of an 'intellectual tourism' discourse (Roman, 2003), in that pupils made brief forays across boundaries to examine the unfamiliar cultures and experiences of 'the other', generally without an introspective examination of their own cultural milieu, which appeared to reinforce stereotypical assumptions. Furthermore, constructions of aid and charity donation thus lacked consideration of economic and political inequalities and structures, thereby resonating with Roman's 'democratic civilisers and nation builders' discourse. However, findings provided some indication of a developmental dimension despite individual differences between pupils; in line with psychological theories of cognitive

development (Piaget, 1972), more critical engagement with abstract global issues became more evident for Year 10 pupils.

Results indicated support for pacifism and values underpinning Human Rights frameworks and pupils seemed to see the value in activism for change relating to the environment, economy and poverty. They expressed a strong sense of their own responsibility in making change, especially in relation to the environment. While this shows a commitment to consider the global impact of action and a responsibility to "think global and act local", pupils also admitted to weighing up their individual liberty and comfort against the perceived benefits of activism.

In general, attitudes to immigrants were very positive although a sizeable minority of respondents demonstrated less liberal attitudes to immigrants of both African and European origins. Given the increased (reported) percentage of violence motivated by racism in Northern (Jarman & Monaghan, 2004), this underlines the importance of educational initiatives which address diversity at local and at global levels.

Current findings do not support the idea that the Global Dimension as implemented in educational practice promotes the development of a superordinate global identity which may bridge community divisions. While identification with the label "Northern Irish" proved to be popular amongst pupils and might provide a shared, unified identity category for both Catholics and Protestants, it may be debatable to what extent this actually unites pupils in their political and cultural affiliations (Trew, 1998). Superordinate identities such as European and Global Citizen have clearly not superseded local identities and given that there was a lack of interconnection between local and global issues in schools in this research, the Global Dimension may not fulfill its theoretical potential to

positively impact on community relations in Northern Ireland.

Survey evidence indicated a consistent pattern of differences between the denominational school types relating to reported learning associated with the Global Dimension. Overall, pupils from Maintained schools reported significantly more learning about global issues and expressed more positive attitudes towards these than pupils from Controlled and Integrated schools. This supports the qualitative findings from teacher interviews which also highlighted school type differences in approaches to the Global Dimension. The common curriculum for Northern Ireland assumes that all Primary and Post-primary school sectors entitle pupils to the same learning and the current findings indicate that this may not be the case in relation to the Global Dimension. While it is not explicitly the remit of the Global Dimension to bridge divided local community identities, it has been proposed theoretically that the development of superordinate global and/or European identities, which may complement and bridge local identities, may ameliorate community divisions and thereby promote a sense of unity and peace. However, unless such differences in learning across school sectors are addressed, the Global Dimension may in fact fail to achieve this theoretical potential.

The research clearly showed that Primary pupils were less well equipped in terms of conceptual frameworks relating to the Global Dimension and more optimistic about the effectiveness of individual and collective activism than Post-primary pupils, who appeared to be less naive in their views and better able to understand more complex issues relating to interdependence. Changes in understandings over time provided an insight into increasingly complex understandings of pupils and teachers, which indicate that, if taught well, the Global Dimension can impact positively

on pupils' attitudes relating to global citizenship, potentially bringing with it both local and global benefits.

Recommendations

Recommendations for Policy

Makers

1. The Department of Education should produce, in consultation with stakeholders, a policy document providing clear guidance for teachers on how the Global Dimension should be implemented through the Northern Ireland Curriculum, including guidelines on effective whole school implementation and advice on its pedagogical, social and economic importance.

(Teachers were generally unsure as to where the Global Dimension fits into their teaching, why it is important pedagogically, and why it is important in an increasingly globalised society. Education sectors clearly differed in their approaches.)

2. The Department of Education, the Council of Curriculum Examinations and Assessment, Education and Library Boards, in conjunction with key stakeholders in the educational sectors and development education organisations, clearly need to continue their efforts towards mainstreaming and awareness raising about the role of the Global Dimension and about resources and training for teachers, in particular with regards to those that are subject specific, and appropriate for particular age and ability groups, as well as for Irish language teaching.

(Teachers were often unclear about the role of the Global Dimension and either found appropriate resources difficult to locate or to sort through and adapt, contributing to inconsistency in implementation.)

3. In all sectors of the education system, Initial Teacher Education and In-Service

Training for teachers in all subject areas should foster a critical discourse about the Global Dimension, including local and global identities, in order to achieve a more consistent approach to its implementation.

(Different approaches across school sectors were evident in the research findings from both pupils and teachers.)

4. Training and support should enable teachers to develop more critical approaches to promoting action beyond work that traditionally has a charitable or school linking focus.

(Unless managed carefully, charitable and school linking approaches did not empower teachers to address issues of global inequality in the classroom and potentially reinforced negative stereotypes of the Global South in pupils.)

5. Training and support should be provided for teachers to empower them to address controversial issues within the Global Dimension and to link the local and the global in order to address gaps in pupils' learning.

(Pupils wanted to learn more about sensitive issues such as global politics and conflict but this was not reflected in their experiences of the Curriculum. Additionally, there was a clear lack of understanding of and critical engagement with interdependence relating to the causes and consequences of global inequality.)

Recommendations for Practitioners

1. In addition to sharing knowledge and good practice within schools, appropriate review processes should be put in place to share experiences with and seek advice from identified professionals and resources (see

references), in order to ensure that their approaches to teaching the Global Dimension are effective in challenging stereotypes.

(While teachers already disseminate information from training within their schools, uptake of services and resources from NGOs was less consistent.)

2. Schools should support teachers, through training and allocated time for critical reflection, in ongoing efforts to address issues such as racism and conflict in the classroom.

(While attitudes to immigrants were generally positive amongst pupils, a significant proportion of them demonstrated negative views. Additionally, pupils reported limited learning about conflict and conflict resolution in schools, but clearly expressed the wish to learn more about these, which emphasises the need for teachers to continue to incorporate such issues.)

3. Teachers experiencing difficulties in teaching the concept of interdependence in relation to key issues such as global inequality should consider their teaching on environmental issues as a model, providing ways of approaching the concept in other contexts.

(While many teachers particularly in Primary schools expressed doubts about the ability of younger children to understand interdependence as a concept, they all reported that teaching about the environment did not present such difficulties and that pupils were engaged by the topic.)

4. Teachers should develop more critical approaches to promoting action beyond work that traditionally has a charitable or school linking focus.

(Unless managed carefully, charitable and school linking approaches did not empower teachers to address issues of global inequality in the classroom and potentially reinforced negative stereotypes of the Global South in pupils.)

5. Teachers should address controversial issues within the Global Dimension and to link the local and the global in order to address gaps in pupils' learning.

(Pupils wanted to learn more about sensitive issues such as global politics and conflict but this was not reflected in their experiences of the Curriculum. Additionally, there was a clear lack of understanding of and critical engagement with interdependence relating to the causes and consequences of global inequality.)

6. In-Service Training providers should incorporate the skills, values, knowledge and understanding in their training that can enable teachers to critically engage with key social and economic issues that underpin globalisation and social inequalities.

(Many teachers indicated uncertainty about what exactly to include in their teaching about the Global Dimension and how to engage with the issues effectively.)

7. Initial Teacher Education Institutions should continue to ensure that student teachers in all disciplines have the opportunity to introduce a global dimension to their teaching practice as part of their Initial Teacher Education.

(Student teachers clearly highlighted the importance of exposure to global learning methodologies and issues while developing their teaching practice.)

Recommendations for NGOs

1. NGOs should put in place appropriate review processes to evaluate and continuously improve collaboration with schools and resources.
(The research indicated variation in perceived provision.)
2. When providing services to schools, NGOs should ensure that educational support provided to teachers is clearly differentiated from support for fundraising activities and that a balance between the two is maintained, thereby increasing the potential for a more critical approach to be adopted.
(Teachers and pupils in some schools regarded fundraising as a major focus for the Global Dimension, thereby neglecting more critical perspectives on global issues.)
3. When providing educational support in schools, where possible co-teaching or team teaching should be encouraged, both to foster the professional development of teachers and to ensure a sustainable level of teacher expertise and pupil learning.
(There was evidence that some teachers lacked confidence and preferred to hand over a class to NGO experts rather than to co-teach.)
4. A coordinated approach to the delivery of educational activities should be taken by NGOs in order to facilitate schools in planning the involvement of NGOs and to avoid duplication of effort and the over-burdening of schools.
(Findings clearly highlighted that many teachers found it difficult to evaluate existing resources and NGO activities and to identify those most relevant to them.)

Acronyms

BELB	Belfast Education and Library Board
CGE	Centre for Global Education
CCEA	Council for Curriculum Examinations and Assessment (NI)
DEA	Development Education Association
DfID	Department for International Development (UK)
DfES	Department for Education and Skills (UK)
ELB	Education and Library Board
GD	Global Dimension
GDSNI	Global Dimension in Schools Northern Ireland
ETI	Education and Training Inspectorate (NI)
ITE	Initial Teacher Education (NI)
NEELB	North Eastern Education and Library Board
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NSPCC	National Society for Prevention of Cruelty to Children (UK)
PDMU	Personal Development and Mutual Understanding
PGCE	Postgraduate Certificate in Education
PISA	Programme for International Student Assessment
PIRLS	Progress in International Reading Literacy Study
SEELB	South Eastern Education and Library Board
STEM	Science, Technology, Engineering and Math
WELB	Western Education and Library Board

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