

# Conceptual and Pedagogical Approaches to the Global Dimension of Youth Work in British Higher Education Institutions

*Momodou Sallah*

De Montfort University (UK)

## **Abstract**

Global youth work (GYW) may be considered as encompassing forms of education with young people which are variously referred to as development education, global citizenship, education for sustainable development, and humanitarian education amongst others. This article reports on primary research in relation to how GYW is conceptualised and addressed in those Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) that deliver youth and community work qualifications across the UK. The research reports specifically on perceived issues of pedagogy, and asks what skills, knowledge and resources are required to deliver an effective curriculum. The article further explores to what extent HEIs are meeting the needs of the field in regards to addressing a global dimension.

The research was based on semi-structured interviews with 43 programme/module leaders in HEIs across Britain, 28 recent youth and community development (YCD) graduates and a focus group comprised of 11 representatives of leading international nongovernmental organisations, HEIs and statutory organisations involved in the delivery of GYW. The research concludes that the conceptualisation of and importance attached to global youth work varies greatly both between and within HEIs. The extent to which current YCD students are enabled to 'think globally and act locally' may be subject to the vagaries of particular tutors' interests. In addition, there is no definitive agreement as to whether lecturers need additional skills to deliver effective GYW training. There is agreement, however, that there is a need for the development of suitable GYW curricula and appropriate learning resources within HEIs delivering youth and community work courses.

**Keywords:** global youth work, global citizenship, development education, globalisation and young people, higher education institutions

## **Introduction**

In this article the author considers the place of global youth work (GYW) within higher education in the UK. The article begins with a consideration of the rationale for the choice of global youth work as the preferred term in contrast to other terminologies that have been used. It is then argued that there are a range of factors, from

a changing balance of economic power in the world, through the current economic crisis, to the motivations of educators themselves that underscore the timeliness of an approach such as global youth work. Three methods of collecting data for this study are then outlined, including the use of individual interviews, focus groups and telephone interviews. The results are discussed in relation to the variability in the manner in which GYW is conceptualised; the uncertainty with regard to the pedagogical approach that should be adopted; whether or not generic or special skills are felt to be required to develop such learning; and the extent to which educators are felt to have both the knowledge and the resources to adequately embrace GYW.

### **Development Education and GYW in British HEIs**

Whilst the research team used the term global youth work for most of the research process, we are aware that it is not a universally acceptable term. In fact what it is called may to a large extent determine how it is understood. We have used the term cautiously yet deliberately, with the understanding that it may be labelled and understood differently by different people from different perspectives.

Fifty UK universities currently deliver training for youth and community workers. According to Young (2006) and Davies (2005), youth work in the UK largely takes an informal approach based on experiential learning, mostly premised on the voluntary engagement of young people. Both authors further argue that youth work is only one of a few professions that works with the whole young person in an informal way based on the voluntary principle. The voluntary principle refers to the choice that young people have in youth work – i.e. whether to engage with youth workers in the youth work process or not. This is in contrast with, for example, formal education or social work where the choice is not necessarily voluntary at all times. This training of youth workers is also very different from teacher training, for example. The former is premised on the voluntary principle, informal and experiential learning and, in the words of Davies (2005), tipping the balance of power in young people's favour. The latter is largely within a formal setup with stricter structures and parents have a legal duty to make sure that their children attend school. Young people can choose both whether and around what issues they may or may not engage with youth workers. On the other hand, the student/pupil is obliged to attend class. They follow a set curriculum and are highly scrutinized through achievements at key stages. It is important to note at this juncture because we later argue that global youth work, based on an informal approach and experiential learning, is different from other kinds of work with young people such as the more structured approach to global citizenship in teacher training. However, some authors have noted a new authoritarianism in youth work, in which the voluntary principle is said to be under attack and the process of youth work viewed as being sacrificed at the cost of meeting outcomes (cf. Jeffs and Smith, 1999; Jeffs and Smith, 2002). This makes a difference to how the curriculum is delivered as well as to the flexibility and informality of praxis.

Development education is the frequently used term for learning about global and development issues. It has its roots in development aid. Bourn argues that: 'Development education emerged from the desire by governments with aid budgets and development non-government organisations (NGOs) to secure greater public understanding and support for international development' (2008: 5). However he further notes that the term development education is constantly questioned as not being in popular educational usage. Teachers either do not know of the term or misinterpret it as just the development of people without any recognition of the global dimension or connection' (Bourn, 2003: 3). This illustrates that there is not one clear understanding of development education, however there is a key definition of what development education is about:

- enabling people to understand the links between their own lives and those of people throughout the world;
- increasing understanding of the global economic, social, political and environmental forces which shape our lives;
- developing the skills, attitudes and values which enable people to work together to bring about change and to take control of their own lives;
- working to achieve a more just and sustainable world in which power and resources are equitably shared. (Bourn, 2003)

Global youth work, on the other hand, addresses how these issues are applied to informal work with young people. Perhaps the most popular definition of GYW captures this the most succinctly: 'Global Youth Work is informal education with young people that aims to encourage a critical understanding of the links between personal, local and global issues. It seeks young people's active participation in bringing about change towards greater equity and justice' (DEA, 2004: 21).

The term global youth work is used here to define how lecturers in the HEIs mentioned earlier train youth workers to deliver a youth work approach which addresses the global dimension. While GYW might have ties with development education, it is additionally connected to and based on the youth work principles of equality of opportunity, education, empowerment and participation. Perhaps the DEA provides a more succinct description of the distinctions between development education and global youth work:

Global youth work is a form of development education. However, what makes global youth work distinct is that it *starts from young people's own perspectives and experiences and develops a negotiated agenda for learning*. Global youth work also focuses primarily on the impact of globalisation in the UK and overseas rather than education about the *development and underdevelopment* of countries. Although it shares many of the values and principles that underpin good youth work, development education often has its own agenda from the outset, linked to specific campaigns or concerns and has historically taken place in more formal educational settings (DEA, 2004: 28; original emphasis).

Youth work is now a graduate profession and this means that all full-time youth workers are required to hold an honours degree from one of the 50 HEIs delivering youth and community work JNC qualifications or their equivalents<sup>1</sup>. The fundamental question, then, is how development education/global youth work or the global dimension is covered in these courses.

### **Drivers for the Delivery of Global Youth Work**

Whilst the term GYW was coined in 1995 (Bourn and McCollum, 1995), its prominence has grown in recent times as a distinct way of working with young people, incorporating both the principles of Development Education and youth work. Global youth work:

- is concerned with how the concept and process of globalisation impacts on young people's realities
- is based on the principles of informal education
- promotes consciousness and action
- challenges oppression and promotes social justice
- is located in young people's realities

(Bourn and McCollum, 1995; DEA, 2004; Sallah, 2008).

There are a number of documents that make reference to or make the global dimension of learning a requirement, most notably the National Youth Agency (NYA) Professional Validation and Curriculum requirements which call for the location of the 'international and global context' in programmes of study (NYA 2007: 17); the National Occupational Standards for Youth Work which encourage young people to explore the 'global context of personal, local, and national decisions and actions' (LLUK, 2008: 15); and the Youth Work Subject Benchmark, which calls on youth work, community education and community development practitioners to 'locate their practice within a matrix of power dynamics across the local, global and faith divides...' (QAA, 2009: 17). These imperatives are also covered in the Department for Education and Skills' *Common Core of Skills and Knowledge for the Children's Workforce* (DfES, 2005)<sup>2</sup>. All of these policy documents place a duty on HEIs to deliver a global dimension in the training of youth and community workers.

As I have argued elsewhere, the need to teach GYW should be beyond the moral and green imperatives and should increasingly be cognisant of the economic and security imperatives. The moral imperative:

'...is doing the 'right thing', it is what our conscience tells us is wrong. If children eat bombs for breakfast in Baghdad and we profit from that then surely that cannot be right. If poor farmers are exploited from other parts of the world so that we can buy bananas at half their real price, then that cannot be right either and it is this sense of injustice that brings about the moral imperative. This can sometimes be linked to the scriptures and the golden rule of doing to others what you would like others to do unto you' (Sallah, 2008: 8).

Furthermore, the green imperative is about protecting Mother Earth due to the destructive impact of escalating carbon emission, depletion of the ozone layer, global warming, exposure to ultra-violet rays and the accelerated rate at which some species are endangered.

I argue that whilst the first two imperatives are well known, the security and economic factors are largely missing from the equation. The economic imperative – particularly in the context of the rise of the Asian giants, China and India (Winters and Yusuf, 2007), and the subprime mortgage crisis leading to a global economic meltdown, house prices in the UK going down by 13.3% in a year at the end of September 2008 (Hopkins and Ramnarayan, 2008) as well as shares plunging across the globe – has a direct impact on young people at the personal and local levels. These impacts might be in relation to unemployment and redundancy, mortgage repossession and even the availability of credit to young people and their parents.

The economy is increasingly global in dimension, and what directly affects the lives of young people includes what happens in other parts of the world, such that, for example, rapid economic growth at the national level of some Asian economies (especially China and India) may alter the political balance of power as well as the economic one. In order to orientate themselves in a changing world, young people need an understanding of how previous European economic strength was at least partially a function of both past colonial relationships and rules of commerce designed to favour the global North. What therefore might currently seem to the young people of the global North as somehow unfair may in fact be the unraveling of previously institutionalized privileges. Unless young people understand how uneven the shares are in growing wealth across the globe, then it is easy for them to become vulnerable to the kind of anti-immigration rhetoric that can mobilize misleading arguments (e.g. why do people still need to migrate when their own country is now doing so well?). The prime minister of Britain, in his letter to the Labour Executive, identified globalisation as one of six priorities that need tackling in building a modern and fairer Britain (Brown, 2007).

Youth work is concerned with young people's personal and social development, is usually locally oriented, and mostly takes place outside of formal structures. It is important to note this because it is informal, largely voluntary and based on experiential learning. As youth work's domain of operation revolves around values and deconstructing reality, it is particularly important that it is a voluntary process of engagement. The acceleration of the process of globalisation since the mid 1990s, as well as the policy documents and imperatives mentioned previously makes it fundamental that the training of youth and community workers addresses the global dimension – in other words, global youth work. Given that youth work is already a graduate profession, it is pivotal at this juncture to explore how it is covered in the curriculum of HEIs.

## Existing Research on Globalisation and Young People

In the next section, I will briefly look at research around globalisation and young people and conclude by identifying gaps that justify this research project. Namely, whilst there have been a number of studies looking at how the global dimension is addressed in the curricula of universities or schools, there have been very few in relation to informal education or specifically within youth and community development education. A survey of 104 business schools within higher education commissioned by the HE21 project (with a 30% response rate), for example, found limited coverage of sustainable development education. Additionally the terminology used was found to be 'unfamiliar and confusing' (Shiel and Jones, 2004: 10). Another study involved interviews with 700 primary and secondary school teacher trainees 'about their knowledge and understanding of, and motivation for, teaching global issues' (Scott-Baumann *et al*, 2003: 15). It found that most of the trainees were knowledgeable and receptive to the global dimension, usually as a result of doing a GAP year, having been abroad, and having friends from other cultures. However, most lacked the knowledge of how to teach it, and were uncertain about what is appropriate to include in classroom teaching. Most of those interviewed called for the global dimension to be embedded in undergraduate or post graduate certificate in education (PGCE) courses.

The imbalance in existing studies also extends to research about professional courses for formal and informal educators. Whilst there have been a number of studies in the field of teacher trainee education which have explored the experiences, skills, knowledge and confidence of trainee teachers to deliver the global dimension (in addition to the above, see for example, Martin, 2004; Robins *et al*, 2003; Davies *et al*, 2004), there have been comparatively few focussed on the HEI youth and community sector. Two exceptions to this are studies by Lashley (1998) and Joseph (2005). Both of these studies attempted to find out how GYW is covered in English HEIs which deliver youth and community work courses. Lashley (1998) examined 15 institutions, out of whom 60% offered GYW sessions, although most of these were one-off sessions, with little opportunity to explore the global dimension in any meaningful depth. The study by Joseph (2005) looked at 9 institutions and concluded that GYW is understood differently by different HEIs. This suggests that one HEI might be covering the issue in a way that raises the political consciousness of future youth workers, and at the same time another might be following curricula that reinforce an understanding of relationships to the global South based on charity and dependency. Both reports conclude that youth and community work courses in England could benefit from more quality resources and external support. The research outlined in this article wanted to go further than these previous studies by involving all four nations of the UK, as well as engaging a wider sample. The aims of the research were:

- To find out how GYW is covered in JNC accredited HE courses.
- To find out the drivers that influence the delivery of GYW.
- To find out what specialist skills, knowledge and resources are needed to deliver GYW and whether lecturers feel they possess them.
- To find out whether the GYW curriculum being delivered in HEIs meets the needs of the field.

Our overall research findings have been themed into the following strands:

- Conceptualisation
- Curriculum
- Motivation
- Pedagogy
- Validation

Due to limited space, for this article we will focus on the conceptualisation and pedagogy themes. The other themes of motivation, curriculum and validation will be covered in greater depth elsewhere.

### Methods

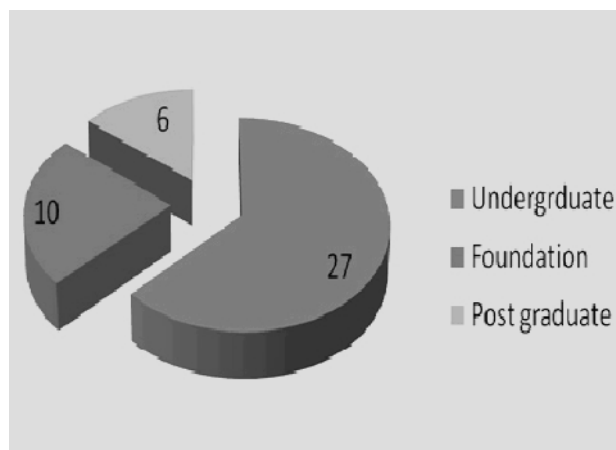
Three complementary strategies were used in order to improve the validity of the research through triangulation. Firstly, 43 individual interviews were conducted with either course or module leaders; this was out of a possible 50 of these professionals across the UK (see Table 1 for geographical distribution). These programme/module leaders/tutors self-identified and took part in semi-structured telephone interviews administered by four research assistants and the lead researcher. Interviews lasted between 20 and 45 minutes. The distribution of the courses across the UK, and their academic level is shown diagrammatically below (Figure 1).

The second element to the overall approach was a focus group discussion comprised of 11 representatives from a range of organisations:

- Two staff from national charities (1 chief executive, 1 manager)
- Two staff from statutory youth services (2 workers)

Institutional Location	Number of Responses	Response Ratio
England	34	79.07%
Northern Ireland	1	2.33%
Scotland	4	9.30%
Wales	4	9.30%
TOTAL	43 Respondents	100.00%

**Table 1: Institutional locations of HEIs interviewed**



**Figure 1: Academic level of HEIs courses interviewed**

- Two staff from universities/training providers (1 principal, 1 senior lecturer)
- Three staff from international organisations (2 coordinators, 1 officer)
- Two final year students

The focus group therefore brought together some of the leading organisations in the third sector, statutory service and HEIs involved in development education/ GYW.

The third approach was semi-structured telephone interviews with 28 recent graduates of JNC or equivalent qualifying courses from 15 HEIs. This was a dimensional sample taking into consideration course level, geographical location, and gender. Eight of these graduates had completed a foundation degree, seventeen did an undergraduate programme, and three did postgraduate programmes.

### Conceptualisation

It is pivotal that we distinguish between terminology and conceptualisation from the onset. Terminology is used here to refer to the descriptive label which is used to describe the domain in question. On the other hand, conceptualisation denotes how it is understood – in other words to what range of activities, processes and topics the domains refer. Whilst the two are not the same, they are inextricably linked together. In relation to terminology, nine of the HEI interviewees called it what can broadly come under the umbrella term of global youth work (including ‘international youth work’ and ‘local and global perspectives in youth and community development’), four called it global education/ awareness, five used terms related to the process and concept of globalisation (including ‘global and international’, ‘managing change in a global context’, ‘globalisation’ and ‘youth in a changing society’), and four referred to what could be themed global citizenship. Nine did not have or identify a name for it, whilst six called it a number of different things which could not be classified into any of the previous headings. Some of



these included 'mission shaped practice', 'cross cultural studies', 'youth identity and globalisation', 'counter hegemonic approach' and Education for Sustainable Development and Global Citizenship (ESDGC; see Welsh Assembly Government, 2008).

The conceptualisation of global youth work also differs from organisation to organisation, including between HEIs. There is some synergy identified by nine of the HEIs who use similar terms to describe it, all of which include the terms youth/ community work and global. This shows a clear understanding of youth and community work within a global context, which is underpinned by youth work processes. This makes it unique from other terms identified, which do not make clear links to the process of youth work/ informal education.

Development education was identified by research participants as being about global education and awareness, although the INGOs also made reference at the focus group to it being based on similar principles to global youth work. Despite this, four of the HEIs interviewed suggested that development education is about knowledge and awareness, but did not mention action and process as might be expected when talking about global youth work.

Within the concept and process of globalisation category, all of the identified terminologies clearly involved both the understanding of the concept and process of globalisation, but made no clear links to youth and community work or to action.

Global citizenship focuses on us being global citizens, including its definitions and implications, but again no clear links were made to action or youth work processes. However, the term 'active global citizenship', for example, might suggest an intention to action. At the same time, global citizenship in general is strongly connected to formal education structures and is widely used within current formal education curricula, rather than being underpinned by youth work's informal education approach. This understanding was confirmed through the discussions in the focus group.

This discussion illustrates that what things are called across the HEI sector varies greatly. It therefore becomes difficult to articulate a lingua franca to which all HEIs subscribe. In addition, this can also be contrasted with the four main terminologies which were identified by members of the focus group who work in the field. These included:

- active/global citizenship
- humanitarian education (used particularly by the British Red Cross)
- Education for Sustainable Development and Global Citizenship (ESDGC)
- global youth work

Based on the discussion above, it can further be argued that what it is called in the field is not commensurate with the terminology used in academia. Out of the four

terms used in the field, the terminology humanitarian education (although mostly used by the British Red Cross) was not mentioned in the interviews with HEIs, although human rights education was mentioned and ESDGC was referred to only once. Active/ global citizenship and global youth work, however, were two of the most popular terminologies in the field.

Two main points can therefore be made in relation to terminology. Firstly, there are significant differences between what it is called in academia as opposed to what it is called in the field, and this needs better synchronisation. Secondly, within HEIs, whilst global youth work is the most popular terminology (from 9 of the HEIs and, significantly, in the focus group), the manner in which it is variously labelled makes it difficult to refer to the same thing. Maybe a better way forward is to focus on the process (i.e. what it is we do in it rather than what we label it as) instead of the terminology used in defining it.

Additionally, a number of criticisms were levied against the use of some of these terms during the focus group discussion. Some of these included the following arguments:

- Active/ global citizenship can be construed as a curriculum area rather than a process; humanitarian education is largely driven by the humanitarian agenda, which can sometimes struggle for congruence with the political nature of education.
- ESDGC can come across as being rooted in the green imperative and wholly dedicated to the environmental agenda, although the UK Sustainable Development Commission clearly identifies sustainable development as more than just this<sup>3</sup>.
- Global youth work was identified by some respondents as being too academic, as well as being open to different interpretations.
- The terminology 'international youth work' can come across as largely limited to international exchanges.

These criticisms of the different terms reveal and demonstrate the complexity of the use of terminology and how this is linked to both understandings and approaches.

Regan argues that 'The process by which we name and define events, places, people and processes is crucial to how we understand and conceptualise them' (1999: 34). In the same way it can be argued that the terminologies used in delineating the domain this author refers to as GYW to a large extent demonstrates and also determines our conceptual understandings and approaches. What has been demonstrated so far is that the process of working with young people to address the global dimension is variously labelled and therefore understood within HEIs and between the field and HEIs differently. Two detailed examples will be given to further illustrate this point.

Firstly, as has been argued before, global youth work is about consciousness and action; gaining consciousness about the personal, local, national and global links and then taking action to redress injustice and inequality. However, the concept used by some HEIs, such as the 'concept and process of globalisation' is mainly about raising awareness and not necessarily taking action to bring about change. Youth and community work is largely premised on informal education and anti-oppressive practice. However, where it is only about raising awareness and not about engaging young people to take action (whether we agree with the resulting action or not), then it is also very differently understood from global youth work as a process, which, in the sense in which it is used in this article, involves both consciousness and action.

Secondly, what something is called dictates or influences how it is understood; for example humanitarian education – as promoted by the International Red Cross Movement – is self-evident and largely operates within its seven basic principles, and especially that of neutrality and impartiality. The principle of neutrality states that:

In order to continue to enjoy the confidence of all, the Movement may not take sides in hostilities or engage at any time in controversies of a political, racial, religious or ideological nature.<sup>4</sup>

This principle clearly protects the Red Cross in its sometimes dangerous and precarious work, but it contradicts the very essence of youth and community work because education, in the words of Paulo Freire, is political in nature (cf. Freire 1993). This means that global youth work operating within the framework of the humanitarian education approach can be problematic for some youth and community work practitioners. Whilst this particular situation is unique to the British Red Cross, it illustrates the significant point that – both in HEIs and in the field – terminology greatly influences conceptualisations. In turn, the various conceptualisations influence how youth and community workers are trained in the UK and invariably how GYW is delivered in youth and community work settings. The document *Education for Sustainable Development and Global Citizenship: A Common Understanding for the Youth Work Sector* (Welsh Assembly Government, 2008) developed in Wales might be a good precursor in developing a lingua franca across HEIs.

## **Pedagogy**

By pedagogy, we refer to the skills, knowledge and resources needed to effectively teach global youth work to youth and community workers across Britain. Whilst we have established that global youth work is called various things and understood differently by different individuals groups, we were also keen to establish whether the HEI staff teams delivering youth and community work qualifications possess these skills, knowledge and resources as well as whether they feel they were meeting the needs of the field. When YCD tutors were asked in the telephone interviews if they

were meeting the needs of the field, 28% replied that, in their opinion, they are meeting the needs of the field; another 28% replied that they are not; and 44% of respondents indicated that they are not sure whether they are meeting the needs of the field in terms of addressing the global dimension. In the focus group discussion, it was suggested that the needs of the field were not being met, but the question was additionally raised as to whether the field itself sees it as a priority.

The data we gathered suggests that whilst the overwhelming majority claim to cover the global dimension, the depth of coverage varies greatly – with some having substantial parts of modules dedicated to it, but about half of respondent institutions not covering it to any great detail or even at all. This has serious implications in that those students who belong to the latter group are the losers in what appears to be a lottery. It can further be argued that some of these institutions are therefore not meeting the Professional Validation and Curriculum Requirements or the National Occupational Standards for Youth Work. This has serious implications for professional standards and for the quality of work with young people that youth workers will be engaged in after receiving their qualifications.

The research also demonstrates that some interviewees from the HEI sector were not clear where the global dimension fitted in or what should be covered within it. To address this gap, one recommendation is that a module template be developed for both undergraduate and post graduate programmes and made available for those who need it to ensure minimum benchmarks of global literacy. Whilst it is not exactly clear at the moment how the mechanics of this might be applied across HEIs in practice, this idea deserves the attention of key stakeholders such as the National Youth Agency, Lifelong Learning UK, and the Training Agencies Group.

## Skills

In relation to skills, there were two views advanced with equal vigour. Some respondents strongly made the point that teaching global youth work required no extra skills to those already possessed by lecturers, and that the skills already being utilised in youth and community courses across Britain are more than adequate. One such view was reflected by a respondent:

'Nothing specific but generic skills for interaction with students... I couldn't think of anything in terms of skills that would be specific to that particular field of study beyond the generic skills that they need to interact well with students in the classroom' (Respondent 1, Q16).

In contrast, other respondents suggested that another set of skills is needed in order to effectively make personal, local, national and global connections:

'It's about being skilled in being able to make those links between the global, international, national, regional and the local... on top of all the other skills you need to be an effective formal and informal educator' (Respondent 16, Q16).

Of the skills both HEIs respondents and the focus group listed as required for the delivery of GYW, only two might not be necessarily found in the teaching of youth

and community work courses. Namely, practical experience of GYW and being able to make personal, local, national and global links. Apart from these two areas, all of the other skills listed – such as informal and experiential learning approaches, being able to locate theory in practice, basing the process on students'/ young people's reality, imagination/creativity, and being able to challenge values and reality – will normally already be found in the realm of youth work. This led us to conclude that the only other set of skills that might be needed in effectively teaching GYW are: the ability to make the connections between different levels, and to be able to mount a practical demonstration of this action. This, however, presupposes a commitment on the part of the educator to global anti-oppressive values and an interest in addressing global injustice and inequality.

### **Knowledge**

In relation to whether members of staff feel that they have the knowledge to effectively deliver GYW, most respondents from HEIs stated that they either already have the knowledge or know where to get it:

'We've got some way to go, we've got some skills (knowledge referred to earlier) in the area but it's definitely not something I would feel ready to go and do here and now... It may well be that we bring in other people to teach that aspect of the curriculum, that might be the way forward for us' (Respondent 6, Q20).

However, it was widely accepted across the research that there is need for up-to-date and broad global knowledge, with over half of HEIs raising it as an issue. Similarly, the main issue identified by the focus group was also the need for up-to-date knowledge. This was because they felt that lecturers need to be knowledgeable and aware of current global events and how these affect both local and national contexts. The respondents from higher education, however, had a conception of the range of knowledge that was required to underpin GYW that was far more extensive. The most frequently recurring theme in the interviews was that of having, or of the need to have, knowledge of delivering practical activities/sessions of GYW. This emphasis is therefore not only on the theory underpinning globalisation, and not only on having gained consciousness of global dimensions to oppression, but of having witnessed and being able to deliver practical examples of the global dimension that allow students to make the connections between different levels of experience. The majority of respondents emphasised that this is a pre-requisite for any YCD tutor to be able to effectively deliver the global dimension/ GYW. Other issues identified in the knowledge 'tool box' include an understanding of the process and concept of globalisation, knowledge of PLiNGs<sup>5</sup>, a historical perspective on global domination/oppression (i.e. colonialism, imperialism and neo-colonialism), knowledge of resource locations, and effective signposting – in the sense of being able to locate the appropriate expertise and resources for effective GYW teaching, as well as imaginative and effective ways of engaging young people.

## Resources

Eighteen of the participants felt that they did have the resources required to adequately train youth workers in the identified HEIs, whilst nine felt that they did not have such resources. Twelve were not sure whether they had adequate resources or not, or felt that whilst they do have some resources, these are not enough. Four of those interviewed did not respond to this question.

The responses from HEIs indicate that even those who felt that they did not have adequate resources were willing, open and eager to have more resources available. It was largely acknowledged that some resources already exist and the Development Education Association's (DEA) website was mentioned a number of times. However, the vast majority stated that they felt that a far greater range of resources should be made available.

Two main suggestions came from the focus group in this respect. Firstly, the focus group recommended that HEIs should better utilise the resources of international nongovernmental organizations (INGOs) such as Oxfam, Y Care International, and the British Red Cross, especially by working with them to place students in these organisations for their field practice. Secondly, the group commented that HEIs should use the expertise of INGOs to attract visiting lecturers. It was also stated that whilst there might be some resources generally for GYW, there were not many explicit resources for HEIs working in this area. There is not a great deal of educational material pitched at a level suitable for students in higher education, and this was a shortage that needs to be remedied: 21% of HEIs identified the need for good literature and journals, whilst 32.5% identified the need for links/guest lecturers from INGOs. Other identified resources include games/simulations, international links/ programmes, manuals that give practical resources, centres for excellences to promote GYW, and specific resources for HEIs in terms of finance, staffing, time, training and ongoing support.

## Conclusion

This article has noted that there is increased support for including the global dimension within the training of youth workers. This is driven by two factors. Firstly, a wide range of policy documents relevant to the HEI youth and community sector have been published in the last five years – including the NYA Professional Validation and Curriculum Requirements, the National Occupational Standards for Youth Work, the Youth Work Subject Benchmarks, and the *Common Core of Skills and Knowledge for the Children's Workforce* (DFES, 2005). Secondly, the process of globalisation has accelerated.

This study was concerned with establishing how this domain of experience is **named** in higher education institutions, and finding out how it is operationalised (i.e. put into educational practice) in the 50 institutions delivering JNC or equivalent qualifications across the UK. Whilst the term global youth work has been proposed

and used in this article by the author, the research findings indicate that the field is beset by a host of other terminologies used to define the process of addressing the global dimension. Is this in itself problematic? This article argues that conceptual understanding determines the curriculum, and if this is variously understood then different people might be talking about the same thing, but with different meanings and using different terms. This poses several issues for both youth workers and organisations, particularly because youth workers in training have very different experiences of global youth work, leading to a wide differential in their knowledge, skills, experience and confidence in delivering it.

The lack of synergy and a common understanding of global youth work both within the HEIs and within the field leads to confusion that effectively creates a lottery both for trainee youth workers and also for the young people who engage in global youth work. This lack of common understanding can affect the quality of young people's experiences of global youth work. Given the economic and security imperatives to engage in GYW which are outlined in the article, it is pivotal that this imbalance is addressed.

A sound debate on the second source of variation – pedagogic processes – depends upon recognising the current variations in terminology. Lecturers in higher education need to be encouraged to be explicit about precisely what they mean by their favoured term so that (i) congruent practice is not hidden behind nominal descriptions of what is being attempted, and (ii) opposing approaches are not hidden behind the use of the same term (i.e. where a single term is being used in very different ways).

There appears to be no agreement as to whether lecturers delivering JNC or equivalent qualifications across Britain need additional skills to effectively teach GYW. However, the research found that some YCD tutors felt that the ability to make connections between the personal, local, national and global levels, or the ability to foster this ability in others, was a specific skill that is not necessarily gained through prior expertise in generic youth work pedagogy. Furthermore, some respondents felt that providing students with opportunities for practical experience was beneficial, or even necessary, in order to effectively make such connections. The research also identifies that there is a definite need to generate a greater knowledge base specific to the HEI youth and community work sector, as well as to develop a range of resources which are easily accessible to lecturers.

Youth and community work is a dynamic process and must continuously respond to changes in society. In the light of the acceleration of globalisation and its increasing impact in the lives of young people, it must be given correspondingly pivotal attention. Those HEIs which train youth workers should increasingly be cognisant of the importance of addressing the global dimension, and of the need to clarify the definitions that youth worker educators use. Furthermore, HEIs need to critically

discuss the different value positions that may underpin different incarnations of this area of education, and to make the necessary knowledge and resources easily available.

## Acknowledgements

The author would like to acknowledge the contributions of De Montfort University's RITA award, DFID's Development Awareness Fund, and the DEA in facilitating this research.

*Momodou Sallah is a Senior Lecturer in the Youth and Community Division, De Montfort University. He has over 15 years of experience working with young people at the local, national and international levels. He has a number of publications in the field of work with Black young people, and his research interests include diversity, participation and globalisation, especially in relation to young people. Momodou teaches the globalisation/ global youth work modules on De Montfort University's BA and MA in Youth Work and Community Development programmes. Email: msallah@dmu.ac.uk.*

## References

- Adams, P. (2008) 'Occupational standards, subject benchmarks and professional validation requirements: help or a hindrance in developing a global dimension?' Paper presented at *The State of Global Youth Work in HEIs*, 12 November 2008, De Montfort University.
- Bourn, D. and McCollum, A. (eds.) (1995) *A World of Difference: Making Global Connections in Youth Work*. London: Development Education Association.
- Bourn, D. (2003) Towards a theory of development education. *Development Education Journal*, 10(1): 3-6.
- Bourn, D. (2008) Development education: towards a re-conceptualisation. *International Journal of Development Education and Global Learning*, 1(1): 5-22.
- Brown, G. (2007) Gordon Brown outlines election policies. *The Telegraph*. 23 September 2007. Available online from: <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/1563918/Gordon-Brown-outlines-election-policies.html>.
- Davies, B. (2005) Youth work: a manifesto for our times. *Youth and Policy*, 88: 1-23.
- Davies, L., Harber, C. and Yamashita, H. (2004) *Global Citizenship Education: The Needs of Teachers and Learners. Research report*. Centre for International Education and Research, School of Education, University of Birmingham.
- DEA [Development Education Association]. (2004) *Global Youth Work: Training and Practice Manual*. London: DEA.
- DfES [Department for Education and Skills]. (2005) *Common Core of Skills and Knowledge for the Children's Workforce*. London: DFES.
- Freire, P. (1993) *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. London: Penguin.
- Hopkins, K. and Ramnarayan, A. (2008) Prices to bounce back ... in 2023. *The Guardian*. 15 October 2008. Available online from: <http://www.guardian.co.uk/money/2008/oct/15/property-housing-market>.
- Jefferies, T. and Smith, M.K. (2002) Individualization and youth work. *Youth and Policy*, 76: 39-65.
- Jefferies, T. and Smith, M.K. (1999) The problem of 'youth' for youth work. *Youth and Policy*, 62: 45-66.
- Joseph, J. (2005) Collated Summary of Questionnaire Responses. Unpublished Report for the National Youth Agency/Critical Praxis.
- Lashley, H. (1998) Report on the Study of an Understanding of Global Youth Work. Unpublished Report for the Training Agencies Group.
- LLUK [Lifelong Learning UK] (2008) *National Occupational Standards for Youth Work*. Available online from: <http://www.lluk.org/national-occupational-standards.htm>
- Martin, F. (2004) *Providing a global dimension to Citizenship Education: a collaborative approach to student learning within Primary Initial Teacher Education. Research Report*. Available online from: [http://www.citized.info/pdf/commarticles/Fran\\_Martin.pdf](http://www.citized.info/pdf/commarticles/Fran_Martin.pdf).



- Milanovic, B. (1999) *True world income distribution, 1988 and 1993 – first calculations, based on household surveys alone*. Policy Research Working Paper Series 2244. Washington DC: The World Bank.
- NYA [National Youth Agency]. (2007) *Introduction to Professional Validation and Curriculum Requirements (Book 1 of 3)*. Available online from: <http://www.nya.org.uk/information/108741/professionalvalidation/>
- QAA [Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education] (2009) *Subject Benchmark Statement: Youth and Community Work*. Available online from: <http://www.qaa.ac.uk/academicinfrastructure/benchmark/honours/default.asp>.
- Regan, C. (1999) The underdevelopment of development education. *The Development Education Journal*, 6(1): 34-35.
- Robbins, M., Francis, L.J. and Elliott, E. (2003) Attitudes toward education for global citizenship among trainee teachers. *Research in Education Journal*, 69: 93-98.
- Sallah, M. (2008) Global youth work: is it beyond the moral and green imperatives? In: M. Sallah and S. Cooper (eds.) *Global Youth Work: Taking it Personally*. Leicester: National Youth Agency.
- Scott-Baumann, A., Holden, C., Clough, N. and Hicks, D. (2003) The Global Dimension in Education. *The Development Education Journal*, 10(1): 15-18.
- Shiel, C. and Jones, D. (2004) Global perspectives in higher education: taking the agenda forward in a business school. *The Development Education Journal*, 10(3): 10-12.
- Welsh Assembly Government. (2008) *Education for Sustainable Development and Global Citizenship: A Common Understanding for the Youth Work Sector*. Cardiff: Welsh Assembly Government.
- Winters, L.A. and Yusuf, S. (2007) *Dancing with Giants: China, India and the Global Economy*. Washington/ Singapore: The World Bank/Institute of Policy Studies.
- Young, K. (2006) *The Art of Youth Work*. Dorset: Russell House Publishing.

## Notes

- 1 The Joint Negotiating Committee (JNC) is the body responsible for youth work in England.
- 2 In 2007, DfES was divided into the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF), and the Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills (DIUS).
- 3 The Commission identifies five principles of sustainability: (i) living within environmental limits; (ii) ensuring a strong, healthy and just society; (iii) achieving a sustainable economy; (iv) promoting good governance, and (v) using sound science responsibly. See <http://www.sd-commission.org.uk/pages/our-principles.html>.
- 4 See <http://www.redcross.org.uk/standard.asp?id=86769>.
- 5 PLiNGs refers to making personal, local, national and global links between the individual and the rest of the world – areas that are brought closer together by the processes of globalisation.

## The Challenge of Teaching Controversial Issues

edited by Hilary Claire and Cathie Holden

*The contents read like a user's guide through the minefield of difficult discussions teachers face every day... a text that one will refer to throughout the course of teaching, as a way in to discussing specific issues, or the whole notion of controversy and different worldviews. Escalate*

This practical book is international in vision and spans preschool through to higher education. The key dilemmas and suggested approaches cover educational policy and social justice; teaching young children about war and global conflict; using children's literature and drama to explore controversial issues; teaching about climate change and sustainability; and teaching about controversial issues with post-16 pupils

*The Challenge of Teaching Controversial Issues* is for teachers and co-ordinators of citizenship, PSHE, English, drama and humanities subjects, primary and secondary heads, policy makers, inspectors, trainee teachers and tutors. It will be recommended reading on PGCE and undergraduate Education Studies courses.

2007, ISBN 978 1 85856 415 9

182 pages, 244 x 170mm, £16.99

### Trentham Books Limited

Westview House  
734 London Road  
Oakhill, Stoke-on-Trent  
Staffordshire, England ST4 5NP  
Tel: +44 (0) 1782 745567/844699  
FAX: +44 (0) 1782 745553  
tb@trentham-books.co.uk  
<http://www.trentham-books.co.uk>

