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Mapping the field of development education in Portugal: narratives and challenges in a de/post/colonial context

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- Development education (DE) as a promising and controversial field of growing interest, mostly enacted by development NGOs.
- Portugal as a case of interest due to the country's (unexamined) colonial past; an open critique is currently emerging.
- Innovative mapping and discussion of core narratives and challenges across DE from a postcolonial stance.
- Postcolonial perspectives as valuable orientation for actors, organizations and research in DE.

Purpose: To map and discuss core narratives and challenges crossing the field of DE in Portugal, from a postcolonial stance.

Design/methodology/approach: The analysis is based on a qualitative approach, comprising two studies: interviews with experts and online analysis of development NGOs active in the field of DE.

Findings: DE is discussed as a set of theories and practices under reconfiguration in terms of scope, aims, actors and educational approaches. There is the need for reconnecting with and addressing the legacies of DE, particularly, given its formal and informal emergence; this is an inevitably conflictual process involving a balance between tradition and change. Higher education is considered a relevant actor in strengthening the field.

Research implications: A postcolonial stance is suggested as valuable orientation for actors, organizations and research in the field of DE, considering its transitional status and an inherently conflictive nature.

Keywords: development education/global education/global citizenship education, development NGOs, higher education, postcolonial perspective, Portugal

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1 Introduction: development education as a contested field

Development education (DE) was one of the first designations that emerged in the western world to name educational practices devoted to raising awareness and establishing a commitment to participation at a global level[1]. These practices have also been labelled under the terms of "global education" and, more recently, "global citizenship education", suggesting an ongoing widening process of focus, actors and goals. Non-governmental organizations, notably those operating in the field of international development (NGDOs), have often been, and still remain, the main promotor of DE (Bourn, 2015), though nowadays the area is of growing interest in the international agenda. This is well evidenced by the investment in guidelines for the field (UNESCO, 2015), and the inclusion of global citizenship as a concern in the global development agenda 2015-2030, particularly, its goal 4 and outcome target 4.7 Education for sustainable development and global citizenship.

In Europe, the political consensus around the importance of DE has increased significantly during the last 15 years, with an investment in the production of national guidelines and the articulation with other public policies in related fields, and "has moved from being the preserve of a tiny number of (…) civil society activists, to engaging commitment of a still small, but growing number, of policymakers" (Wegimont & Hartmeyer, 2016: 243–244). The debates about DE mostly took shape in the decades of 1970-1980, the period of transition from the "project of development" to the "project of globalization", as referred to by McMichael (2017), and regained attention around the year 2000 (Bourn, 2008). In fact, not only several fields intertwine what is nowadays understood as "Development Education", but also a transition from the scope of development to the scope of citizenship education seems to be in place (Mannion *et al.,* 2011; Wegimont, 2016). However, the lack of a theoretical investment and the conceptual challenges connected to development education (e.g., terminological profusion, fragile transdisciplinary connections) have been extensively recognized as main obstacles in the field (Andreotti, 2006b; Bourn, 2008, 2015; Wegimont, 2016).

As such, there are significant challenges, namely at the conceptual and political levels "that might enlarge and engage Global Education in Europe; or that may hamper the continued development of this field, unless they are addressed" (Wegimont & Hartmeyer, 2016: 245). Although there is some agreement among NGOs on the overall goal of their work in DE, many of these debates remain unaddressed, embodying substantive tensions. Research has been indicated as a crucial investment in tackling these challenges and making the field move forward (Myers, 2016). Wegimont and Hartmeyer (2016: 246) consider there is a "need to build on existing and emerging research, and to go beyond, to a strong empirical base, more critical philosophical foundations, and to develop a culture of research". This demands a more substantial engagement with the debates taking place in other areas of knowledge, such as foreign policy, international relations, educational theory, identity and even citizenship education (Andreotti, 2006b; Davies, Evans & Reid, 2011; Myers, 2016). The debates around DE range from a (still) fragile presence in the academic scene, to a blurred relation between NGOs' and states' agendas concerning development intervention and dominant political forces (Bourn, 2008, 2015). The diversity and complexity of globalization challenges that influence education and development have also been widely acknowledged (Spring, 2008; Robertson *et al.*, 2007; Verger, Novelli & Altinyelken, 2012). The fact that DE in NGOs is rooted in the development or "aid industry" has also been pointed out as problematic by several authors

(Krause, 2016; Sogge, 2017). Inter alia, this is because NGDOs frequently play a double role in global development: both as part of the solution and of the problem, advocating for development, but sometimes reinforcing prejudices or damaging practices through their action as well (Fowler, 2000b; Lewis & Kanji, 2009).

However, it is still unclear how an education informed by globalization and development perspectives should be shaped. Development education literature is often grounded in the experience of contexts like the UK, Germany or the Nordic countries, but despite a less solid tradition, other European countries, such as Portugal, are gaining attention in the field. Portugal is a particularly interesting case. On the one hand, the field is supported by dedicated policies at the governmental level and the work of several active NGOs (GENE, 2014; Wegimont, 2016; Pereira, 2016). The involvement of higher education institutions (HEI), in both research and practice, is fragile, despite recent progress. On the other hand, Portugal's colonial past and relatively young democracy, instituted in 1974 by a revolution that simultaneously marked the end of the last colonial empire, potentially generates close and complex connections with DE. In fact, the emergence of DE in Portugal is grounded in the work of NGOs supporting pre-independence liberation movements and denouncing human rights violations in the former colonies (CIDAC, 2006; Coelho, 2013). However, colonization (and decolonization) is far from being openly discussed in the Portuguese society or even in the education field. Only recently has an open questioning of the historical past started, with the narrative of "discoveries" and Portugal as a "good colonizer" (the so-called "lusotropicalism") (Rosas, 2018) being deconstructed and opposed, in light of the colonial oppression and its echoes in the present time. In this sense, a detailed account of the Portuguese situation is also interesting, because, as demonstrated by Inocência Mata (2006), tensions between a lack of what we might call a critical consciousness of the colonial past coexist with growing claims for the need of postcolonial visions (Santos, 2002) and for a critique of the persistent "coloniality of power" in daily life (Quijano, 2000).

The current work presents and discusses the results of two qualitative studies on the reality of DE in Portugal, which seek to explore existent discourses on how the field is currently organized and what the main challenges are for the future. This is mostly done regarding DE in the nongovernmental sector, the most active promoter, but the discussion also considers the role of higher education. We start by framing the Portuguese situation, followed by a discussion of how a postcolonial perspective can foster a challenging and valuable approach to DE.

2 Development education in Portugal: some milestones

In Portugal, DE emerged through the action of informally organized civil society. This occurred before the Portuguese revolution of 1974 that ended the dictatorship and the colonial era (GENE, 2014; Santos & Cardoso, 2014; Coelho, 2013). By then, students and groups of progressive Catholics promoted activities "to inform the national public opinion about realities in the territories under Portuguese colonial domination (…) to raise critical awareness and the will for acting for justice and peace" (CIDAC, 2006: 2). Although mostly clandestine, many of these initiatives were already promoted by NGOs and concentrated on supporting decolonization processes and independence movements in the former Portuguese colonies. They also focused on providing training and information regarding those contexts, as well as

the human rights violations happening there, to the general public and to development cooperation staff. The end of the dictatorship and the liberation of the former colonies generated a significant expansion of DE (Coelho, 2013).

The last 40 years witnessed important signs of progress, both at nongovernmental and governmental levels (Coelho, 2013). The creation of the Portuguese NGDOs Platform (PPNGDOs), in 1985, was crucial, just prior to Portugal's entrance in the European Economic Community, in 1986. It included a group dedicated to DE, which aimed to equip and mobilize national actors and connect them to key European DE representatives (Santos & Cardoso, 2014). Besides connecting Portuguese DE actors to their European peers, this platform allowed the access to funding and the possibility to benefit from specific training (CIDAC, 2006). At the governmental level, DE has been legally designated as the core field of action for NGDOs since 1998, alongside development cooperation and humanitarian and emergency assistance, under the regulation of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, through the current Camões Institute of Cooperation and Language. In 2005, DE experienced a double investment at the political and financial levels (GENE, 2014). Concerning policy, for the first time, DE was declared a strategic priority for Portuguese Cooperation (IPAD, 2006). Mostly scoped to the national context, it was understood as a tool for tackling global challenges, and for assisting overseas intervention as well:

> [DE] is a permanent educational process which favours social, cultural, political and economic interrelationships between the North and the South, and which promotes those values and attitudes of solidarity and justice that must characterise a responsible global citizenship. It is, in itself, an active learning process that aims to raise awareness and mobilise the civil society for the priorities of a sustainable human development. It is also a fundamental instrument for creating a basis of public understanding and support for development cooperation issues. Although (…) not limited to formal education, it is important that (…) it is progressively incorporated into school curricula, so that formal education both reflects and contributes to the education of citizens who are attentive and demanding and who participate in global life and solidarity. (…) At the same time [DE]-related topics are not confined to matters of an international character. Rather, they promote solutions and responses to issues that are cross-cutting to our society, such as respect for multiculturalism, the questions of immigration and social inclusion, the fight against poverty, education for health and environmental awareness campaigns, the issues of corporate social responsibility, sustainable consumer behaviour and fair trade, and the media's social responsibility (*idem*, 45–46).

This extended definition evidences a very broad reach for DE. It enrols civil society and formal education, as well as various themes and goals. Although not reducing DE to formal education, school and youth appear as priorities. Such vision remains in the current political orientations for the sector between 2014-2020 (Governo de Portugal, 2014).

Concerning financing, in 2005, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs created the first dedicated granting mechanism specifically targeting NGDOs, to fund DE activities on a yearly basis (GENE, 2014). This remains the main funding instrument for the sector, despite budgetary cuts during the last years. Following the official investment in DE and the Portuguese participation in the Global Education Network Europe (GENE), in 2009, Portugal approved the National Strategy for Development Education (IPAD, 2009), framed between 2010 and 2016, which is an important milestone in the dissemination and evolution of DE (Pereira, 2016). It also marked

the participation of the Ministry of Education as a formal actor in the field. This was included under the umbrella-term "citizenship education" along with 14 other thematic areas (GENE, 2014). Governmental and nongovernmental actors conceived the Strategy, subscribed by 14 public institutions and civil society organizations, in a process considered innovative and participatory (GENE, 2014). The Strategy's main goal was "promoting global citizenship through learning processes and by raising awareness of development related issues among Portuguese society, in a context of growing interdependence, and focusing on activities leading to social change" (IPAD, 2009: 28). After a period of external evaluation, the second cycle of this public policy for 2018-2022 was approved in July of 2018, updating the former cycle and articulating national priorities with the 2030 Agenda.

More recently, important steps have paved the way for a greater integration of DE in the school system, with the creation of guidelines targeting K-12 education (Torres *et al.*, 2016) and a new curricular subject named "Citizenship and Development" that includes DE-related issues (GTEC, 2017). These steps can be understood in light of what Wegimont (2016: 229, italics in the original) considers to be a true paradigm shift in the field over the last 15 years: "*the move to integrate Global Education into national curricula and the reform of curricula*", and an effort towards "policy coherence" (Wegimont & Hartmeyer, 2016).

Despite its symbolic importance, the National Strategy 2010-2016 only addressed a small number of actors, even for the NGO universe. The most recent data estimated the existence of 17.012 NGOs, 220 of which claim to work on development education and cooperation, 174 being NGDOs (Franco, 2015). Currently, the Portuguese NGDOs Platform integrates 61 of these actors, 38% of which claim to work on DE[2]. To date, and since the establishment of the DE-funding scheme, 182 projects were granted, mostly on awareness raising and formal education, to 23 organizations, an investment of about 7.2 million euros[3]. Notwithstanding the considerable number of projects implemented by NGDOs, co-financed with public funding, there is little empirical evidence about their nature or impact. This might be explained, among other aspects, by the reduced engagement of HEI with DE, in relation to both training and research (GENE, 2014; IPAD, 2009). As Costa (2012: 23) notes, DE is

> an expression that has been of growing use, in the scope of actions in international cooperation fighting poverty, by civil society actors (national and international NGOs) and by decision influencers and policy-makers […], however without a scientific reflection and a systematic critique in the national academic setting about what underlies the concept and practices [of DE].

However, there are very positive signs of change. On the one hand, several projects sponsored by the DE-funding scheme, though promoted by NGOs, include HEI in their partnerships. On the other hand, multi-stakeholder networks were created, in recent years, to foster a coordinated action and thinking in DE, which include higher education representatives as partners and target groups (e.g., the project Sinergias and two networks RED-NETT and Rede ECG). Generally, these institutions are active in the fields of education and teacher training, citizenship and global development.

3 Moving DE forward: absences, emergences, translations

In light of global challenges – migration, climate change, the need for alternative modes of producing and consuming, the rise of populism or the erosion of the democratic space (Santos, 2017), to name a few – DE has become more important than ever in the education agenda, particularly if we take into account the counter-hegemonic possibilities raised by postcolonial scholars in the field of DE (Andreotti, 2006a,b, 2011, 2016; Pashby, 2013), education (Tikly, 2004) and social sciences (Santos, 2002). Santos argues that there are three fundamental obstacles inherited from western modernity and extensively present in all fields of life: colonialism, capitalism and patriarchy. This legacy, he argues, is present in a number of silent (or silenced) issues ("absences") that need to be acknowledged, resonated differently and thus pave the way for alternative modes of life ("emergences"), an endeavour which requires an alternative epistemological mind-set, the so-called "epistemologies of the South" (Santos & Meneses 2009), with the support of "translation" processes.

The recognition of "absences" is a fundamental first step, as these "non-existences are produced whenever a given entity is disqualified and made invisible, unintelligible or disposable in an irreversible way" (Santos, 2002: 246). These are generated by "monolithic" understandings of the world regarding what is valid in relation to knowledge (with a prevalence of scientific knowledge), time (dominated by a linear perspective), social classification (the emphasis on white, male, heterosexual), scale (with the global as more relevant than, for instance, the local) and productivity (with an emphasis on capitalism). An inclusive perspective should make present and visible what has been made absent and invisible, replacing a monolithic with an ecological perspective. By "emergences", Santos means researching alternatives, imagining what can be done differently, and which "conflicts and dialogues" (2002: 256) can occur: for instance, what if all types of knowledge are valued, what if we seek forms of development, work and production beyond capitalism, what if we value diversity, what if we optimize possibilities for transnational flows of communication and information that have counter-hegemonic purposes, and what if we foster both liberal representative and participatory forms of democracy? The mind-set necessary for both recognizing "absences" and imagining "emergences" is framed by an "epistemology of the South". As Santos & Meneses (2009: 12) synthesize

> The South is here metaphorically conceived as a field of epistemic challenges that seek to repair the damages and impacts historically caused by capitalism and its colonial relation with the world. This conception of the South partially overlaps with the geographic South, the group of countries and world regions that were submitted to European colonialism.

By reframing colonialism as an "epistemological dominance" (ibid.:13) which, among other types of violence, made ways of knowing invisible, Santos & Meneses (2009) argue the need for a "horizontal dialogue" involving a "translation" work. This effort

> can either happen between hegemonic and non-hegemonic knowledges as it can happen between different non-hegemonic knowledges. (…) [and] between social practices and its agents. Of course, all social practices involve knowledges, and, in that sense, they are also knowledge practices. When focused on practices, however, the work of translation aims to create reciprocal intelligibility between forms of organization and action goals. (…) The work of translation aims to make clear what unites and separates different [social] movements and

> different practices in order to determine the possibilities and limits of bridging or aggregating them (Santos, 2002: 265–266).

In our view, DE may profit from this analytical lens, recognizing its own "absences" and being oriented towards creating alternative "emergences". However, is the paradigmatic vision of the epistemologies of the South being currently mobilized to understand and problematize the field of DE in Portugal? In what ways are actors and organizations discussing the absences, emergences and translations that DE is or should be exploring, given its many contested dimensions, particularly in a country where the colonial past seems to go unrevised and undiscussed?

4 Methodology

The first study took place between February and May of 2015, and was based on semi-structured interviews with experts in development education. Three experts, one man and two women, with ages ranging from 36 to 65 years, were invited to participate considering their role as "gatekeepers" in the field (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2018: 231): all are well recognized in the community of DE actors, having played a significant role in the establishment and evolution of the field in Portugal and in the international arena. One interviewee was the co-founder of an NGDO working in DE since 1974. The other two had "hybrid" profiles. They have solid experience in the nongovernmental sector, in DE and in international cooperation, are currently members of NGDOs and have been working in academia in recent years, with an important role the institutionalization of DE. All were engaged in the production or implementation of the National Strategy for DE 2010–2016. According to the interviewees' preferences, the interviews were conducted in person or remotely, via Skype™. The script comprised five general questions: (1) personal enrolment in DE; (2) views on the path of DE in Portugal; (3) views on projects and practices; (4) and on main challenges and recommendations, in general, and (5) specifically concerning a research agenda. The content was audio-recorded, fully transcribed and returned to the participants for validation and informed consent. Final validated content was submitted to thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The analysis combined pre-defined themes, informed by literature, and emergent data-driven themes organized in several "layers of analysis" (Creswell, 2012: 252).

In the second study, conducted between February and July of 2016, we selected official websites from NGDOs active in the field, as a relevant instrument for public communication and dissemination of their work. This study was concerned with understanding how DE was presented by those NGDOs and collecting an extensive range of organizational features potentially relevant for the analysis of their action in this field. From 46 organizations working on DE at the time, 13 were considered eligible for this study, as they were active during the data collection period and had more than one project under the DE public funding scheme between 2005 and 2015. Despite appearing small in number, this "sample" actually gathered 107 of the 120 DE projects supported by public investment in this time span. Whenever available, we collected: i) information on the organizational context (intervention, team…); ii) activities report for 2015; iii) activities plan for 2015 or 2016; and iv) statutory documentation. The information was organized in a data collection form created for this purpose, and externally validated by experts regarding its relevance, adequacy and coherence, to map

organizational features potentially impacting DE across three domains: overall organizational and working profile, and the outline of DE in the organization. The presentation and analysis of the findings is structured around the key themes that emerged from the experts' interviews (study one), using data from the second study to supplement or illustrate the data from the interviews.

5 Mapping the field of DE in Portugal

Reflecting on the evolution of the field in Portugal, the experts highlighted the pioneer role of NGOs in its appearance and discussed the National Strategy for DE 2010–2016 as a crucial turning point, mentioning several aspects related to the creation and implementation of this policy, as well as the uncertainty around its future at the time. In fact, this document has been recognized, at a European level, as a good practice, as it resulted from a participatory initiative joining governmental and civil society actors, in a "multi-stakeholder" process (GENE, 2014; Pereira, 2016). Despite some critical issues in the implementation of the Strategy, there was a consensus as to its importance for making DE more visible and legitimate. This is significant even for institutions already working in the field, where sometimes a struggle for recognition (and a devaluing compared to other areas) is still seen by practitioners as an obstacle to leveraging its impact. In fact, issues connected to the acknowledgement of DE by different groups were emphasized by experts, with interesting nuances that confirm the lack of knowledge about the area:

> DE still remains very unknown in Portugal. It has gained some acknowledgement and awareness among NGOs. Little by little, it is gaining so (…) in Higher Education. In the last years, also at the Ministry of Education and Science, with positive impact on pre-school, basic and secondary education. The Camões Institute recognizes it. But general knowledge and awareness from society are missing (…). Among NGOs, the knowledge of other NGOs' work is very scarce. (P3)

These results suggest that the field needs what Santos (2002: 265) calls a "process of translation" of "knowledges, (…) social practices and its agents", among NGOs themselves and between them and other actors. We believe this may be an important exercise to strengthen the mutual knowledge between very experienced actors, as well as in bridging the connection with newcomers to the field. We argue that a qualitative leap can happen if the issue of knowledge and acknowledgement is posed at a deeper level, connected with the processes of producing knowledge *in* and *about* DE. Using Santos' metaphor, which eventual "absences" are central to DE action and knowledge production, and which "emergences" are they raising? Are they grounded in counter-hegemonic perspectives of globalization or instead, even if unintentionally, reinforcing hegemonic mechanisms (Santos, 2005)?

5.1 Understanding DE in practice

Experts were asked how they would characterize DE's work in Portugal. This intentionally broad question was asked in order to identify key ideas on the national scenario, prompting the discussion around various features of projects and practices in the field, regarding which there is little empirical evidence. While all experts referred that the inexistence of a systematized, in-depth knowledge about practices is a serious obstacle to the evolution of the

field, their views relate to three main themes (Figure 1): *activities, actors and ideas*. The first theme, *activities*, aggregates general information on the approaches used, and on themes and resources. In the second theme, *actors*, we included accounts on current and prospective actors, as well as challenging issues regarding who "does" DE. The third theme, *ideas*, gathers evidence on how experts conceive DE – a standpoint on what DE "is". Three main tensions emerge from these themes.

Firstly, the field of DE appears to be struggling between growth and consolidation, between managing the existent DE *ethos* and making it scale. On the one hand, there is an increase in the number of activities, actors and partnerships, supported by the political (and financial) investment in DE. On the other hand, not only do experts acknowledge that the National Strategy was somehow "a step ahead" of real practices, but they also raise several issues that suggest the need for consolidation: the already mentioned lack of in-depth knowledge, including regarding the educational resources, the impact of this type of education, of other eventually active actors, and of other NGOs beyond the Portuguese NGDOs Platform (Figure 1). Another important issue is the geographical bias: experts consider that the geographical distribution of DE is still very unbalanced, mostly located in the capital, which is consistent with the fact that only one in 13 organizations under analysis in the online study was located outside the country's capital area. However, it is not clear to what extent NGDOs are reaching or targeting other regions outside their location, through partnerships with other organizations. NGOs appeared as predominant actors and, although being a relatively small group, there is an understanding that promotors and their practices are not homogeneous, but diverse:

> We have very diversified practices, undertaken by diversified organizations as well. We don't have many types of actors, for instance, compared to other European countries (…). There are a lot of informal groups, social movements, etc., that are also DE actors. [In Portugal] we don't have that. There are social movements, I think that informal groups are ascending but they do not assume themselves as DE actors, nor think they are doing DE, although sometimes they are. Municipalities are very important actors in other countries … sponsors and partners with NGO. Here it is very rare. (P3)

Diversity was quite visible in the organizational profile drawn from the online study. Organizations exist for a period ranging from ten to 60 years. The majority (9/13) started as development cooperation (DC) agents, still the main area of intervention for Portuguese and European Development NGOs (CONCORD, 2018b) – explaining the strong reference made by experts to the (tensional) connection between DE and DC (Figure 1). A small number of NGOs worked in community intervention and local development (n=4). The existence of faith (n=4) and non-faith (n=9) based organizations is also an important feature of the Portuguese case. The information available on the websites of faith-based organizations suggests the existence of a connection between the work done in DE and religious intervention (e.g., delivering training about DE to future volunteers for missionary work; connecting DE's concerns to the *Laudato Si* agenda proposed by Pope Francis in 2015). Finally, and even if not explicitly acknowledged in the interviews, this first tension will surely be inflated by the transition towards (formal) education, with the involvement of new organizations and actors (schools and teachers, to name the obvious).

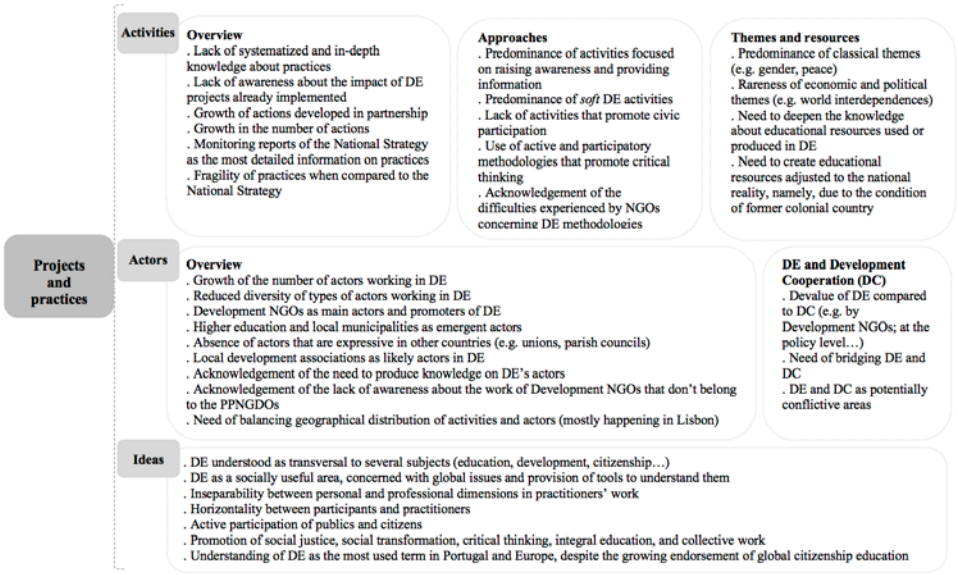

Figure 1. Practices and projects in DE – experts' views.

A second important tension is that, paradoxically, a politicized approach to DE seems to be more desired than experienced, and perhaps struggling between hegemonic and counter-hegemonic possibilities. Experts considered that there is a predominance of activities focused on raising awareness and providing information, whereas those promoting civic participation and global education are perceived as much less frequent (Figure 1). Moreover, in their opinion, activities tend to focus on classical themes (e.g., peace, poverty) and less frequently on topics of injustice and redistribution. Several references were made to methodological issues in DE (e.g., NGOs' concerns with DE methodologies in Figure 1), which may open up the discussion around functionalist, instrumental approaches to DE. In fact, current practices apparently tend to convey what Andreotti (2006b, 2011) would call a *soft,* less disruptive and politicized DE instead of a *critical* one, with greater counter-hegemonic potential and political engagement. However, the use of methodologies that promote participation and critical thinking was described as a frequent feature of Portuguese DE. The interviewees argue that DE should promote citizens' understanding of global interdependencies and participation in initiatives that foster social justice and transformation. Nonetheless, these are quite complex and demanding goals that involve diverse forms of civic and political participation, ranging from individual daily choices informed by the local-global dialectics to collective politicized activism – and, as such, it is probably unrealistic to expect this depth of impact.

From the institutional point of view, understanding participation also seems useful, especially considering the highly ideological nature of DE, evidenced in the online study. In the NGDOs' visions, the manner in which the work developed in DE is presented conveys values and finalities that include: social justice, solidarity, equity or inclusion (n=6), sustainability

(n=6), a systemic vision of the world and its development (n=5), dialogue (n=5), respect for identities and diversities (n=5), and the sense of co-responsibility in global challenges (n=4).

A third tension involves recognising that it is necessary to revisit, reconnect with and address the legacies of DE. We select two angles for discussing this argument. The first, connected to the formal emergence of DE, has to do with the fact that DE is rooted in the "aid industry", and is an instrument of Official Development Assistance (ODA), initially created with the aim of supplementing the work done in development cooperation (Krause, 2010, 2016; Bourn, 2015). Despite the significant evolution in the way DE is understood nowadays, this legacy impacts the field, with DE still viewed by many as having that assistive role and, as Hjelleset (2011: 40) puts it, "the ODA-label becomes a liability", with NGOs often being the critic of strategic options[4]. In fact, experts described a somehow tensional relation between both DE and development cooperation, and the need to promote dialogue between both domains (Figure 1). In practical terms, DE is still considered less valuable at the policy level and even by NGOs, when compared to development cooperation. Furthermore, at the institutional level, the relation between the two domains can sometimes be conflictive, in the sense that DE can often be critical of some development cooperation practices and assumptions:

> (...) It is relatively common in other countries (…) [that] often, the DE team works as the "critical heart" of the organization (…). Here, I think that this conflict might happen in some organizations, between practices seen under the light of DE and practices within other sectors of the same organization, which (…) might end up slipping to other parameters." (P3).

In the online study, the vision of DE contained explicit references to development cooperation in seven organizations. Usually, this was connected to the fact that both areas belonged to the same department, and no conflictive side was evident in the information displayed. The study of the connection of both domains is of interest for future studies, not only in Portugal, but also for the field of DE at the international level, where this issue remains poorly discussed (Bailley Smith, 2008).

Development as a concept is also an important part of this discussion. There is a growing adoption of "global citizenship education", instead of "development education" worldwide and in Europe (Mannion *et al.,* 2011; Bourn, 2015; Nygaard & Wegimont, 2018). In fact, literature presents (education for) global citizenship as a more feasible and practical term to express DE's intents, progress and adaptation to an evolving globalized world, overcoming the critique to the models and rationale entangled in the idea of "development". Among experts, development appeared as a problematic concept, due to its vagueness and inadequacy (Parfitt, 2002; Ashcroft, Griffiths & Tiffin, 2007; Rist, 2007). Yet, on the opposite side of this, global citizenship appeared as rather neutral and valued, contrasting with a growing body of literature that offers critique to such construct (Dill, 2013; Andreotti & Souza, 2012). The online analysis conveys similar findings, with global citizenship often presented as a channel and goal for action in this field. We believe this reinforces the need to understand and deconstruct discourses around development and global citizenship, and its potential implications for DE.

The second angle is connected to the informal emergence of DE before being defined as a development policy. The fact that DE is rooted in civil society with a de/postcolonial orientation (CIDAC, 2006), signals the counter-hegemonic identity it had in its foundation. The

reference to this origin was made by the experts in this study, from a historical point of view, when describing the path of DE in Portugal. However, when reflecting on educational resources used in DE, experts also argued for the need to take the colonial legacy into account:

> I've seen some materials, I think many of them are translated or adapted from other contexts, namely, Ireland, Canada and others. It would be an interesting investment to produce materials more contextualized to our reality, I would say, even in our post-colonial condition now, and what we are as a post-colonial society. What does it imply? What is still in people's minds? I think there are a lot of unsolved things in our colonial and post-colonial past and our current situation (…) we still have further work to do on this issue, which can be translated into interesting pedagogical (…) I think it would be very important to produce our own materials (…) about our specific situation as a country, as a society, and our relationship with the world, our past and our future. (P1)

However, this call for a de/postcolonial orientation is not systematically present in current policy guidance documents for DE in Portugal (IPAD, 2009; Torres *et al.*, 2016). These documents do mention the critique of hegemonic mechanisms of inequality and oppression as the core task of DE, conceived as based on respect for diversity, inclusion, and the elimination of all forms of discrimination. The National Strategy (IPAD, 2009) presents assistive practices, such as money raising, which potentially invest a paternalist-salvationist narrative, as "what DE is not". The Strategy situates DE in its (post)colonial background, whereas the School Guidelines (Torres *et al.*, 2016: 48) generally mention, as learning goals, to "know past or current situations of respect or disrespect for human rights (…) [and] of social disruption or territorial conflict". There is some input from critical and postcolonial perspectives as background documentation. However, the postcolonial stance remains as an historical account and does not appear to be assumed as a task for the present time, nor is DE framed as (post)colonial "object" and "subject", subsuming this legacy.

We argue that Portuguese DE appears to have loosened the connection with this foundational matrix, strongly linked to decolonization struggles, and suggest the need for a strong and explicit (re)connection with it. This process may take form by addressing DE as postcolonial "object", i.e., DE as a product of de/post/colonial conditions, and "subject", i.e., DE as producer of de/post/colonial conditions. We argue that the metaphor proposed by Santos (2002) can be helpful in disclosing the "absences" at stake and thinking up the "emergences" necessary for an education that is able to contribute to democracies of high intensity (Santos, 2005), as well as a less uneven world, as DE aspires. Investing in postcolonial perspectives in Portugal also adds to the efforts of scholars and actors internationally.

5.2 Challenges and recommendations

Concerning the main challenges and recommendations for the field in Portugal, four themes were identified: (i) *NGOs' conditions*, (ii) *quality and innovation*, (iii) *higher education* and (iv) *understanding and problematizing DE* (Figure 2). NGOs' conditions comprise issues at the level of the financial situation and the organizational dynamics. Quality and innovation cover a broad range of challenges and recommendations concerning training. Higher education refers to the need for promoting DE in higher education, in institutional policies, training and research. The last theme, understanding and problematizing DE, expresses experts' thoughts on conceptual issues affecting the field, and which options can be of use when researching

about it. The *conditions* faced by NGO's were reported as having a significant impact on DE. The financial situation was highlighted by all experts as critical, and even a taboo amongst NGOs. They described the struggle for financial sustainability, the dependence on external income and the difficulties in obtaining funding:

> Institutional and financial constraints are not known at all. In fact, another problem, in the scope of Portuguese NGDOs, is that money is never mentioned. Organizations have great difficulty in collectivizing that experience, the lack of money, the way they manage money. All that is untouchable, unspeakable, and therefore, is a fundamental and obscure aspect – not that there are bad practices; it's obscure in the sense that it's unknown. (P3)

The online study helps to understand these conditions as well. When looking at the volume of financed projects in DE, we also see the diversity between organizations. From the 107 projects implemented by these 13 organizations between 2005 and 2015, 90 were actually promoted by a group of seven. In projects sponsored by national funds, there is a significant lack of diversity in funding providers, with the large majority of projects being granted by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, helping to understand the observation on the fragile financial sustainability and dependence on external funding (Figure 2). Only five in 13 NGDOs mentioned participation in international projects, as a partner in all cases.

Regarding organizational dynamics, several concerns were expressed. This includes NGOs' high workload and, in many cases, the scarcity and reduced size of teams specifically dedicated to DE – only four of the 13 organizations reported having two or three professionals each. Additionally, experts considered the project-based dynamic as the dominant work pattern, leading to instability, constant transition between projects and the lack of reflection about intervention. The online study supports this pattern, as the work developed by NGDOs was presented around financed projects in all cases. Apart from that, in the vast majority of cases, it was not evident whether they develop other work in DE beyond the sponsored activities. Nevertheless, three NGDOs – the oldest – also used their websites as hubs to advocate for DE-related issues (e.g., international trade agreements).

The challenges with the financial situation and organizational dynamics of NGDOs are well discussed in the literature (Fowler, 2000a,b; Lewis & Kanji, 2009) and uncovered by recent data (CONCORD, 2018b). It impacts the way DE is conceived, implemented and evaluated, as well as the broader evolution of the field, eventually pushing organizations into a more technical, task-based delivery of DE that potentially precludes its critical and counter-hegemonic possibilities. Thus, the "projectization" trend (Fowler 2000b) as the main working mode introduces a constant transition between projects, usually shortly spanned and heavily relying on the grants' calendar, without the necessary time to learn from the experience (Bourn 2008, 2015).

As our experts acknowledged, this critical scenario limits the possibilities of organizations consistently reflecting on, and capitalizing from, experience acquired as a collective, with consequences for the evolution of DE from the theoretical point of view, as well. In this respect, Andreotti (2006b, 2) argues that "as a result (and understandably), fundraising and the implementation of projects take up most (if not all) of practitioners' time. Thus, DE has mainly focused on practice – a 'how to' approach - at the expense of DE thinking – or theory". Although experts voiced several tensions faced by NGOs, we found no evidence of a need for a

profound reconfiguration in the role of NGOs, as authors such as Fowler (2000b) and Krause (2016) suggest. Further research is needed in order to understand the perceptions of DE practitioners regarding the current and prospective role of NGOs.

With respect to *quality and innovation*, once again, the discourses express the need for growth and consolidation, as previously discussed. Experts considered that the investment in quality and innovation issues in DE is crucial and still insufficiently explored among NGOs. This is perhaps one of the least invested aspects in the field and across different actors, at least in Europe. Wegimont (2016: 227) notes: "there is also a slight but growing recognition of *the need to support learning, creativity, breakthrough and innovation in the field* – which must include the space to fund failure along with success" (italics as presented in the original). Experts associated quality and innovation issues with an investment in tools for supporting reflection and systematized information, training, and strengthening the sense of community among DE actors (Figure 2):

> (...) experience sharing (...) is very rare and really unstructured. The details are totally unknown and there are a lot of important details. In fact, DE's principles are visible in them. (P3)

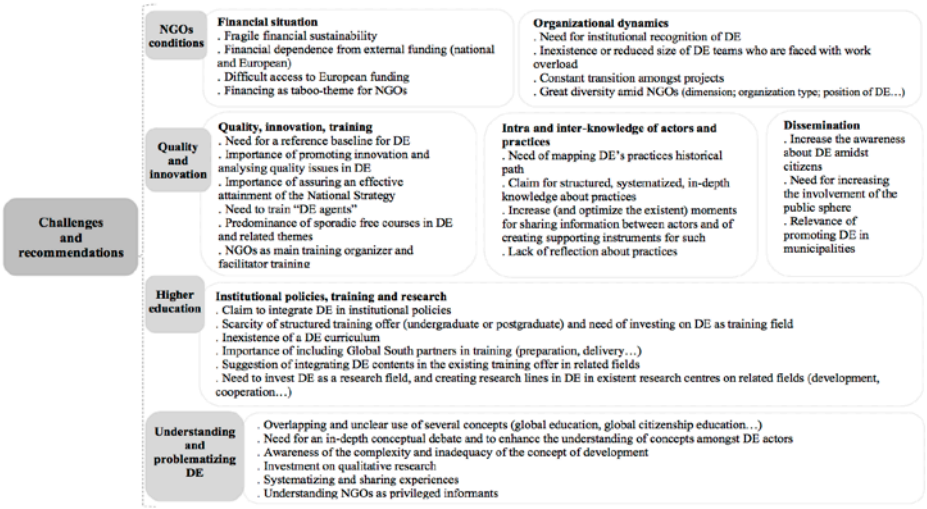

Figure 2. Challenges and recommendations to DE – experts' views.

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Optimizing the already existing meetings between professionals (e.g., conferences), creating specific instruments to share information and defining a reference baseline for practices were suggested to support such processes. The knowledge around practitioners, either in NGO or in other settings, is still rare, not only in Portugal, but also in other countries, despite being of utmost importance (Shultz, 2007; Brown, 2015; Skinner & Baillie Smith, 2015). These studies have shown the importance of practitioners' personal stances, such as experiences and beliefs.

Approaching the study of practitioners from a "community" perspective, knowing which collectives, intervention and reflection spaces eventually cross and foster their experiences, as well as which dynamics and tensions describe the relations between NGDOs, can equally add important inputs to a comprehensive understanding of these actors. In Portugal, valuable efforts are in place in the scope of the project Sinergias, which, since 2013, has been promoting collaborative action and reflection between civil society organization and higher education institutions, "committed to the interface of practice and theory" (Wegimont, 2016: 228). Bridging this type of collaboration is, in fact, a matter of concern and considered of paramount importance by scholars worldwide for strengthening the field (Shultz, Abdi & Richardson, 2011; Boni, Hofmann-Pinilla & Paino, 2012). Other concerns expressed by experts had to do with the fact that DE still lacks wider dissemination among citizens. They considered that involving the public sphere and municipalities can be of significant impact on such purpose.

The third theme is *higher education*. Experts' discourses were explicit on the lack of research and training in Portugal and the importance and expectations of higher education. Experts are well aware of multiple challenges caused by the lack of DE (Figure 2):

> In this field, everything is missing. There's a lot to write and read about conceptual issues: how is DE in Portugal, how do practitioners (…) see it, what is currently happening in other countries? It would be essential that research reach NGOs and try to understand what is being made. (P2)

The need for graduate and postgraduate courses was among the most valued aspects, as most of the current training offers consist of short-term courses, provided by NGOs themselves. The importance of research was also extremely emphasized, and higher education institutions were stated as crucial partners in the growth and consolidation of the field via research:

> I deeply regret the absence of DE in higher education. I think that this absence, this gap, must be fulfilled, somehow, with research, with systematized training, and also with practices from academics and academia (…) it's crucial, I would say, to train "DE agents", promoters, people… very well prepared. (P1)

On the whole, experts advocate for a stronger involvement of higher education, be it in research or training, which is also consistent with accounts on the Portuguese situation (IPAD, 2009; GENE, 2014; CONCORD, 2018b). But this will require a closer look into this "emergent" actor, with the assumption that the practice of DE appears to be moving faster than its formal adoption in training and research. In fact, we believe that a comprehensive analysis of the DE financed projects, past and current, would be relevant for a wider understanding. Is the informal practice in DE preceding, following or surpassing its formal adoption in HEI? Does DE imply an immediate and similar commitment at the level of the three "missions" of HEI (training, research, extension)? Which factors help to explain the more or less intense formal adoption of DE, and which steps would be important to foster higher education's engagement? To what extent are DE's concerns already being addressed in Portuguese higher education, even if not framed as such?

The fourth theme is related to *understanding and problematizing DE*. The fact that there are, as Nygaard & Wegimont (2018: 44) note for the Portuguese case, "differing, sometimes overlapping, often interrelated, and nonetheless distinct concepts in use in the field" (e.g., global learning, global education, global development education, global citizenship education) is seen as an obstacle by experts, justifying the need for furthering the conceptual debate. However, it should be noted that important efforts have been made, particularly in the preparation of both cycles of the National Strategy (Pereira, 2016), and by the DE working group in the Portuguese NGDOs Platform, that recently proposed a revised definition.

However, the results from the online study also evidence the terminological diversity and overlapping. The terms most commonly adopted were DE (n=9) and Global Citizenship Education (n=6). In eight organizations, these and other less frequent terms were used interchangeably. These results are consistent with the most recent studies on the concepts adopted in Europe (Global Schools, 2016; CONCORD, 2018b), suggesting that continuous efforts on conceptual clarification should remain a transversal research priority (Myers, 2016). In sum, "the journey to greater conceptual clarity is one that is ongoing" (Nygaard & Wegimont 2018: 44). Once again, DE practitioners are key players in making the knowledge about what DE is, moving forward, and explaining to what extent, if at all, statements from the official definitions are expressive of their representations and practices.

6 Concluding remarks

The field of DE is paved with controversies, mainly due to its conflictive "nature". In a way, DE is in a liminal space: between the 'aid industry' and social transformation; between information/awareness raising and participation/empowerment; between promoting individual competencies and confronting social inequalities; between state support and independence; between mainstream education and critical pedagogy; between the Global North and the Global South; and, last but not least, between "development education" and "global citizenship education". Concerns with its imprecise identity and epistemological statute, can, at least partly, be explained by the lack of advanced training and comprehensive research in DE and the insufficient theorization across the field (Marshall, 2006; Liddy, 2013). These are related to how exactly DE is defined (e.g., as pedagogy, a field of knowledge, as a process) (Bourn, 2015) and to the specificities of DE or how it should relate to other similar terms (e.g., coexist, blend, replace) (Davies, Evans & Reid, 2005; Mannion *et al.*, 2011). Myers

(2016: 9) adds that the field "lacks an articulated focus and sense of a shared goal that would provide a distinct identity". The reduced contribution from HEI also justifies, in many countries, including Portugal, the increasing claim for strengthening its connection to nongovernmental actors in DE (Krause, 2010; Bourn, 2015; GENE, 2014; Pereira, 2016).

On the whole, our data suggest that the vision of expert actors is consistent with existing research in other countries. This is especially significant given the limited corpus of our research, with three expert interviews and the analysis of the websites from 13 NGDOs. Like their international counterparts, Portuguese experts clamour for the involvement of HEI, assuming that the fostering of DE in Portugal depends on advanced training and research, both on the theoretical foundations and on praxis. The "in-between" status of DE, across the fields of development, (global) citizenship and education is recognized as a nowhere land. Its rationale, coordinates and implications remain unclear, in spite of the vivid and committed work of several NGOs in the country, with the support of specific public policies. Experts clamour for critical and postcolonial perspectives, placing DE in the wider (but nevertheless controversial) conversation regarding the role of education in citizenship and democracy (Biesta, 2007; Myers, 2016). However, if the emergence of DE in Portugal had both a strong decolonial and postcolonial root, we question whether the postcolonial driver remains active among Portuguese DE actors and organizations: to what extent are they attentive to the 'absences' caused by and the 'emergences' expected from DE? Boaventura de Sousa Santos' (2002) sociological metaphors, together with critical and postcolonial perspectives on education, global citizenship and development (Parfitt, 2002; Tikly, 2004; Andreotti, 2006a,b, 2011, 2016; Shultz, 2007; Rist, 2007; Pashby, 2013), are valuable tools to read discourses around DE in Portugal and to question whether (and how) the field can generate counter-hegemonic views and alternative imagined futures. This implies, as Alexis Shotwell (2016) suggests, that we "examine our connection with *unbearable pasts* (…), our implication in *impossible complex presents* through which we might craft different modes of response, and our aspirations for *different futures* towards which we might shape different world-yet-to-come" (p. 8).

Postcolonial perspectives are not only of utmost importance for understanding the field of DE in Portugal (and elsewhere), but also to position this educational response among the wider efforts of decolonizing education. This requires keeping in mind that education is, at the same time, object and subject. In this sense, it can produce "non-existences" as much as it can generate "counter-hegemonic possibilities", to recall Santos' (2002) imagery. It also seems evident that the desired consolidation of the field and the renewal of some of its narratives is unlikely to happen without "unlearning" efforts (Andreotti, 2011; Santos, 2002), and without a profound change in (northern) epistemic stances. To put it more simply, without bringing the Global South in. Moreover, the transitions discussed (between development, education and citizenship; between traditional and emergent actors) should be kept in mind, and the referred "translation" processes should be considered one of the possible tools to make the field move forward, fostering dialogue as much as conflict, or the necessary dissensus contended by Wegimont (2016).

This also resonates with the discussion – and the expectations – on terminology. Regardless of the terminology adopted, we need to further the conversation between (instead of *versus*) development and global citizenship, and to strengthen the *locus* of education. Acknowledging the "in-between" status is necessary to clarify representations and frameworks of reference underpinning DE practitioners' activities and discourses. To what extent is DE

really being merged or replaced by global citizenship education and what are the consequences of such change? What are the perceptions of practitioners, and what are the implications of shifting terms? Recognizing (un)contested visions of development and global citizenship, these studies show the need for understanding terminology and analysing its intrinsic (postcolonial) implications (Bourn, 2008; Skinner, Blum & Bourn, 2013). There is room for a strong positioning of the field in education *as, for, through* democracy debate (Biesta, 2007), while also furthering research on the understandings, meanings and experiences of citizenship and participation in relation to the communities in which we live.

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Endnotes

[1] Since "there is an emerging consensus amongst NGOs and academics regarding the main constituents of this body of practice" (Skinner, Blum & Bourn 2013: 92) and DE is the terminology used in official documents in Portugal, we will adopt DE as term during the text, assuming it an equivalent to global education and global citizenship education in core issues, regardless of the particularities of each term.
[2] Retrieved from: https://goo.gl/nh7xjM.
[3] Retrieved from: https://goo.gl/ttn7g5.
[4] A recent example is the position of the European NGOs Confederation for Relief and Development (CONCORD) on the use of ODA in relation to migration, raising a flag on the European Union's aid use "to curb migration, done on-purpose by EU policy-makers to serve three domestic priorities: inflation, diversion, conditionality" (CONCORD, 2018a, n/p).

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