





Research article

Reflexivity of participants of Football for Development project: experiential learning as delivery methodology of global education

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Submission date: 19 July 2023; Acceptance date: 1 May 2024; Publication date: 27 June 2024

How to cite

Dušková, L., Šafaříková, S., van der Klashorst, E. and Svoboda, A. (2024) 'Reflexivity of participants of Football for Development project: experiential learning as delivery methodology of global education'. *International Journal of Development Education and Global Learning*, 16 (1): 43–57. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.14324/IJDEGL.16.1.04>.

Peer review

This article has been peer-reviewed through the journal's standard double-anonymous peer-review process, where both the reviewers and authors are anonymised during review.

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Open access

International Journal of Development Education and Global Learning is a peer-reviewed open-access journal.

Abstract

The power of sport to affect social change is widely acknowledged. However, little empirical research has explored the use of sport in engaging young people in global education. This article fills the gap by exploring the role of sport using experiential learning tools as delivery methodology for global education in the context of Central Europe (Czechia). The study focuses on the experiential learning process of the

study participants, a mixed intercultural team of Czech and Kenyan youth ambassadors participating in a Football for Development project with the aim of engendering cultural understanding, respecting diversity as positive and valuing differences as beneficial to society. The study benefited from a newly developed non-conventional data collection tool enhancing the research methodology and allowing for the facilitation of the participants' ability to discover and process the experience-related learning through reflexivity. By showing the changes in knowledge, skills, values and attitudes, our findings indicate how the sport for development programme contributes to creating a semi-conscious learning environment for global education.

Keywords global education; reflection diary; non-conventional qualitative research methods; sport for development; Football for Development

Introduction

Sport is believed to be a powerful pro-social force (Hartmann and Kwauk, 2011). Since the 2000s, its use has also grown in the field of international development in both the Global South and the Global North (Banda and Gultresa, 2015; Spaaij et al., 2014), especially within the area of sport for development (SfD) (Kidd, 2011; Schulenkorf, 2016). The integration of sport in development initiatives around the world as a tool and 'engine for development' (Levermore, 2008: 56) is well documented. It includes the areas of value-learning, peace-building, post-disaster intervention, gender equity, the integration of migrants and inclusion of marginalised communities and promotion of cultural understanding (Gadai, 2019; Kwauk, 2016).

Sport has also been used to achieve diverse purposes in different educational projects around the world (Fialová, 2008; Gieß-Stüber, 2008), including, among others:

- intercultural learning of youth reaching ambivalent results concerning attitudes towards cultural diversity (Grimminger-Seidensticker and Möhwald, 2017)
- 'development' education understood as a 'school outside' the school system that might allow youth-at-risk to learn how to 'serve their families, to learn English and to become globally minded' and to gain skills to achieve transnational futures (Kwauk, 2016: 644)
- minority and marginalisation issues where a sport environment can be used for encounter of people with different migration background, taking into account established power structures (Hertting and Karlefors, 2013; Walseth, 2016)
- life skills training (MacDonald et al., 2010; Trottier and Robitaille, 2014)
- the exchange of experience among different cultures based on research about cultural adaptability of youth (LeCrom and Martin, 2019).

One of the possible ways of using sport as a facilitator of education and social change (Kwauk, 2016) is presented by global education (formerly known in Czechia as global development education), which fosters participants' reflection on alternative environments. Research on global education has not yet focused on using sport and physical activities in achieving global education learning outcomes. This article addresses this literature gap illustrating how an SfD project can facilitate global education outcomes through the use of experiential learning theory (ELT) as delivery methodology. It is hypothesised that, in combination, SfD and ELT present a holistic frame in which cultural learning transactions between individuals and the outside environment can be explored. Moreover, we argue that the combination of SfD and ELT establishes a field where not only the reflection skills of the actors are enhanced, but also their reflexivity towards the learning process, thereby creating the foundation for global citizenship (Andreotti, 2014), as well as their personal development.

In a broad sense, we employ the concept of reflexivity as an analytical tool represented on the individual level of actors (Beck et al., 2003; Giddens, 1994). On the practical side, the participants' reflection process was supported by visual diary templates to daily reflect and record new experience

and their context. Thus, reflexivity was materialised in the subjective description of getting new experience, processing and evaluating it. On the theoretical side, the reflection presupposes a dualistic distance between a subject and an object of knowledge, where an individual studies and memorises new knowledge. By contrast, reflexivity is a non-linear process underlined by the blend of structure and agency (Lash, 2003). The late modernist conception of a subject and an object of reflexivity involves also a broad context where the reflexive processes take place: a heterogeneous field of cultural knowledge, values and various skills that affect our reflexivity skills and, at the same time, direct our active engagement with an object of reflexivity (Beck et al., 2003; Farrugia and Woodman, 2015).

The presented research of the Football for Development (FfD) project sheds more light on how an SfD project using experiential learning can facilitate situated learning within the area of global education in the context of Czechia, where an environment was created to enable North–South (Czech–Kenyan) encounters and exchanges. The project's geographical locations played an important role in the study, as they touched on the prominent North–South narrative within both SfD and global education literature (Andreotti, 2014; Bentall, 2022; Giulianotti et al., 2016). The FfD project works opposite to the mainstream by bringing participants from the South to the North. This article aims to analyse how such an SfD project, set in an experiential learning framework, can facilitate global education aimed at the intercultural group of Global North (Czech) and Global South (Kenyan) FfD young leaders within the context of Czechia.

First, we position global education in a global context. Then, we explore the use of sport as a tool in global education by presenting the FfD project as a case study. We then examine the argument that an SfD project may present participants with the opportunity to develop skills and knowledge on global development issues if a methodology such as experiential learning is used as a tool for delivery, with the special emphasis on employing reflexivity.

Global education

The purpose of global education is to prepare people to understand the complexity of the current interconnected world through providing knowledge, skills and attitudes based on understanding and interpreting a changing world (Jančovič, 2016). Global education is supposed to open people's eyes and minds to the realities of the world, to awaken them to bring about a world of greater justice, equity and human rights for all (Jasikowska and Witkowski, 2012), to respond to the process of globalisation, to link the global and the local (Svitačová and Mravcová, 2014) and to foster knowledge and skills important for understanding and responsible behaviour in today's multicultural world (MZV ČR, 2019). Alongside the transformative potential, global education is, however, also associated with potential limitations (Andreotti, 2015; Yemini, 2021). Without critical reflection on global education processes and methodologies, global education can reproduce inequalities, hierarchies and prejudices embedded within existing neoliberal structures and thinking (Jefferess, 2012). As an educational approach that goes beyond national borders, global education also cannot be removed from issues of power inherent in the context of the developing versus the developed world and, as such, from inequities between and within the Global North and the Global South. Unpacking the potential reinforcement of Global North values in global education practice, Andreotti (2014) suggests the adoption of critical global education. Notions of power, self-determination and the construction of difference are at the centre of critical global education, which requires the development of skills and critical engagement by the participants to analyse and critique the relationships among perspectives, power, social groups and social practices. As Andreotti (2021: 496) argues, there is still a lot to be done 'to engage with the complexities, paradoxes and nuances of the critical landscape of GE'.

As the research was done in the context of Czechia, the definition by the Czech Ministry of Foreign Affairs' is used to highlight the lifelong and global nature of global development education: 'Global [Development] Education, which is based on the SDGs [United Nations Sustainable Development Goals] Agenda, is to promote people's ability to understand global issues competently and objectively, regional and local political, economic, social, environmental, and cultural processes, including their interrelationships and the interconnectedness of their impacts' (MZV ČR, 2019: 1).

Furthermore, global education is aimed at contributing to the creation of the following competencies: knowledge (for example, understanding the causes and consequences of different development problems, understanding sustainable development), skills (for example, using empathy when getting to know others, being able to consciously identify stereotypes and prejudices and be

aware of their causes and effects), values and attitudes that are important for understanding and for responsible behaviour in today's multicultural world (for example, taking responsibility for oneself and the surrounding world, respecting different opinions, expressing solidarity with people living in difficult situations) (MZV ČR, 2019). These expected competencies are taken as the main analytical framework for this article. The authors are aware that acquisition of the aforementioned competencies, and their measurement, are complicated processes that require critical thinking and an approach that takes into account power relations, coloniality, hierarchies and privileges (Andreotti, 2021; Jefferess, 2012).

Using sport as a tool in global education

Sport is an important social space that provides two areas where global education can play a role (Kamberidou, 2011): (1) it is related to learning about cultures and global issues by experiencing physical activities from foreign destinations (Fialová, 2008); and (2) it is a direct encounter through sport between youths from different cultures or backgrounds, generally allowing for much in-depth interaction and sharing. This happens worldwide through programmes and festivals such as the Football for Hope Festival (Adam, 2017). Consequently, this study argues that many organisations, while employing SfD, unintentionally provide global education, especially while participating in facilitated international encounters that allow for exchanges among youth from across the whole world. The global education aims are tackled, however, not as the main outcomes of the SfD programmes. Therefore, the authors find it useful to apply the critical lens that global education offers (Andreotti, 2015; Jefferess, 2012). In contrast, FfD, the project presented as a case study in this article, is an example where global education is explicitly advocated to be at the core of the SfD programme, as it was historically financed through global education budget lines of the Czech Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

SfD using experiential learning as delivery methodology of global education

Experiential learning is a key factor in acquiring knowledge through experience (Efstratia, 2014). It is not intended to emulate another individual's exact experience, but rather to develop awareness and accuracy of understanding about the viewpoints of others, and to move out of a culturally encapsulated view of the world (Arthur and Achenbach, 2002; Bower, 2013). Experiential learning, therefore, facilitates the discovering, processing and application of information and allows for reflecting on what participants have done. Through experiencing differences, a connection with real-world problems is achieved (Efstratia, 2014).

A well-known experiential learning model by David Kolb presents learning as a continuous process where participants are actively involved in new experiences, where they reflect on what has taken place, theorise about the experience and apply this knowledge to new situations (Bower, 2013). This process presents an ideal framework for the delivery of SfD outcomes, such as cultural understanding, respecting diversity as positive and valuing differences as beneficial to society, as learning is facilitated through the experience of participation. Within the intended cycle, participants engage in hands-on experiences, after which they reflect on what has happened by considering the events, their feelings and outcomes. This is followed by a period where participants create concepts based on their reflections, and where patterns and connections are explored between experiences. Participants then proceed to the final phase of active experimentation. In this phase, participants, equipped with new insights, apply their learning within the sport experience to the world around them (Kolb and Kolb, 2018). This process formed an integral part of the experiential learning activities of the FfD project, and also of our employment of reflexivity.

Reflexivity

In comparison to previous studies (for example, Numerato, 2015), we do not present reflexivity as a concept questioning the post- or late modern neoliberal social order (Beck et al., 2003), but rather as a quality aiming at personal development and immediate social relationships. Participants in the study contemplate and think through new knowledge and experiences to which they are introduced. To this

end, we applied the theory of Archer (2012: 1), who describes reflexivity as ‘the mental ability, shared by all normal people, to consider themselves in relation to their (social) context and vice versa’. As Dyke (2015) remarks, Archer’s attention to an individual’s practices in a social setting that is not of his or her origin draws her conception closer to the education field. Generally, Archer (2012) employs relational reflexivity to depict an active interaction between actors and the social reality, potentially resulting in making personally relevant choices by the actors and actively shaping their biographies. To further highlight the meaning of reflexivity as an internal conversation (Dyke, 2015), Archer (2007) distinguishes four types of reflexivity: (1) communicative (confirmative feedback from other actors is needed to make a choice); (2) autonomous (an internal conversation leads to immediate action); (3) meta-reflexivity (own internal conversation and subsequent action are objects of critical reflexivity); and (4) fractured (internal conversation arouses more distress than starting a purposeful action). Archer (2007, 2012) and other authors (Jasper, 2011) confirm that emotions often affect these reflexive processes. In our study, we also observed the role of emotions in reproducing new knowledge.

The reflection and theorising about the experience gained through the activities were strengthened with the help of using the visual reflection diary, a tool specifically designed to work as both a project activity focused on strengthening the reflective observation and abstract conceptualisation foreseen by the Kolb cycle and a non-conventional data collection tool (see research methodology, below).

The research context

Football for Development is an educational sport project using experiential learning with the goal ‘to contribute to increasing participation and global responsibility of young people through the connection of local and global problems while using the potential of football as an effective tool in raising awareness’ (INEX-SDA, 2012: 1). This project has been implemented annually since 2006 under the label of global education by the Czech non-governmental organisation (NGO) INEX-SDA, focusing on international voluntary work and intercultural education. The SfD partner for this project was a Kenyan NGO, Mathare Youth Sport Association (MYSA), one of the oldest SfD NGOs, founded in Mathare slum in Nairobi.

The project provides volunteer participants from both Czech and Kenyan youth (also referred to as ambassadors) with the opportunity to participate and interact in interventions in Czechia’s socially excluded regions by exploring a variety of development issues with local communities. The project addresses the common biases associated with global development interventions (Chambers, 2017) by providing opportunities for interactions among different groups of people in different contexts. The main areas of consideration include the unprivileged or socially excluded, as well as other vulnerable populations. Participants had the opportunity to discuss the different complexities experienced, while going beyond the normalised dichotomies such as North–South, urban–rural, abled–disabled, formally–informally educated, rich–poor, centrally located area–hard-to-reach area.

Table 1 shows the three main parts of the project (the preparatory workshop, six project site interventions and the reflection and evaluation workshop), and the activities carried out in each of them. The preparatory workshop aimed at team building, familiarisation with the football3 methodology (a unique way of playing football without referees using values of fair play, gender equality and respect) and Theatre of the Oppressed methodology, setting the goals and discussing expectations. As part of the project interventions, participants had the opportunity to plan, organise and participate in tournaments using football3 methodology (Moran, 2014), awareness-raising workshops for other young people and the wider public, as well as in discussions and cultural presentations in collaboration with the local NGOs. The final reflection and evaluation workshop walked the participants through reflective discussion of their experience as individuals, and as a group. Self-experience of social interactions within different contexts of exposure was an inherent and crucial part of the learning path. The project illustrates a connection to the aims of global education, because the knowledge, skills, values and attitudes of the people involved are supposed to be enriched through their participation across selected Czech regions. The FfD project’s main goal was strengthening participants’ (ambassadors as well as local community) perception of the contemporary world through the interconnection of local and global issues, emphasising the promotion of equal opportunities through football.

Table 1. Experiential learning activities related to the project sites

	Group planning and preparation ¹	Living and travelling together among the project sites ²	Football tournaments with local communities ³	Interactive workshops with local communities ⁴	Reflection diary and group discussion
Preparatory Workshop	x	x			x
Project site 1	x	x	x	x	x
Project site 2	x	x	x	x	x
Project site 3	x	x	x	x	x
Project site 4	x	x	x	x	x
Project site 5	x	x	x	x	x
Project site 6	x	x	x	x	x
Reflection and Evaluation Workshop		x			x

Notes:

- (1) The group of ambassadors regularly prepared and discussed the programme activities for each project site, with the aim to contribute to enhancement of the participation and global responsibility of the involved participants through raising awareness about local and global challenges (poverty, exclusion, stereotypes, marginalisation and so on) via using football3 as a tool.
- (2) The group of ambassadors, living and travelling together, encountered different everyday problems stemming from the intensive sharing of the living space, and had to find strategies to solve them.
- (3) In each project site, football3 tournaments were organised, where the ambassadors had the chance to encounter actively with the local population through playing football matches. Football3 is played without referees, and both sides decide on specific rules and negotiate solutions for possible conflicts. Respect of common values (for example, tolerance, cooperation, fairness, no discrimination, acknowledgement of different perspectives) is emphasised.
- (4) The ambassadors organised different interactive workshops in each project site, for example, Theatre of the Oppressed focused on local problems (such as exclusion and discrimination), music performance, picture exhibition and waste material upcycling for production of footballs.

Research methodology

The study employed a qualitative research methodology. Using such an approach allowed the study of social phenomena and processes in their natural setting by attempting to make sense of and interpret people's experiences and the meanings they bring to them, as suggested by Denzin and Lincoln (2011). The research aimed to shed light on how an SfD project using experiential learning can facilitate situated learning within the area of global education. This article aims to answer the following research question: How can an SfD project set in the experiential learning framework facilitate global education aimed at the intercultural group of FfD ambassadors?

Data collection, sample and analysis

The FfD project was implemented in six locations in Czechia. Research site visits were conducted at project sites and in the places where all workshops of the ambassadors' group were carried out to collect data. Before implementation, the project sites were also observed to gather data related to context.

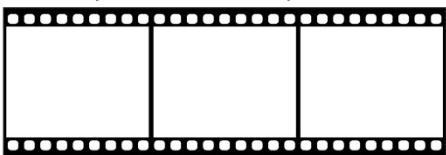
To answer the research question, the researchers focused on the data collected from the ambassadors to analyse the changes within the FfD project, and how this initiative had influenced the learning process for the ambassadors in the area of global education. Respecting the principles of anonymity and confidentiality (Gray, 2009), the data were collected through the use of 8 focus groups conducted before, during and after the programme; 3 in-depth interviews with ambassadors and 16 non-participant observations at each of the project sites and workshops; 12 surveys with the ambassadors,

1 group 'chronicle' and 1 blog (the individual ambassadors and their groups wrote the different parts of the chronicle/blog throughout the programme; the entries were anonymous). Apart from the above conventional methods, the authors developed a new data collection instrument, the ambassadors' reflection diaries (see Figure 1). The purpose of which was: (1) to track the changes concerning global education to the learning of all ambassadors involved in the project; (2) to allow participants to develop awareness of the changes occurring through the experiential learning; and (3) to equip them for group discussions focused on fostering their learning within the Kolb cycle. This tool also played a crucial role in fostering participants' reflexivity of their lived experience and enhancing skills necessary to challenge inequalities, hierarchies and prejudices. At the start of the programme, each ambassador was provided with such a reflection diary; that is, 12 diaries were distributed, with a pre-designed template offering tasks to guide the participants through the reflection on their experiences and discovering the potential learning points. Each page was dedicated to reviewing the experience of a project day (see Figure 1). The ambassadors were instructed on how to use the diary and informed about how the data would be used in the research. A common structure for questions and visualisation tools allowed for enhanced comparability, and simplified the process for the ambassadors to structure their thoughts better while evaluating their experience and learning path. In respecting ethical considerations, all diaries were anonymised, and the analysis was done using copies of the diaries instead of the originals. This ensured the privacy of the research participants, and also allowed them to keep the diaries as tangible keepsakes of their experience.







Figure 1. Excerpt of a reflection diary

Date: 14th July


Write or draw your 3 main moments of a day



How much did you learn today?

Draw a smile representing the atmosphere in the team.






Describe why.

From whom I learnt the most today?

And what was it?

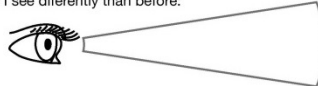
Date: 22nd June

Unfair situation (describe it):.....

	I'm aware of situation
	...and I think about solution
	...and I did something to change it

Inspirational quote :

What do I see differently than before:



The ambassadors' team was composed of six Kenyans (selected from long-term involved MYSA young leaders) that travelled to Czechia (representing the Global North) from Kenya (representing the Global South), and six Czechs (selected by a call for applications from the entire interested youth population in Czechia). This team was composed of a mix of six female and six male participants aged 20–26 years. This structure intended to question the general trends in voluntourism (Jefferess, 2012) and volunteering (Bentall, 2022; Devereux, 2008). All the participants were formally volunteers; however, they were framed as young leaders within the FfD project. Therefore, volunteering, voluntourism and their critical assessment (as discussed by Bentall, 2022; Devereux, 2008; Jefferess, 2012) are not the main focus of this article; however, this is addressed in the conclusion. In Czechia, all the participants were exposed to situations experiencing new social and geographical contexts together. During one month, they became responsible for the organisation of activities implemented in unprivileged areas of Czechia (that

is, six project sites), respecting the specificity of the context of each site, and adjusting to it. MYSAs had previous experience working in underprivileged communities within their daily engagement in the organisation in Nairobi. The Czech ambassadors' team was composed of university students with various academic backgrounds, a common interest in football, and previous experience in non-formal education.

Qualitative data collection and interpretation through thematic analysis were done simultaneously, thereby increasing the intensity of the data analysis as the process of project implementation and data collection progressed (Chowdhury, 2015). Such analysis allowed the researchers to interpret and analyse the data content in relation to the global education concepts that analytically frame this article. The coding process was structured according to the analytical categories, that is, global education competencies defined by MZV ČR (2019) – knowledge, skills, values and attitudes. Such participants' competencies were observed to interplay and change during the project process.

Findings and discussion

Knowledge

Concerning the ambassadors' knowledge of the cultural and economic context, as one of the desired competencies (MZV ČR, 2019), changes were observable during the project. On the general level, participants reflected on the stereotypes of single monolithic characteristics at the national and continental levels: 'We talked about Africa in training, their habits that are different from ours' (Czech ambassador). It is interesting to note that the discussions often happened on a continental, and on a rather superficial, level; for example, breaking the stereotypes about 'poor' Africa and 'rich' Europe. Even though Andreotti (2014) would categorise this more superficial understanding as soft global education, the reflections were based on real national-level experience of diversified contexts entailing different dichotomies (for example, North–South, urban–rural, abled–disabled, formally–informally educated, rich–poor, centrally located area–hard-to-reach areas), generalising to some extent the characteristics of the continents, with Czechia 'framing' Europe and Kenya 'framing' Africa.

The ambassadors met and interacted with local people both formally and informally as they lived in different towns and villages, and participated in everyday community life. They experienced different socio-economic backgrounds. Immersion into the contexts of marginalised urban areas and distant rural areas formed a crucial part of the experiential learning process, and thus facilitated the strengthening of critical global education outcomes (described as a competency for linking local and global challenges in MZV ČR, 2019). For example, one Kenyan ambassador responding to the question 'What do you see differently than before?', stated, 'There are problems in all parts of the world', and another stated, 'It's not what it seems to be! ... Africa versus Europe.' This insight on the power relation and assumptions held within development indicates a shift towards critical global education outcomes (Andreotti, 2014).

Despite the previous quotations, which can be read as rather vague, the visits and discussions with locals surely enriched the group. In response to the question 'What do you see differently than before?', one of the Czech ambassadors highlighted: 'Youth at risk club, I have never been there before.' This shows that the participant did not have any idea about the level of marginalisation experienced by certain groups of youth within their own country. A competency of gaining different perspectives on specific challenges is materialised here (MZV ČR, 2019).

Skills

The ambassadors acknowledged that the interventions had equipped them with new skills, such as the Theatre of the Oppressed, which they could use as a tool in situations necessitating problem solving, which is also a specific competency set in the strategy (MZV ČR, 2019). A Kenyan ambassador wrote: 'Drama performance and children games. Use these to develop community libraries, children's talents, and free time activities.' Another Kenyan ambassador openly reflected on their acquisition of a specific tool, and stated: 'I learned the theatre of the oppressed ... and for me it was [a] new thing and fact that we were able to interact with the people watching and bring them into the play is a much better way of making people learn.'

The ambassadors also agreed that they got to know and use the fair play and teamwork aspects of football games and were able to translate them into daily life already when interacting with other people: 'The interests of the others are very important when u [you] are in a team', and 'Though all fingers can

never be equal, they need each other for the accomplishment of hand's work' (Kenyan ambassadors). In the metaphor, the ambassador refers to a competency of reflecting on their own behaviour and responsible decision making in the social setting (MZV ČR, 2019).

The importance of including everyone in decision making was further highlighted: 'When there is a decision to be made that affects everyone, all team members should be involved' (Czech ambassador). Reflecting on this skill development, a Czech ambassador emphasised the personal development attained: 'It gave me lots of nice opportunities to develop my personality in many ways ... leadership, workshop facilitation.' Regarding the evaluation process, it is important to notice such specific personal skills mentioned by the participants, as they can be directly linked to another competency, being able to process and understand various situations, and to understand and facilitate other people's needs (MZV ČR, 2019).

The ambassadors were tasked with facilitating discussions and public debates, and with cooperating and engaging in active listening when meeting with local people and playing football³. A Kenyan ambassador indicated that, through these processes, a competency of dealing with stereotypes is built (MZV ČR, 2019): 'We had to understand the stereotypes to be able to talk about them with other people, the participants of the action days, to be able to chat with the people about life in Africa, work of the MUSA organisation, social exclusion in Czechia, Romas [unprivileged population] and their lifestyle.'

The ambassadors had to learn how to overcome differences in ideas and communication styles to discuss and collaborate as a group when planning their day-to-day stay and programme, and organising the fair play matches and other FfD-related activities for the public. In the chronicle, there were references to such processes: 'We cannot just show how things can be done ... we learned how the members of the group are willing to give up some ideas for the purpose of the group ... we discussed the misunderstandings.' One Czech ambassador stated, 'I have learned to be more aware of the others, not to be so selfish sometimes.' Another Czech ambassador shared, 'Living in one place, I have learned the respect to the others, the different backgrounds ... we had to find ways to communicate and the communication worked.' A Kenyan ambassador in the focus group said, 'Even if people had issues, they had to sit on them and resolve them.' All these quotations, and the keywords used ('respect', 'resolve', 'aware of others' and so on) show how the ambassadors acquired a range of desired competencies, including communication, leadership, presentation and conflict-resolution skills (MZV ČR, 2019).

Attitudes and values

The ambassadors presented their gradually gained ability to actively recognise, identify and talk about attitudes and values. For example, regarding the importance of voluntary engagement in society (and, thus, accepting the option to positively affect the local community, as set out in MZV ČR (2019)), a Kenyan ambassador emphasised: 'How fulfilling it can be to assist one's community', and a Czech ambassador stated, 'We realised the importance of voluntary work in the regions.'

The ambassadors became aware that their work around the football tournaments and workshops brought fun, new topics and different perspectives to local problems and educational activities in often excluded areas and youth centres in Czechia (supporting the active information seeking about local news, and putting them in the global context as present in MZV ČR (2019)). This was evident, for example, in how the ambassadors confronted the stereotypical pictures of Europe and Africa, and how they acknowledged different forms of discrimination in different parts of Kenya and Czechia: 'We came to the village [geographically excluded village] ... most of my colleagues were shocked by the structure ... you don't come to Europe and expect something like that ... many of us have not been to villages for a long time' (Kenyan ambassador).

The village was situated in a remote rural area with limited infrastructure. All ambassadors had to share living space with a local family. The group of ambassadors cooked for themselves, and they were responsible for taking care of the place. On the Kenyan side, this led to comments reporting breaking down the overall image and stereotypical belief regarding Czechia and Europe as a 'paradise' where life was easy and everything was ready and prepared. This conceptualisation illustrated an internalisation of the idea of multiple realities, and an acknowledgment of social and cultural diversity (MZV ČR, 2019), in this case within the Global North.

As the ambassadors brought the FfD programme to juvenile homes and the excluded areas, further contrasts and stereotyped expectations were revealed as a powerful learning tool: 'There was still discrimination towards the minorities – this was surprising. Discrimination is not a problem only in Kenya'

(Kenyan ambassador). During this experiential learning cycle, some of the images and stereotypes were broken down over the intensive period of coexistence, leading to a strengthened competency to respect others (MZV ČR, 2019): 'Through discussions we were able to break some negative stereotypes about Africans and Europeans, about HIV, widespread poverty [meaning in Africa] versus all wealthy and no one suffering [meaning in Europe].'

Additional values and attitudes expressed by the ambassadors included the importance of mutual engagement and support among people of different backgrounds. A Kenyan ambassador explained their understanding as: 'Black or White we are still one people with red blood.' Attitudes towards sport, and especially football, also changed. Mainly the Czech ambassadors, who did not have significant experience using football as a social tool – compared to Kenyans – acknowledged the potential added value of the use of sport in education. One said, 'Football is not just about the victories, there are also more important aspects to it ... fair play, friendly approach to others' (Czech ambassador). Another stated, 'It showed me how powerful sport could be used to communicate and educate' (Czech ambassador).

Through their time together, the emotionally intense moments, and their shared work in the communities (in at-risk youth centres, in juvenile homes, and in remote rural areas in various Czech towns), the ambassadors became motivated to continue their work even after the project. They became aware of their strengths and their ability to move and impact society. When asked, 'What do you see differently than before?', a Kenyan ambassador answered (and directly addressed the competency to adopt responsibility for their own behaviour, stipulated in MZV ČR (2019)), 'That I hold the power to change things for the better.' Another one stated, 'I want to share the fair play feeling among the others when I am back home and support them in what they are doing, we have to start from the individual, am I not right?'

However, in contrast, some of the statements shared during the activities illustrated the persistence of certain stereotypes and prejudices. These were visible in the individual judgemental labelling of the behaviour of a few individuals, and the generalising of a whole group, even describing a behaviour as a national characteristic. For instance, one of the Kenyan ambassadors noted, 'To be honest, to tell you the truth, the Czechs are a relatively strange nation ... If I have to mention just one single thing, I was really shocked, how much alcohol [beer] is consumed here [in one of the villages].' Another highlighted the following difference: 'Totally different ways you guys behave ... how you young people talk to the elderly, even though I do not understand the language, there are some gestures when people are talking, and you can see it's a bit rude.' A Czech ambassador shared the following observed difference: 'Kenyans surprised me by the fact how much they need music in their life ... loud, very loud ... Headphones on, loud music ... even at 5 a.m. if they feel like. Then their slow walking ... I would fall asleep at this pace.'

Reverting to the concept of global education and its aims in the area of values and attitudes (MZV ČR, 2019), we argue that, through this project, the ambassadors learnt to accept their part in the responsibility for the globally interconnected world through learning about the current problems and actively participating in their solution at the local level. They also internalised the importance of respecting different opinions and taking account of diverse contexts.

Concerning the changes discussed above, we argue that it is impossible to distinguish what had the strongest influence on the shifts, that is, whether it was football, workshops, meetings with local people, informal time spent within the ambassadors' group or intensified reflection processes. Furthermore, we also need to be critical, and to continuously question the validity of participants' testimonies and their links to desired competencies. Still, football created an enabling environment in which people could experience beyond their everyday problems. Here, the authors acknowledge the potential of sport and football, but, at the same time, agree with many SfD scholars (for example, Coalter, 2010; Gadais, 2019) who emphasise the need for further research into the untapped possibilities of sport.

The use of experiential learning theory as a reflexivity enhancing tool in a global education project

Adopting Kolb's experiential learning theory as delivery methodology for the FfD project emphasised the significant role that experience and interaction play in the learning process (Efstratia, 2014). At the same time, it shows how relational reflexivity works using participants' diaries as a record of their internal conversations (Archer, 2007; Donati, 2010). The relational reflexivity is observable in participants'

acknowledgement of the learning that occurred through observation and interaction while exploring the real world and, simultaneously, resulting in a change in a participant's conditions: 'Living in one place, I have learned the respect to the others, the different backgrounds, we had to find ways to communicate and the communication worked.' This illustrates how encountering the sociocultural structuring settings elicits a personal reflexive process producing new forms of sociability or, in other words, new structures conditioned by the reflexive practices arise (Donati, 2010). In the project, this process involves reflexive subjects (participants in the project), arriving at the place (activities in local villages and/or marginalised urban settings), meeting new people (youth at risk or social workers), lifestyles (alcohol consumption, listening to music), personal skills (empowerment based on becoming aware of the power to change things for better), living environment (unexpected poverty in a village), methods of social work (Theatre of the Oppressed) and so on, learning their specifics and comparing them to previous experience.

Learning occurred throughout the project as a multidimensional process, involving several facets of reflexive thinking, reflecting Archer's (2007) typology. First, the communicative reflexivity comprises the need to have the new experience affirmed by the others: 'Through discussions, we were able to break some negative stereotypes about Africans and Europeans, about HIV, widespread poverty [in Africa] versus all wealthy and no one suffering [in Europe].' Second, autonomous reflexivity relies on a discrete internal discussion coming to output without exchanging views with anyone else or a deeper critical elaboration: 'Totally different ways you guys behave ... how you young people talk to the elderly, even though I do not understand the language, there are some gestures when people are talking, and you can see it's a bit rude.'

Meta-reflexivity characterises a third type of reflexive thinking, when a subject critically assesses its intended practices and when the internal discussion itself becomes an object of reflexive analysis by the subject. A significant facet of meta-reflexivity is the existence of an ideal and its high value for a reflexive subject: 'We had to understand the stereotypes to be able to talk about them with other people, the participants of the action days, to be able to chat with the people about life in Africa, the MUSA organisation, social exclusion in Czechia, Romas and their lifestyle.'

Using experiential learning theory as a delivery methodology allowed participants to actively participate in the project, and to reflect on experiences rather than merely being observers. At the same time, the active role of reflexive subjects (participants) in gaining, elaborating and assessing the new experience further highlights the relational nature of the experiential learning theory. The relational aspect implies an active adaptation to the external condition and, vice versa, imposing its influence on structural and cultural properties (Archer, 2012; Dyke, 2015). This aspect of experiential learning theory presented a bridge between theoretical and applied knowledge, thereby allowing participants to gain an applied understanding of global education principles (Bower, 2013).

Conclusion

This article has explored the use of SfD in the achievement of global education goals using experiential learning theory as a delivery methodology. At the start of the research, it was hypothesised that the project would affect the knowledge, skills, attitudes and values of the Kenyan and Czech participants according to the learning outcomes of global education, and that this learning would be facilitated through the use of experiential learning theory as a delivery methodology. It is important to note that regular reflection with the ambassadors was important to allow them to discover and make sense of their learning outcomes. The tool created to assist the reflection process, the reflection diary, proved to be an invaluable experiential learning theory tool. In addition, it established a field where the reflexivity of participants was fostered and, using the diaries, monitored. It must be noted that we have not rigorously measured a degree or a type of reflexivity using a questionnaire tool, as Baker (2019) presents. In contrast, we focused on various types of reflexive objects, and we drew on the participants' descriptions to deduce Archer's modes of reflexivity. We also agree with Dyke (2015), who maintains that we cannot attribute a single type of reflexivity to a subject. We often identify heterogeneous reflexivity practices, following various conditions that an individual must cope with.

On the practical level, care had to be taken to ensure that reflection was not overemphasised, as participants might have become overexposed to the reflective process. Some admitted to feeling overwhelmed by the everyday need to complete the reflection diary. Future studies may need to reduce the number of entries allocated per participant. The methods utilised enabled the researchers to delve

deeper into the processes within the FfD project, because space and voice were given to the participants (including those who found it hard to state otherwise, that is, through more conventional methods of data collection), as many scholars have urged (for example, Nicholls et al., 2011; Sobotová et al., 2016).

In the results section, we analysed the learning outcomes in the areas of knowledge, skills, values and attitudes, as they were happening, during the programme. We cannot attribute these changes to the FfD project, as a non-experimental research design was used. However, from the analysis, it is possible to see how such a programme can facilitate open processes and create a semi-conscious learning environment for global education, while connected to reflexive cycles. The ambassadors deconstructed some of their prejudices and perspectives, even though some stereotypes persisted. Although the young leaders, being exposed to different 'stories' (Adichie, 2009) while interacting in different contexts representing Czechia, deconstructed the single story of a rich European country with no marginalisation and problems, they kept framing Czechia as a 'single story' of Europe, and Kenya as a 'single story' of Africa. While contributing to changes in knowledge, skills, values and attitudes, on the larger scale the global education activities using sport did not remove the existing wider power relations. Despite the project going against mainstream global volunteering – voluntourism (Bentall, 2022; Jefferess, 2012) when creating opportunities for Global South volunteers to travel to the Global North, the participation of the Czech part of the ambassadors' team still remains easier (compared to the need to get visas, selection process requirements and language barriers on the Kenyan side). However, the project at least created conditions for all Czech and Kenyan young leaders to be exposed to contexts that were new to both groups, and both groups could have acquired the learning experience together in the mutual interaction. As critical as the methodologies involved were, they could not be a panacea for a deconstruction of the hierarchical and discriminatory images of the world that are lived and practised by people in everyday life.

The ambassadors were confronted by realities that were very different from their long-held perceptions, which became apparent in their reflection diaries. This was also a moment when a significant role of Archer's (2012) concept of contextual continuity rose to the surface. According to Archer (2012), moments when we are confronted with new, unknown or even hostile external conditions urge us to apply corrective or protective mechanisms. Communicative reflexivity is especially important, as individuals tends to link up with people of similar backgrounds or traditions (Archer, 2012). On the other hand, combination with meta-reflexivity enables a subject to develop his or her biography and generate new cognitive structures that adapt to the new reality. As Baker (2019) suggests, reflexivity might also serve here as a lens enabling the analysis of what external structures are or are not negotiable by the agency of an individual, and his or her strategic use of the reflexivity skills following the current demands imposed on the individual (see also Colombo, 2011). We also note that the presented theoretical framework does omit a critical element in the reflexive processes of the actors. While Archer (2007) highlights a critical aspect of the meta-reflexivities, we argue that the critical potential lies at the very centre of the concept of reflexivity – all the more so when Archer (2012) underlines the conscious nature of reflexive practices in contrast to deterministic theories that often lack a clear structure–agency division.

Acknowledgements

The authors would like to thank Zuzana Švajgrová (Plachká) and Ondřej Plachký for their help with the graphic design of the reflection diary.

Declarations and conflicts of interest

Research ethics statement

The authors conducted the research reported in this article in accordance with ethical standards (in accordance with the declaration on the ethics shared with the editor upon submission of the article).

Consent for publication statement

The authors declare that research participants' informed consent to publication of findings – including photos, videos and any personal or identifiable information – was secured prior to publication.

Conflicts of interest statement

The authors declare no conflicts of interest with this work. All efforts to sufficiently anonymise the authors during peer review of this article have been made. The authors declare no further conflicts with this article.

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