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The Impact of Globalization on How We Learn: Global Citizenship Education as a Transformative Learning Approach Towards Global Identities

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Globalization has a tremendous impact on our societies. It affects every single aspect of our everyday lives, from food intake, choice of clothing or working place, to smartphone use, or political responses to a global pandemic. Processes of globalization have changed the contexts in which we have lived over the last decades and thereby altered how we feel about ourselves and others (Reese et al., 2019). Ultimately, it has led to transformations of our identities (Arnett, 2002). At the same time, globalization is inextricably linked to global sustainability challenges, issues of global inequality, and contested democracy in Europe and various other

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parts of the world (e.g., Rosenmann et al., 2016). Against this background, we deem it vital to understand the educational contexts in which people become socialized in a globally connected world.

In this contribution, we focus on the meaning of international experiences for students, taking the example of student mobility, as a learning field of global citizenship. We argue that studying abroad can foster global citizenship by engaging learners in the complexities and challenges of pressing global issues and thereby nurture learners' capacity to take part in globally responsible action. The purpose of this chapter is to provide a new theoretical perspective on the process of global citizen learning in study abroad stays through bringing together educational and psychological research on global citizenship. We begin with a general introduction to the interlinkages between globalization, decolonization, and internationalization of higher education, followed by the educational concept of GCE, which we unfold in its potential to repurpose current mobility practices. Then, we review studies that have investigated the relationship between student mobility and global citizenship. Next, we introduce social identity theory and the importance of international contact in the development of a global identity. We continue by applying transformative learning theory to theorize the process of global citizen learning in study abroad programs. Finally, we combine social identity theory and Mezirow's (2009) theory of transformative learning to gain new insights into the meaning of international experiences in the context of global citizenship. In the end, we make suggestions for future work in this field of research.

Globalization, Decolonization, and Higher Education Transformation

Universities play a crucial role in offering an international, inclusive, and transformative higher education to empower, engage, and educate learners to act for a more just and sustainable world. In our understanding, universities can only fulfil this responsibility if they recognize their ongoing role in the reproduction of colonial and racial structures.

Decolonizing the university has multiple facets but "[s]ubstantive decolonization must have as one of its pillars the transformation of universities into spaces that actively foster and acknowledge epistemological diversity" (Dawson, 2020, p. 85). In the last years, the process of decolonizing universities has started to gain momentum (Bhambra et al., 2018; Jansen, 2019; Mbembe, 2016). In the context of the internationalization of higher education, this means to decolonize the curriculum (e.g., Meda, 2020), the pedagogies (e.g., Laing, 2021), and study abroad programs (e.g., Moreno, 2021).

There are critical voices questioning the value and meaning of current internationalization practices for a decolonial future of universities. For instance, Pashby and Andreotti (2016) have investigated the discursive orientation of internationalization documents of higher education. They found that these internationalization documents are placed within a modern-colonial imaginary that aligns with the global expansion of capitalism. Furthermore, the neoliberal orientation of internationalization practices acts in the cloak of international development and sustainability efforts and thus conceals the questioning of the aim of internationalization practices (Pashby & Andreotti, 2016). The way in which internationalization is practised at many universities is still linked to the rationale of developing human capital, competencies for innovation, leadership, and entrepreneurship in the global markets, but less to solidarity, anti-racism, and global social justice (Stein et al., 2016). Thus, Stein et al. (2016) argue for an anti-oppressive approach to internationalization that includes feminist, anti-capitalist, anti-colonial, anti-imperial, and anti-racist perspectives that aim at systemic change towards greater social justice. These changes require a deep questioning of the methodological (shift the means of the task or goal of internationalization—doing things differently), epistemological (consider the intended outcomes of internationalization—thinking about things differently), and ontological (shifting people's sense of global interdependency—being different) layers (Stein, 2019). Against this background, universities have started to reorientate their internationalization strategies through, for instance, paying more attention to the qualitative dimension of internationalization such as global citizenship development (de Wit & Altbach, 2021).

One approach to transformative higher education can be found in the concept of Global Citizenship Education (GCE). International organizations such as UNESCO (2014) set GCE on their political agenda and emphasize the role of GCE "in moving beyond the development of knowledge and cognitive skills to build values, soft skills and attitudes among learners that can facilitate international cooperation and promote social transformation" (p. 9). Also, the UN highlights the relevance of global citizenship to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in its 2030 Agenda "Transforming our World" which was adopted in September 2015 by the General Assembly of the United Nations in New York. The SDGs are the heart of the Agenda and outline a transformative and comprehensive framework for government, private and civil society actors to promote sustainable development. The SDGs address goals that are intended to ensure a sustainable, peaceful, prosperous, and just life for current and future generations. These include among others poverty (SDG #1) and hunger reduction (#2), good health and well-being (#3), quality education (#4), gender equality (#5), climate action (#13), peace, justice, and strong institutions (#16) (UN, 2015).

In particular SDG #4 Target 4.7 calls on all learners to acquire knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, including education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, the promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship, and the appreciation of cultural diversity and of cultures contribution to sustainable development by 2030 (UNESCO, 2016).

Global Citizenship Education as a Future Orientation of Internationalization Practices

The quest for students to become critical, active, and engaged global citizens draws attention to the field of global education. GCE has gained international attention and has become prominent in the discourse of governments, intergovernmental agencies (e.g., UNESCO), civil society organizations (e.g., Oxfam), and educational institutions. Setting GCE on the political agenda has led to multiple efforts to institutionalize

GCE in national educational contexts (e.g., Aktas et al., 2017). However, post- and decolonial scholars draw attention to the fact that colonialism continues to exist, and thus, educational concepts such as GCE that claim universal validity must critically examine whether they do (not) reproduce a certain Western idea of education. In the Latin American context, the Peruvian sociologist Aníbal Quijano (2000) developed the concept of coloniality of power to describe the structures of power, control, and hegemony that emerged during the modernist era. The coloniality of power has (1) produced racism, naturalized the introduction of "race" and cultural differences, and legitimized the racialized behaviour of colonizers, (2) made global capitalism possible and led to an unequal distribution of wealth, (3) fostered ethnocentrism, and is (4) expressed by the hegemony of subjectivity, culture, and the production of knowledge. The Argentinian literary scholar Walter Mignolo (2011) takes up Quijano's thinking and argues that overcoming a Eurocentric knowledge perspective is a central element of decolonization. For Mignolo and Walsh (2018), a pluriversal society brings together "local histories, subjectivities, knowledges, narratives, and struggles against the modern/colonial order and for an otherwise" (p. 3).

Considering that many modern educational concepts are fuelled with Eurocentric perspectives, thereby reproducing colonial thought patterns that have led to global inequalities and crises, GCE scholars continue to develop a critical and decolonial global citizenship scholarship (for example see Abdi et al., 2015; Andreotti, 2006, 2011a, 2011b; Andreotti & de Souza, 2012; Stein et al., 2020). For example, Abdi (2015) argues for overcoming mono-locational and mono-epistemic constructions of global citizenship education (epistemic pluralism) and the co-construction of new possibilities of viable citizenships. In a similar vein, Andreotti and de Souza (2012) state that global ethnocentric hegemonies are enacted in education "through initiatives that uncritically embrace the normative teleological project of Western/Enlightenment humanism, which is deeply invested in the production of rational unanimity and unequivocal knowledge regarding conceptualisations of humanity/human nature, progress and justice" (pp. 1–2). In terms of educational practice, Andreotti (2010) emphasizes the need to rethink structural frameworks for pedagogy and learning in education so that

both educators and learners can learn to critically engage with and be able to analyse the complexities, diversities , uncertainties, and inequalities of globalization and the multiple challenges humankind is facing today.

According to Stein (2020), one way to rethink structural frameworks for pedagogy and learning in Western higher education is to think about the current diagnosis of contemporary global challenges and to respond to specific approaches to global learning. Stein (2020) suggests three approaches to global citizenship: learning about difference, learning from difference, and being taught by difference. Concerning global citizenship, *learning about difference* is fuelled by the idea of solving global challenges with more sufficient knowledge, better information, or innovative technology. Thus, the aim is to educate global citizens who will take a position of leadership for the rest of the world and follow a path of universal progress. An approach to global citizenship based on *learning from difference* would appreciate shared qualities and differences to build mutual understanding and deepen relationships. Nevertheless, this approach has a bias towards seeing the world through a Eurocentric perspective. In contrast, *being taught by difference* opens up a way of developing global citizenship by being unsettled and transformed by difference. This approach to global citizenship

> (…) faces the limits and harms of the promises of colonial modernity (including security, certainty, supremacy, autonomy and universality), and the colonial habits of knowing and being that they foster, and to encounter radically other ways of knowing, being and relating without trying to control the outcome of that encounter – that is, without projecting one's understandings, hopes and desires on to others and the world. (Stein, 2020, p. 71)

In particular, the last approach has implications for transformative learning processes as such an approach aims at challenging learners "onto-epistemological frames of colonial modernity" (Stein, 2020, p. 71). This approach can be understood as a pedagogical intervention that creates space for developing new modes of knowing, being and relating towards the self and others.

But what kinds of learning environments are appropriate or meaningful for learners to critically engage with global challenges and develop global identities? How can study abroad avoid being a neo-colonial activity that reaffirms "white subjectivities" (Heron, 2019, p. 4)?

The Potential of Student Mobility for Building Global Citizenship

Study abroad programs are increasingly expanded in higher education internationalization efforts. As noted in the literature, studying in a different cultural context can foster the development of varied student outcomes. There is a solid base of empirical evidence that reports about learning outcomes and settings of GCE in relation to study abroad experiences (for a review of GCE outcomes in higher education see Horey et al., 2018). For example, Killick (2012) examined outcomes of U.K. undergraduate students who participated in diverse international mobility activities such as a 2-week volunteering program, a single-semester study placement in Australia, or a full-year teaching program in Spanish universities. He found that relationships with significant others (not only those of the host culture) and international student communities were a driver for students learning about themselves, others, and the world, which he frames as an essential component of self-transformation processes. In another study, Wynveen et al. (2012) investigated students' learning of global citizenship from U.S. universities participating in a 4-week study abroad program to either Australia or New Zealand. Results of the study suggest that the study abroad program had a positive impact on students' pro-environmental behavior. In a more recent study, Blum (2020) explored what undergraduate students in an Arts and Sciences program in the United Kingdom, who studied abroad for a minimum of half a year in and outside of Europe, thought they had gained from studying abroad. Most of them described a greater understanding of themselves, a new understanding of a new/diverse culture, as well as a greater understanding of global issues/concerns. In terms of learning settings, Boni and Calabuig (2017) explored university students' learning processes in three different learning spaces: electives devoted to

international cooperation, mobility programs in Latin American countries, and a student-led university group. In comparing the learning processes in these different learning spaces, the researchers concluded that strengthening the link between informal settings, formal curricular spaces, and international mobility supports student's self-transformation process. In particular, promoting dialogues, offering spaces for reflection on North–South interdependencies, and building agency among students before and after the mobility experience, can deepen students' learning processes.

However, there are also studies underlining the pitfalls of short-term study abroad programs that are intending to promote decolonial thinking. For example, Schulz and Agnew (2020) analysed the constructions of global citizenship of Australian undergraduate students who participated in a 4-week study abroad delivering sport development program (primarily cricket) to school-aged students in India. Schulz and Agnew (2020) pointed out that even if the Australian students were enthusiastic and well-intentioned about encountering people in India that they would likely not meet at home, they were broadly unaware of the consequences of their beliefs and practices. That has unintentionally led to Eurocentric constructions of global citizenship through modes of knowledge production and practices. The authors identified four discursive constructions of the white Self and how these identities produced knowledge:

> 'Coaches' tended to advance a paternalistic attitude that undermined their capacity to 'listen' (…). 'Travellers' were limited in their capacity to engage with different logics given the premium they placed on consuming cultural difference as commodity. 'Helpers' by and large conceptualised 'transformation' in terms of developing personal confidence or expanding empathy, which while laudable overdetermines divisions between benevolent West and needy East. (pp. 1175–1176)

Unlike the former three identities, the cricket "rockstars" construct themselves as normal white Aussies. These students were unaware of power relations and their own identity as raced, classed or gendered.

In a nutshell, it seems that although the study abroad programs differ in destination, length of the stay, discipline, and specific course objectives, the commonality of studying in another country lends itself to a unique learning environment for global citizenship as it surpasses traditional campus-based instruction. Being placed in a new social environment requires students to restructure or modify internal beliefs, norms, and values about the human–nature relationship (Tarrant, 2010). However, such programs can also lead to the reproduction of colonial structures and fail to transform Westernized identities into global identities.

The importance of international contact in these learning processes will be elaborated more in-depth next. To do so, we apply social identity theory and integrate current insights into the concept of global identity from a social psychology perspective.

International Contact and Global Citizenship Identification

Identity is a key concept in psychological research. It refers to the sense we have about our self, the sense of who we are. The social psychological perspective we adopt here distinguishes between a personal self that includes specific, idiosyncratic characteristics of a person, and a social self that is derived from a person's membership in social groups (Tajfel & Turner, 1979). The latter is also often referred to as social identity. According to the social identity approach, people can self-categorize on various levels of abstraction, from identifying with one's family or sports team up to identification with a country, a nation, or with the whole humanity. The concept addressing the latter level—a global identity—has long been neglected by social scientists. Reysen and Katzarska-Miller (2013) proposed a model of antecedents and outcomes of global citizenship identification. This model places a global identity into the core of global citizenship and links global identity to sustainability-oriented attitudes and behavior. The normative environment (e.g., friends, family, school) and global awareness (knowledge and interconnectedness with

others in the world) are the antecedents of global citizenship identification. Identification as a global citizen, in turn, predicts prosocial values such as intergroup empathy , social justice, valuing diversity, sustaining the environment, intergroup helping, and a responsibility to act.

The global citizenship identification model (Reysen & Katzarska-Miller, 2013) is in line with a social identity perspective on global identity that delineates how the content (in terms of values, norms, and beliefs) of this social category affects group members' behavior. In McFarland and colleagues' work (McFarland et al., 2012; for a review see McFarland et al., 2019) on identification with all humanity (IWAH), people who identify strongly with the superordinate group of all humans perceive other group members as part of one human family. Reese et al. (2015) differentiated between two underlying dimensions of IWAH—global self-definition and global self-investment. The former represents the sense of a cognitive, definitory self-categorization to the inclusive group of all humans (i.e., seeing all humanity as one family). The latter represents the content of caring and solidary helping with fellow humans (see also Reysen & Hackett, 2016).

The common core of these concepts can be subsumed within the social identity framework (Reicher et al., 2010). This framework describes conditions under which people identify with a specific group and the consequences that go along with group membership. In terms of social identity theory, ingroup identification is associated with commitment to one's group's goals and norms (Reicher et al., 2010; Tajfel & Turner, 1979). When one identifies with, for example, the Fridays for Future group, it is more likely that this person will act in line with the group's underlying norms (e.g., "we should decarbonize our lifestyle"). When people identify strongly with their ingroup "all humans", they should act in favor of all people within that group, in particular when corresponding norms or beliefs are activated (for a systematic model see Fritsche et al., 2018). While this sense of feeling like a global citizen is certainly a practical challenge (and a theoretical as well), there is some evidence demonstrating how to foster a global identity. This is probably one of the core challenges to a GCE approach, in particular in higher education internationalization.

One of the basic tenets of internationalization in higher education—the exchange of students—is one potential path to GCE. Exchange of students allows positive and goal-oriented contact, and literature on contact suggests that this may be key to sustainable and justice-oriented action. For example, Römpke and colleagues (2019) tested in a series of studies whether international contact (i.e., contact with a person from a different cultural background) increased global identity. In their studies, students participated in an online chat with a partner and were asked to solve a problem together. Subsequently, global identity was measured. As expected, people who engaged in a common task with a partner from a different cultural background were more likely to show increased global identity compared to those in the no-contact control group. Römpke and colleagues (2019) argue that cooperative contact with people from other national or cultural backgrounds result in a shift of perception from "us vs. them" to an inclusive "we". Such an inclusive recategorization should then result in equal treatment of the former outgroup members (but see Reese et al., [2012, 2016] for potential perils of a human superordinate group). A single experiment by Reese et al. (2015) further suggests that merely depicting internationalism—through posters depicting many different flags or a globe held by differently colored hands—could also increase global identity.

Besides these antecedents of global identity, there is also a growing body of evidence suggesting that self-categorizing as a global citizen is associated with stronger pro-social and pro-environmental beliefs and values. They also have stronger behavioral intentions in favor of disadvantaged groups and the environment (for example see Loy et al., 2021; Reese & Kohlmann, 2015; Reese et al., 2014; Römpke et al., 2019), pointing to the idea that global citizen education may indeed foster such sustainable actions.

Transformative learning theory (Mezirow, 1978, 2000) opens up an educational theoretical perspective on how international students make sense of their study abroad experiences to better understand the longer-lasting impacts of such endeavors on the development of global citizenship.

Transformative Learning Theory and International Experiences in Study Abroad

Several authors have already argued for fostering global citizenship through transformational learning processes in study abroad stays, but very few studies have explored the links between the study abroad experiences and the transformation of frames of references underpinning transformative learning theory (e.g., Killick, 2013; Lilley et al., 2015). Jack Mezirow was one of the pioneers working on a theory of transformative learning in adulthood education (Mezirow, 1978, 1991, 2000). For Mezirow (2003) "Transformative learning is learning that transforms problematic frames of reference—sets of fixed assumptions and expectations (habits of mind, meaning perspectives, mindsets)—to make them more inclusive, discriminating, open, reflective, and emotionally able to change" (pp. 58–59). Mezirow (2012) states that the justification of one's knowledge, beliefs, values, and feelings are related to their biographical, historical, and cultural context. Learning does not necessarily lead to transformations of one's existing frames of reference, but it can lead to transformations when they are becoming critically reflective of their assumptions and in what contexts these assumptions are placed.

When applied to GCE, the goal of transformative learning is to empower students to move from perspectives that have allowed the formation of global ethnocentric hegemonies and continuing (colonial) power relations generated through Westernized knowledge production (Andreotti & de Souza, 2012), to the creation of new meaning perspectives. Thus, study abroad experience is about renegotiating students' perceptions of the world and thereby their own and other peoples' identity constructions. To understand the meaning of experience and to be able to develop new perspectives, one has to be a part of an active dialogue with others (Mezirow, 2000). Study abroad students are often part of these discursive spaces as they enter in dialogue with locals, other exchange students, and teachers with different biographical, historical, and cultural backgrounds. Participating in discourse involves "finding

agreement, welcoming difference, 'trying on' other points of view, identifying the common in the contradictory, tolerating the anxiety implicit in paradox, searching for synthesis, and reframing" (Mezirow, 2012, p. 80). However, engaging in these discursive spaces can be also an emotionally threatening experience for international students as they become aware of the underlying assumptions of their ideas and the connected emotions (Mezirow, 2012). In an empirical study, Lilley et al. (2015) conducted semi-structured interviews with students who had studied abroad for 6–12 months in a European Union-Australian mobility program. The researchers asked the students about their experiences of change (e.g., in terms of perspective/s or the way of thinking) resulting from the international mobility experience. In terms of participating in discourse, Lilley et al. (2015) found that "interpersonal encounters with diverse others" (p. 234) made students listening to other perspectives, questioning their assumptions, and considering alternative points of view. Also, dealing with "difficult interpersonal relationship situations" (p. 235) facilitated change as students learned to solve relationship dilemmas (e.g., shared housing). Learning about similarities and reflecting on differences are essential parts of the study abroad experiences as they are ways of questioning existing frames of references. Through interpersonal encounters in a study abroad stay, "ethical relationships with people across linguistic, regional, ideological and representational boundaries" can be established (Andreotti, 2010, p. 241). Through lived experiences of Otherness, students started raising themselves to consciousness as cultural beings, questioned their assumptions about Otherness and were better able to open their minds (Killick, 2012). Furthermore, Lilley et al. (2015) showed that experiences that take the student "out of their comfort zone" (p. 233), such as cultural differences, being away from family and friends, and language difficulties, facilitated change as it relates to any disorienting situation that creates a sense of uncertainty, personal discomfort, or dilemma.

These findings align with Mezirow's (1978) conceptualization of a transformation process model, where a disorienting dilemma is a starting point for transformative learning. Irritations are very often present at the beginning of transformative learning processes as people realize that their previous meaning perspectives have been limited, or no longer

adequate to deal with the new situation, and then they start reflecting on these perspectives. According to Mezirow (1990), critical reflection is the core element of transformative learning as deep learning and changes in meaning perspectives require reflection. In line with Mezirow (1990), Dewey (1933) understands reflective thinking as a practice of being self-critical towards one's own thoughts. Reflective thinking emerges when a person interacts with their environment (other people, nature, idea of a book, etc.) (Dewey, 1938). The insights that result from reflection need to be experienced in new situations which in turn initiate new reflective thinking processes (Dewey, 1938). In Blum's study (2020) of what U.K. undergraduate students think they have gained from studying abroad, the students' perspective revealed the need for greater support for returning students to reflect on and integrate their learning back home, and to help students develop a critical sense of global issues and of their own identities. Also, in Lilley et al.'s study (2015), some students attributed their personal change to an inspiring teacher during their study abroad who functioned as a "cosmopolitan role model" (p. 233), whose teaching style made international and comparative learning more meaningful to students. From a decolonial GCE perspective, educators need to learn that their perspectives and constructions of their knowledge and identities are shaped socially, historically, and culturally and that they are therefore limited (Andreotti, 2010). In such learning environments, learners can become aware and reflective about the origins and implications of their own and other people's assumptions. Furthermore, they can learn to make ethical choices about their own lives and using their own position, privilege, and power in ethical and accountable ways (Andreotti, 2011b). In this regard, Bamber et al. (2018) point to the need to develop a transformative pedagogy for global citizenship in higher education.

A New Theoretical Perspective on International Experiences in the Context of Global Citizenship

Study abroad is a unique learning environment for global citizenship as it offers students the possibility to develop a global identity. GCE can serve as an alternative and future-oriented approach that opens up a different vision for the alignment and design of the internationalization of higher education and international student mobility. In this chapter, we have shown that considering global citizen learning in study abroad through the lens of transformative learning theory and a social identity approach opens up a new perspective on this phenomenon. We believe that three issues are particularly noteworthy here.

First and foremost, social identity allows us to understand why international experience is useful for global citizenship. Contact with people from cultures different from one's own may highlight the similarities between people and thus increase connectedness through recategorizing on a superordinate level (Römpke et al., 2019). The feeling of being a global citizen can reduce stereotypes and motivate stronger intentions and actions in favour of disadvantaged groups and attention to acting against inequality (Reese et al., 2014). International contact helps to further develop one's scope of experience and thereby increase openness to other peoples' assumptions and views. Through the reflection of the lived experiences, existing frames of reference and fixed assumptions (e.g., racist mindsets) about other people can be transformed over time (Dewey, 1933; Mezirow, 1990). To support a deep learning process of students who are part of an international learning environment, teachers can ask self-reflective questions and/or use a learning diary or weblog that prompts students to reflect on their lived experiences.

In this sense, the process-oriented perspective—i.e., a perspective focusing on the processes of learning, rather than mere outcomes—of transformative learning theory helps to understand why and how identification as a global citizen can be seen as a transformative learning process that can bring about changes in how individuals perceive and act in

the world. With a procedural understanding of a learner's transformation, educators can design their teaching practices accordingly, and better support learners' development of global citizenship (for a transformative learning model see Förster et al., 2019).

Second, (transformative) learning processes are inextricably linked to the social self. By focusing on the societal aspect of identity formation, social identity theory supports critiques about Mezirow's main focus of transformative learning theory on the cognitive transformation(s) of individuals (e.g., the deconstruction of taken-for-granted assumptions; Mezirow, 1991, 2000).[1] In this context, Illeris (2014) argues that the transformation process not only involves a change in the cognitive mental structures, which organize our understanding of ourselves and our life and world, but rather a change and development on the level of identity. For him, the concept of identity includes both the cognitive, emotional, and social dimensions of learning (Illeris, 2017). In the same vein, Bamber (2016) argues that transformative learning involves an ontological process concerning ways of being in the world and ways of knowing that world. In this sense, a global identity is also a motivator for social change and linked to collective efficacy beliefs. Collective efficacy is the belief that we as humans can achieve social change. According to the social identity model of collective action (van Zomeren et al., 2008) identity, collective efficacy, and anger/injustice perceptions are strong predictors of collective action. For example, developing a global mindset through political participation in, for instance, global social movements such as Fridays for Future or Black Lives Matter may also help to change unequal (power)structures and mechanisms.

Lastly, when talking about transformative learning processes and global identity formation, one should be aware of not uncritically taking the promotion of a global mindset through study abroad as a given and desirable outcome. Post- and decolonial studies are helpful to raise awareness of colonial mechanisms that are still in play and point to the risk of an uncritical take up of global citizenship in study abroad programs that are informed by a Westernized, hegemonial, and universal

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[1] Mezirow has later emphasised that emotional and social conditions are also important for the transformative learning process (Mezirow, 2006, 2009), but it has not been reflected in his definitions of transformative learning.

idea of citizenship. In relation to the educational practice, transformative learning theory emphasizes the need to support those learning processes of students (e.g., by offering spaces for reflection on North–South interdependencies; Boni & Calabuig, 2017). Without reflecting, the experience of dealing with other worldviews or other everyday practices can also lead to unintentionally reinforcing existing stereotypes and further alienating international students from global relationships and perspectives (Andreotti, 2011b). In this context, establishing a transformative pedagogy for global citizenship would be helpful to support the learning processes of international students (Bamber et al., 2018). A central component of this pedagogy would be to establish discourse spaces (Mezirow, 2000) where students can talk about and reflect on their international experiences. In these learning spaces, students can try out different perspectives, explore their reasoning, sense of self and reality, and formulate anxieties, desires, hopes, and visions for a different future (e.g., Amsler, 2019; Andreotti et al., 2018). At the same time, it elucidates the educational challenges in supporting international students in this reflective practice. According to Andreotti (2016), one challenge to invite international students into a conversation is to communicate dissenting perspectives that imply that student's self-image and worldviews will likely not be affirmed as this may produce discomfort and resistance. One reason why learners resist reflecting on such perspectives can be explained by self-preservation. In her theory of edge-emotions, Mälkki (2019) explains that unpleasant emotions such as fear, anxiety, or anger arise when our assumptions are being challenged. Those reactions are rooted in the biology of emotions and cognitive functions of human beings. To foster critical reflection and transformative learning, the role of an educator would be one as a "cultural broker" (Andreotti, 2011b, p. 395) who challenges students to negotiate between different perspectives, existing worldviews, attitudes, and/or taken-for-granted assumptions. Such a learning environment makes it possible for students to learn from and through different ways of being and knowing (Andreotti, 2011b). Furthermore, educators would need to learn to embrace and elaborate on edge-emotions to support international students in developing new meaning perspectives.

Conclusion

The pressing social, economic, and ecological challenges reveal that society is on a transformation pathway. Crises are dangerous for the stability of societies but at the same time, they open a window of opportunity for structural change. In the context of the internationalization of higher education, this gives universities all over the world the chance to rethink the meaning and purpose of internationalization strategies. A decolonial approach to the internationalization of higher education for society seems promising to contribute to sustainable development, social cohesion, and global social justice. Proposing the SDGs as a possible guiding framework for internationalization efforts in general, and mobility practices in specific, makes clear that further empirical work needs to be done to broaden the conceptual foundation of global citizenship as a learning objective of educational practices in higher education. In this context, Rosenmann and colleagues (2016) argue that a global identity may be fuelled by values that are core to globalized Western culture—beliefs such as liberalism, free trade, and individual freedom. Do people from more collectivistic or economically insulated countries share this understanding? Do they assign the same priority to these values? It is a key question whether there are inalienable values and beliefs, or notions of recognition of multiple identities, multiculturalism, and valuing diversity that characterize a "truly global" identity, shared by all human societies (see also Reese et al., 2019). To avoid global citizenship becoming unintendedly part of the neoliberal imperative that characterizes much of the current internationalization efforts (e.g., Pashby & Andreotti, 2016), an international comparative research approach to global citizenship seems fruitful. This is particularly relevant when it comes to the learning processes of international students to avoid a unidirectional and decontextualized approach to GCE.

Further research is required to better understand the societal and emotional aspects of transformative learning in studying abroad. What role does empathy play in transformative learning processes? Does the ability to share another person's feelings and emotions increase moments of irritation when being confronted with different lived realities? Does empathy help students in exchange programs build understanding for

unequal living conditions and even triggers the will to act against this? Psychological research suggests that dispositional empathy relates to global identity (McFarland et al., 2012). People with strong dispositional empathy also believe that global inequality is unjust and show strong intentions to act against global inequality (Reese et al., 2015). These insights could be used to develop international learning environments by considering how empathy can become an integral component of such learning processes. Concerning the societal aspects of transformative learning in study abroad, further investigation is needed to shed light on the transformative power of collective experiences and action. As social reality and (postcolonial) identities are socially constructed, entangling the learning processes on the individual and collective level (e.g., through identifying collective spaces where international students are engaged such as student initiatives at the university or outside of campus, e.g., in volunteering services) may prove useful.

On a methodical level, it seems necessary to shift the research focus from those willing to study abroad to those who are excluded from mobility practices and exchange programs. Especially students from a low social background and/or Black students and students of color are less likely to study abroad and thus remain excluded from mobility experiences.[2] Against the background of making mobility practices more inclusive, it is valuable to investigate pathways that encourage and allow those underrepresented groups of students to study abroad. One field of inquiry is the potential of blended mobility or even virtual mobility options for the development of global citizenship (e.g., Huish, 2021; Satar, 2021).[3] Also, it would be interesting to design more research that compares different sites of student mobility. As lots of study abroad programs are exchanges between students from the Global North, it would be promising to shift the focus to international experiences that emerge from different North–South/South-North or South-South

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[2] According to 2018–2019 data from the Institute of International Education (IIE), from 347,099 U.S. students who participated in study abroad programs, only 31% identified as students of color.

[3] In the next Erasmus program years (2021–2030), the European Commission wants to provide 12 million people learning and mobility opportunities by using the possibilities of virtual exchange as a central element of the digital university of the future.

mobility contexts such as developmental voluntary service or service-learning opportunities.

Finally, it is important to examine student mobility with different methodical approaches. The combination of qualitative and quantitative approaches, such as survey research assessing exchange students' global identity before and after the mobility experience followed by interviews and/or group discussions, could provide further insights into the transformative learning processes of international students. Acknowledging that Mezirow and others have recognized that individuals change their frames of references over time and sometimes even unnoticed, it is particularly relevant to conduct (biographical) narrative interviews to investigate the meaning and longer-lasting effects in perspective transformation and the identity construction of international experiences on the development of global citizenship. All these insights could be used to develop the design of study abroad programs and make future suggestions on how to improve the concrete pedagogical practice.

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