



# The challenges of global citizenship education: a consideration of the debates

Or 'Making global education in the  
West more meaningful'

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# Key Themes:

- Global citizenship education in schools in the West (especially English-speaking countries), with focus on the UK and schools
- Underlying challenges & contradictions in field
- Towards a research agenda

# What is meant by global citizenship education ?

- Recent
- Growth of government-endorsed strategy documents & recommendations
- Different NGO/academic/government definitions
- Mostly in relation to education for sustainable development and development education
- Much less frequently in relation to philosophical & historical theorisation of global citizenship & cosmopolitanism

# Debates 1a & 1b

- Which is more dominant, the active-participatory dimension or the learning-process dimension?

e.g. Process & Pedagogy

- Which is more dominant, the epistemic/cognitive dimensions or the moral/affective dimensions?

e.g. Status of Knowledge

# Debates 2 & 3

- How is knowledge being selected and how is this knowledge engaging with geo-political and historical dimensions of power?

e.g. Selection of knowledge

- Which is dominant, the technical-instrumentalist dimension or the social justice (also instrumentalist) agenda?

e.g. Ideological underpinnings

# Debates & associated areas for research

- **Process & Pedagogy**  
(e.g. by researching school practice)
- **Role & Status of Knowledge**  
(e.g. by researching educator/pupil perspective)
- **Selection of Knowledge**  
(e.g. by researching curricula)
- **Ideological Underpinnings**  
(e.g. by researching policy & perspective)

# Conceptual & theoretical frameworks for analysis

- Need for theoretical frameworks that facilitate a critical examination of the underlying frameworks, drivers, agendas, learning theories & epistemological assumptions of global education initiatives

# Conceptual frameworks...

- Borrowing from historical, sociological, political and philosophical discussions and typologies of **global citizenship, cosmopolitanism & globalisation**
- Rizvi (2007): concepts for investigating **global competence** & implications of **neo-liberal imaginary**, need to foster key epistemic virtues: **historicity, reflexivity, criticality & relationality** in GCE
- Beginnings of educational theorisation of global citizenship education (Nussbaum, Heater, Osler, Papastephanou, Gunesch etc.) sometimes using terms **education for cosmopolitanism**.

# Theoretical frameworks...

- Sociology of education - pedagogy and the curriculum, probing issues of knowledge selection, teaching & learning processes and relationships
- Post-colonial theories that expose relations of power/control, through analysis of text/discourse/resources e.g. *Open Spaces for Dialogue and Enquiry Methodology*
- Critical realist theories recognising and clarifying technical-instrumentalist agendas of GCE policy & practice

# A quick look at some UK recommendations

- Wales: *Education for Sustainable Development and Global Citizenship* (2000 onwards)
- England: *Developing the Global Dimension in the School Curriculum* (2002 onwards)
- UK: *Putting the World into World Class Education* (2004)

# ESDGC Wales

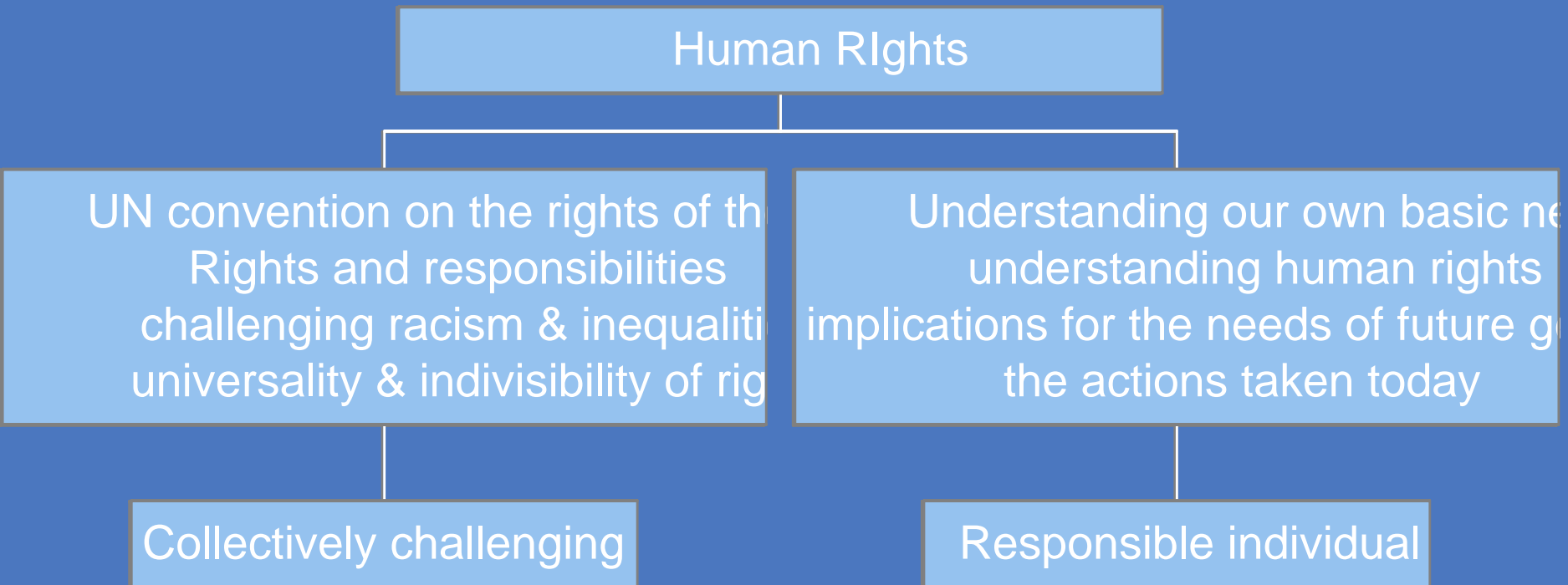
- **An overarching concept** which sees links and interrelationships with other subjects & complementary initiatives
- Holistic, common standards, the need for a **common understanding** of ESDGC in Welsh schools
- Focus on **progress** and **important global issues**

# Developing the global dimension

- Endorsed by DFID, DEA, SureStart, British Council, DFES, QCA - NGOs, government bodies, individuals - But whose global dimension?
- Working with the National Curriculum, current practice, current subject divisions.

<b>ESDGC</b> <i>9 Key Concepts</i>	<b>Global Dimension</b> <i>8 Key Concepts</i>
Citizenship & Stewardship	Global Citizenship
Quality of Life	Social Justice
Values & Perception	Values & Perceptions
Sustainable Change	Sustainable Development
Interdependence	Interdependence
Needs & Rights	Human Rights
Diversity	Diversity
Conflict Resolution	Conflict Resolution
Uncertainty & Caution	

# Interpreting human rights for example...



# A crucial addition...

Acknowledging that there are a range of possible approaches to sustainability and global citizenship and that situations are constantly changing, indicating a need for flexibility and lifelong learning (ACCAC 2002:7)

Including Rizvi's competences: Criticality & reflexivity?

*The 3rd DfES consultation document & strategy focuses on three goals.*

- Preparing all learners for the global context, by promoting global citizenship in the curriculum, twinning all schools with schools overseas and implementing the national language strategy.
- Working with international partners to achieve mutually beneficial goals. For example: **making the EU the world's most competitive and dynamic knowledge-based economy.**
- Maximising the contribution of the education, training, and university research sector to **overseas trade and inward investment.**

# Taking a step back we see...

- Different levels of visibility of the economic, technical-instrumentalist agenda underlying strategies, recommendations & practice.
- Range of dichotomies and contradictions inherent in discourses e.g. diversity of understandings of GCE yet need for 'common practice'. Holistic/cross-curricular, but need for visible and arguably linear 'progress'. Flexibility v.s structure etc.
- Different perceptions and prioritisation of key issues in GCE.

# Engaging with these debates allows us to...

- Be clear about the drivers behind GCE initiatives at governmental and non-governmental level
- Investigate how schools are reconceptualising and responding to these drivers
- Recognise the significance of the ideological and epistemological assumptions being made
- Helps GCE practice become more meaningful

# Doing so theoretically also...

- Helps us recognise the complexities of the many dualisms in the field of GCE
- Helps us consider how global citizenship education is engaging with geo-political and historical dimensions of power
- Helps us add weight to survey, anecdotal or empirical research
- Provides us with a conceptual language for articulating GCE
- Helps GCE research become more meaningful...