

OPPORTUNITIES FOR NON-FORMAL DEVELOPMENT EDUCATION IN BRITAIN AND SPAIN

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Abstract: This article reports the findings of comparative research on non-formal development education. Development education is defined as learning about international development issues with a social justice perspective through critical analysis of the structures that frame global interactions. This was an Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) funded doctoral study exploring the opportunities for non-formal development education, i.e. learning provided outside formal and qualification bearing education, run by small non-governmental organisations (NGOs) in two European countries: Britain and Spain. At a time of increasing globalisation and interdependence, it is essential to reflect on how people make ethical decisions and how they develop the consciousness and understanding necessary to resolve problems both as citizens and consumers. Through a cross-case analysis of opportunities for adult development education, we explore the wide-ranging opportunities available in these two contexts and examine the possibilities for transformative learning provided by these organisations. There is a discussion of the way NGOs frame development and the pedagogies they associate with their work, followed by key findings and implications for practice, drawing on what the NGOs in each country could learn from the other.

Key words: Non-formal education; critical reflection; development education; transformative learning; NGOs.

Development education and related approaches such as global citizenship education and global learning, have received increasing attention within formal education in recent years (Bourn & Issler, 2010; Brown, 2011; Marshall, 2005). This article argues that there is also an important role for adults and the public to learn about issues of global injustice and their role as citizens and consumers through non-formal educational spaces. There has

been little research into non-formal development education among the adult population, and even less from a comparative perspective.

Since development education aims to challenge the status quo, non-formal opportunities for dialogue are significant for adults struggling to make sense of complex concepts and the impact of their own actions on other people, not least as an example of informed and active citizenship. Creating opportunities for adults to explore the complex and often controversial nature of development and global interdependence could make an important contribution to active citizenship and deepen our understanding of both the 'Other' and the questions around which our conceptions of the 'Other' are formed. I argue that engaging with these complex concepts is important for adults living in a globalised society, and that creating opportunities for adults to participate in dialogue is an essential aspect of lifelong learning.

The central question addressed in the article is what are the key features of non-formal development education provision in Spain and Britain? This question has a number of dimensions, from the types of activities on offer, through to the pedagogies used to engage learners with the issues and the organisation's conception of change. I begin with some background from the literature on development education and transformative learning; I then discuss some of the findings, concluding with implications of this study for future practice.

Development education in Britain and Spain

According to much of the literature, development education has evolved from an activity aimed at gaining public support for international development projects, generally through making donations to 'charity work', to a process that encourages critical thinking, enabling people to take part in debates about global issues (Hicks, 2003). It is defined as a learning process based on solidarity and on common aspirations for social justice, which develops understanding of the causes and effects of global development problems, and which generates personal involvement and informed action (DEEEP, cited in Bourn, 2008: 3-4).

There are a number of key debates in development education literature. The first is regarding the goals of development education activities; these can range from raising awareness of the existence of injustice and development issues, through to engaging participants in a deep transformative learning process which results in them taking action on injustice. Learners may be expected to reconsider understanding and attitudes to development and social justice issues, and for some this might lead to changes in behaviour, through lifestyle or consumer choices. They may be expected to pass their learning on to friends and family, providing a multiplier effect against social injustice, or they could participate in processes that demand change from political decision-makers by, for example, lobbying politicians. For some, there is an expectation that development education-based learning will go beyond this and work towards social change through movements and campaigns. This relates to debates on the amount of exposure required to engage adults in this learning process; whether this can happen in one-off sessions such as a church group talk or a stall in a city centre, or whether more sustained engagement is required.

Another debate concerns the way the learning is conducted, whether the pedagogies are participatory and the extent to which critical reflection and dialogue are encouraged. Transformative learning is defined as a process by which taken-for-granted frames of reference and assumptions are reflected upon critically, considering one's own assumptions and the perspectives of others to look for inconsistencies or prejudices in an attempt to make them more 'inclusive, discriminating, open, emotionally capable of change, and reflective so that they may generate beliefs and opinions that will prove more true or justified to guide action' (Mezirow, 2000: 8). This can change the way someone interprets information which can have a deep impact on attitudes and often behaviour. *Fair-minded* critical thinking is essential for transformation (Paul, 1990), and can only be generated through dialogue and openly considering different perspectives fairly and honestly, without holding on to vested interests. In order to do this, there must be a safe space in which learners feel comfortable to challenge their beliefs, and this may require relationships to be built within the group.

Much of the literature on global learning and development education in Britain focuses on pedagogical issues, arguing that ‘global learning is a social-constructivist learning activity that involves experiential and project-based learning’ (Gibson, Rimmington & Landwehr-Brown, 2008: 13). Similarly, Marshall (2005: 250) claims that knowledge in global education is seen as a process rather than a product. Bourn and Kybird have analysed the work of the NGO Plan UK, raising important questions about the role of development education to support learning for learning’s sake rather than as a means to an end, and about the relationship between learning, action and change. They claim this relationship cannot be assumed or enforced and that for development education to be transformative, a critical pedagogy approach is required (2012: 59-60).

There are also studies considering the way that development and the ‘other’ are framed through development education, criticising negative stereotypes and images used to define ‘developing countries’ (Graves, 2002; Moro, 1998). Andreotti (2006) has conducted a postcolonial analysis of development education, discussing some of the underlying ethnocentric assumptions that may be reinforced through this work. She critiques discourses found in some development education materials that reinforce attitudes which reproduce colonial relations and cultural superiority, finding that often a modernisation and neo-liberal approach is implicit. Therefore, a framework is required that seeks to ‘critically engage students with, and challenge, common assumptions and dominant theoretical frameworks of international development (such as modernisation theory) that are often engrained in mainstream development discourses’ (Bryan, 2008: 63).

In Spain research has found that there are a wide range of examples of non-formal development education run by non-governmental development organisations (NGDOs), but that these activities often focus on short-term awareness raising activities and, therefore, tend not to engage learners with the complexities of the issues through critical pedagogies. Indeed, Escudero and Mesa (2011) have found that educators are often development specialists

rather than people trained to facilitate dialogue, something that many argue is an essential component of transformative learning.

Aims and methodology

The research upon which this article is based had four main aims. The first was to identify the ways in which NGOs provide opportunities for adult learners to engage in non-formal development education activities and how they define this work. The second was to look at the ways that other cultures are portrayed through images and language. The third aim was to explore the pedagogies used in development education and the extent to which they generate critical thinking, dialogue and participation; and the fourth aim was to determine whether these pedagogies have a transformative effect on the learner. A discussion of pedagogies for generating critical thinking is reported in more depth elsewhere (Brown, 2014).

The study used a qualitative methodology to consider how participants explored premises and constructed knowledge through educational activities. Data were collected from seven organisations in each country, to gauge the range of activities available in these regions. Interviews were conducted with key staff and the cross-case analysis looked at how education practitioners understood transformative learning. Two organisations in each country were then selected purposefully with respect to the non-formal educational activities they conducted. Time was spent in these organisations attending meetings, analysing documentation and observing activities, and further interviews and focus groups were conducted with staff. Six activities of different types and lengths were observed, conducting interviews with learners to understand the extent to which the learning processes involved were transformative. These case studies are reported elsewhere (Brown, 2013).

I began the study by looking for organisations that provided development education in each country, looking for opportunities outside the capital city, as in Britain many development organisations are based in London, whereas in Spain NGOs tend to have regional offices. In the region

sampled for this research the only organisations conducting this work in Britain were development education centres (DECs), so all seven organisations were DECs located in the same region of England. In Spain there was greater decentralisation and a large number of development organisations in the regions sampled, so the seven NGDOs selected were based in four cities in the same region. I selected Spanish organisations which had development education as a significant part of their remit. Despite having diverse origins these organisations share many things in common and defined their organisational aims in broadly similar ways. However, there were some important differences.

In Spain, the seven organisations studied were small NGDOs, typical of the sector in Spain, which tended to run international development projects, often in Latin America. They would then run development education courses and activities to complement this work. The target population varied from teachers and young people to organised groups, such as community or women's groups. However, some courses were open to the public in general and tended to be accessed by university students and adults of all ages with an interest in social change or development cooperation. These courses ranged from online three-month courses on development theory and the role of technology in development, to seminar series over a week discussing a specific issue such as the right to water, gender violence or food sovereignty. There were also workshops and courses provided for people who wished to volunteer abroad on one of the organisations' projects. When this research was conducted in 2011 the NGDOs tended to be funded by the government department for international development cooperation (AECID) as well as other foundations and private donations.

The DECs in Britain were small educational charities, which had typically developed out of teachers' networks and with a historic focus on formal education. They generally had no international connections with the exception of some town or school twinning arrangements. The seven DECs sampled were typical of DECs in Britain more broadly. The non-formal activities they engaged in varied. For some, there was very little adult

education other than teacher training courses. For others, adult education took the form of one-off talks to church groups or women's institutes, or a stall in the city centre to discuss the Millennium Development Goals with members of the public. Some organisations ran regular workshops to which teachers, youth workers, students and any interested members of the public could attend to discuss issues such as human rights. One or two ran long-term global youth work projects with marginalised young people, often lasting over a year with weekly sessions. The DEC's received much of their funding from the UK government's Department for International development (DfID), and a few other sources such as the Big Lottery Fund.

Research findings

Opportunities for non-formal development education

Through the cross-case analysis it became clear that there were scarce opportunities for non-formal development education beyond one-off sessions, talks and awareness raising activities. This meant that there was rarely time to generate a safe space for challenging assumptions. Yet practitioners recognised the need for this in order for the learning to change participants' attitudes or behaviour and there was some consensus on the need for critical pedagogies to deeply engage learners, something very difficult to achieve in a one-off session.

Development education practitioners in both countries were clear about their aims and values, with a discourse closely aligned to theory and an understanding of critical pedagogies. Definitions of development education varied. The Spanish participants identified different 'generations' of development education, from the first generation based on charitable interventions and development understood as 'backwardness', to the fifth generation, understanding complexity and acting on injustice as global citizens. Practitioners' conceptions of the definition closely aligned with the theory and they were clear that the aim centred on generating active citizenship and transformation:

“The theoretical framework of development education has evolved ... it breaks the dichotomy of North and South; things are understood more in terms of inclusion and exclusion... So in order to eradicate poverty we have to overcome social injustice. The other important contribution of global citizenship in this framework is that it puts the accent on action, on transformation” (Dolores, development education practitioner, Spain).

In Britain there were numerous terms used with different nuances in meaning. British practitioners saw action as being promoted through ‘global citizenship education’, yet they also used the term ‘global learning’, in which there was a deeper focus on learning as the primary outcome. This is associated with methodologies such as *Open Spaces for Dialogue and Enquiry* (OSDE) and *Philosophy for Children*, which generated critical thinking and questioning of assumptions:

“Citizenship for me is about participation and taking action and so on, but global learning has a lot more about understanding the complexity of the issues involved” (Kate, development education practitioner, Britain).

DECs and NGDOs rarely provided non-formal education in which they opened new spaces for dialogue; something they acknowledged would advance their aims. They identified different phases of development education, from awareness-raising to deeper consciousness and action:

“We divide the work into three phases: one is to inform the public, the next is to create consciousness, and that people become more conscious of the information you are giving them, the last is to get people to act. So there are projects that work on each one of these levels” (Ignacio, development education practitioner, Spain).

However, most examples of non-formal development education in both countries did not go further than raising awareness, often due to time or funding restrictions. Since an engagement with complexity and power

relations required sustained learning, this meant they missed opportunities for the deeper engagement they saw as essential:

“Our role is about raising awareness, but it perhaps doesn’t go to that next step of critical engagement that we would like” (Rebecca, development education practitioner, Britain).

The practitioner discourse emphasises sustained, participative learning moving through several phases from increasing awareness and consciousness to facilitating informed action. Yet their work with adults very rarely takes these steps. In Britain, DECs often work with teachers, encouraging long-term projects that are often transformative, but these opportunities tend not to be provided outside the parameters of formal education. In Spain on the other hand, while there is often less focus on supporting critical pedagogies in practice, there are more spaces opened for adults to consider and discuss global issues. These range from seminar series on topics such as food sovereignty to cinema series where documentaries are shown in a public place, such as a bar or café, and practitioners or volunteers facilitate debate. There are instances of development education courses aimed at adults, both on-line and actual; these are sometimes associated with opportunities for international volunteering. Since the NGDOs also work in international development, with small projects overseas, there are also opportunities for learning through blogs from project workers and volunteer groups helping with project administration, providing a space to learn about other countries. Nevertheless, with the exception of a handful of notable examples, such as the seminar series in Spain or the Global Youth Action project in Britain, which offered transformative potential through opening safe spaces for collaborative learning ‘allowing learners to engage with complexity and to reflect on their own knowledge and presuppositions’ (Brown, 2013: 19), critical and sustained development education opportunities for adults are rare. This is despite the fact that the need for such spaces has been raised by practitioners, both in terms of the pedagogies they advocate and the perceived ways to meet the needs of the organisations.

Frames for development

It is clear that both NGDO and DEC practitioners in Spain and Britain oppose overconsumption and are keen to expose international trade rules that create inequality. They were critical of modernisation theories of development associated with neoliberal economic policies and the growth of markets, and of mass consumption seen as the positive outcome of linear development (Rostow, 1960). As such, development was framed in a way that aims to avoid presenting a Eurocentric perspective and neo-colonial assumptions are often questioned. As Andreotti (2008) argues, seeing ‘developed’ countries as ‘superior’ because of more ‘advanced levels of development’ is an assumption that needs to be questioned in development education. Practitioners in both countries were critical of approaches that portray people in other countries as powerless.

The British practitioners were particularly aware of the contradictions of the *Live Aid Legacy* (VSO, 2002), which claims that British public opinion about development has not changed since the 1980s notions of starvation and poverty as the only characteristics of ‘developing countries’. They were keen not to promote perceived deficits through negative imagery of other countries, which they argued would fail to engage people in working in solidarity towards fairer global systems:

“I think you need to sometimes be careful with the images and the ideas that have in the past been used by some NGOs in terms of fundraising and trying to build sympathy often around a cause, that don’t always have the most respectful or the most accurate image of a country... in the long run it doesn’t necessarily help with development awareness or development education” (Elizabeth, development education practitioner, Britain).

In Spain, practitioners have also discussed the importance of not reinforcing negative stereotypes, although they have not generally explored the neocolonial dimensions of working on international development projects in Latin America, for example, and to some extent this narrowed the

possibilities for deep learning. However, they were conscious of presenting an alternative to the perspective provided by the mainstream media, which they recognised could reinforce negative stereotypes:

“It’s important to inform citizens about these issues, because the media doesn’t help because ... almost always the images that they present of Africa, Asia and Latin America are ones of pure chaos, they’re only in the news if there’s a disaster” (Fernanda, development education practitioner, Spain).

To engage in the sort of deep learning required to challenge the complex assumptions related to development and structural justice, practitioners have claimed that questioning such deeply held assumptions takes time and that it is important to use a pedagogy that emphasises critical thinking, examining different perspectives and questioning assumptions to avoid recourse to stereotypes or cultural superiority:

“it’s reinforcing that idea, that these people are ... powerless, aren’t capable and are just always in poverty and it’s like these people in these developing countries are like this and they’re poor and they need our help, and I think we really need to move away from perceiving developing countries like that” (Jenny, development education practitioner, Britain).

Pedagogies for critical dialogue

There was agreement that development education is a process, which implies that it is difficult to achieve in a single session. The ideal is to work with people over a longer time to help them develop skills, become more open-minded and critical and to require evidence in support of attitudes and action. Critical reflection is generated through participative methodologies, where learners are ‘trying on’ different points of view and reconstructing narratives they held previously (Mezirow, 2000). New information from different perspectives is required to stimulate critical reflection, in which learners are encouraged to look at the sources and the agendas behind the information and consider a range of perspectives:

“you need to develop critical thinking skills to engage with that information, and decide where it’s coming from, what their agenda is, what’s useful for me now, in the future, whatever, and that you can only really understand when you go beyond your own perspective and look at other people’s perspectives” (Christopher, development education practitioner, Britain).

Therefore, exploring complex and controversial issues as a group requires a safe space in which to examine and question assumptions and stereotypes freely. During the research, this was done through the use of teaching methodologies which facilitated the open exploration of different perspectives and allowed all voices to be heard, focusing on constructing knowledge from the collective experience available in the room. DEC practitioners commented on challenging ethnocentric assumptions and on their use of methodologies and resources such as: *OSDE*; *Philosophy for Children*; *Communities of Enquiry*; *Connect, Challenge, Change*; and the *Development Compass Rose*. These helped learners develop questions and provided tools to challenge stereotypes, expectations and prejudices.

Definitions of dialogue varied. For some this was achieved through discussion and group work, while for others it was also about learning from the students and being open to perspectives they had not considered previously. It was agreed that all perspectives should be heard fairly and openly and this was facilitated by developing supportive relationships within the groups:

“Apart from getting to know other people that share the same values, it’s also the character of socialisation which the course has ... people don’t take long to form strong relationships within the group ... and personal implications lead to more collective implications ... it’s the multiplier effect, these people form networks and that extends it” (Carlos, development education practitioner, Spain).

So in addition to helping to create a safe space for dialogue, these relationships also contributed to transformation in that the learners found opportunities for networking and passing on what they had learned to others in their communities.

Transformation through learning

Sustained learning had a greater effect than short-term interaction which often took the form of campaigning and presenting only one dimension of an issue due to time restrictions. Two essential aspects of transformative learning were information provided from a range of perspectives and an opportunity to reflect on this and discuss the information critically and fairly in dialogue. Where there was a safe space to explore assumptions, the impact on the learners was more profound. On some occasions, there was a greater focus on providing a torrent of information which resembled ‘banking education’, in which students are seen as deposits for information rather than as constructors of knowledge (Freire, 1970), thus curtailing the transformative potential of the activity.

The balance between rich information and having time to reflect and assimilate this was extremely important. Of course, there is a need to avoid superficiality, and even error, in open discussions through providing a strong basis of information and evidence. Information is a first step towards critical engagement and without it discussions may lack substance. However, learners also needed time to engage with the information, to consider it in terms of their own experiences and to discuss it with peers. This process facilitated deeper understanding and reflection on the consequences of their learning. Where a range of perspectives were available and learners had time and space to explore their own assumptions, the learning experience was transformative.

Transformation was understood in a number of ways: i) learning about global issues and reflecting on the impact of daily actions on these, often resulting in changes in lifestyle or consumer choices; ii) passing learning on to others, such as friends and communities and encouraging more

widespread support of the issues; iii) supporting social movements and campaigning for change through protests and lobbying politicians to address unjust structures; and iv) donating time and resources through charities and humanitarian aid, although with this there was also a growing recognition of the need to analyse one's own position in and attitudes towards international structures, and the implications of power relations.

There was more of a drive in Spain towards action, whereas in Britain the focus was more on learning. Nevertheless, in both countries practitioners claimed that change, although often desirable, could never be assumed or enforced. Understanding and critical thinking were the primary objectives and these were seen to have transformational qualities that were personal to the learner; increased self-esteem, a desire to volunteer, or a shift in consumer choices such as a different relationship with food. Learners often showed signs of becoming critical of consumerism or more aware of alternatives. Although the outcome was small, this was often the result of a change in habits of mind and new ways of interpreting the world.

Responsible consumption was seen as an appropriate way for everyday actions to feed into larger struggle for fairness in global systems, one that required networking and citizenship action. Mesa (2011) has found that creating 'conscious consumers' is an important aspect of development education in Spain, and many learners commented on how development education had made them reflect on their attachment to material things. However, this was not presented as a panacea to global problems. It was important for learners to recognise their complicity in global structures and to make daily consumption patterns consistent with this. While individual actions were not seen as a sufficient response, they were regarded as a necessary step towards critical consciousness (Freire, 1970). Many courses, particularly in Spain, required learners to consider the implications of their actions on global structures through group work:

“it makes you think; ok so all this is great, but am I really prepared to take another step, you know, so this doesn't just become, I came

to a talk, I became more aware, but then my everyday life stays the same” (Manuela, course participant, Spain).

This did not prevent collective action. Indeed, it was often a vital step towards building networks of people acting in similar ways, or to joining social movements. The latter was rarely part of the remit of these NGOs, although by opening spaces for dialogue and bringing people together to discuss a particular global issue, they facilitated networking and further action for social change:

“Now I’m more interested in the idea of participation, citizenship in general ... I’m more involved in small actions, in the streets, things about solidarity ... Yeah, that’s something I’ve noticed has changed in me” (Belén, course participant, Spain).

When it came to extending the transformation further, practitioners discussed the importance of participating in community activities, solidarity and social movements and the importance of passing their learning on to others in their communities:

“It's such a positive influence that we're now passing around ... Everything that comes up now is something we can understand and take with us and pass it onto someone else” (Michael, course participant, Britain).

Implications for practice

This article has considered the perceptions of development education practitioners together with those of participants in development education activities in Britain and Spain. In so doing, it contributes to understanding how these organisations can provide transformative learning experiences that make learners more critically aware of issues of global social justice. It is worth reflecting on the findings that, despite valuing the pedagogies associated with transformative learning, such as participation and critical dialogue in a safe space, there were very few instances in which sustained learning opportunities allowed this to take place. NGOs and DECAs worked

hard not to promote stereotypical issues of developing countries as ‘poor’ or ‘lacking’ and in long-term learning processes there were signs of changes in the learners in terms of their attitudes to social justice and their behaviours. However, the key finding is that most organisations continued to run small, one-off awareness-raising sessions, which did not permit use of critical pedagogies or the opportunities for learners to question stereotypes of development. There may be many reasons for this, the main one being funding. Here I derive some tentative implications for policy and practice, which may improve development education in non-formal spaces, and identify aspects of good practice in each country that the other might find useful for developing practice.

First, the organisations were well placed to deliver critical development education, yet there were scarce development education opportunities for adults. By opening new spaces to bring people together to discuss global and development issues, DECs and NGOs provide opportunities for learning, as well as for networking and possibly collective action. Building networks enables people to search for local solutions such as forming cooperatives; this can be empowering and enriching and can be related to solidarity with other groups dealing with similar issues in other contexts. These spaces might consist of public places such as bars for showing and discussing documentaries, community spaces for seminars or workshops, or higher education institutions opening up to the public. Spain offered examples for long-term non-formal development education, such as volunteering, on-line courses, workshops and seminar series.

Second, transformative development education must aim for a balance between providing varied and thorough information for learners, and providing opportunities for them to reflect critically and to question information, including their own prior assumptions. While information is important, time to assess its accuracy, and to digest and consider the information from different perspectives as a group is also essential. The idea that all learners bring experience to the room and that the group can construct knowledge together may be helpful to support dialogue. Teaching tools and

methodologies used by DECs, such as OSDE, may also be useful when opening discussions.

Third, this implies the need for safe and open spaces, where everyone feels comfortable to voice their opinions and question ideas. No one should be afraid to play the role of devil's advocate, and both teachers and learners should look for the positive aspects of positions they do not themselves hold and to consider the impact of these on their assumptions. This is a difficult atmosphere to create and is more likely to be achieved if there is time to build relationships within the group and conduct activities that strengthen these relationships. Therefore, sustained engagement enables learners to be comfortable enough within the group to challenge assumptions openly and fully.

Fourth, everything must be on the table for debate, with all perspectives heard and respected and with learners free to reach their own conclusions. This means that even activities the organisations take for granted, such as international development projects or fair trade should be discussed and critiqued. Organisations must therefore accept that some learners will not share their views or objectives. To facilitate transformative development education, short-term goals must give way to a commitment to considering a range of perspectives, knowing that for some learners the long-term impact will be more transformative than a campaign, which has only a superficial impact albeit on many people.

Finally, *fair-minded* critical thinking (Paul, 1990): imagining other possible ways of understanding and genuinely questioning deep, taken-for-granted assumptions, is extremely difficult to facilitate. Development education activities need to identify different types of assumptions for examination. For example, socio-cultural norms can be reflected upon critically through examining the implications of modernisation and of alternative conceptualisations of development, consumerism, and economic growth. Neocolonial and ethnocentric assumptions can be challenged by reflecting on questions about what is knowledge and recognising why we see

the world in a particular way; and why it might be different for others. The role of charity and dichotomies such as ‘North’ and ‘South’ should be carefully considered and historical factors taken into account. Ecological assumptions can also be compared through different perspectives, such as differing scientific opinions, for example on climate change. Learners can then reflect on their own position and learning.

Practitioners in both contexts negotiated the relationship between learning and change, seeing participative dialogue and the use of information from a range of perspectives, as essential to generating deeper understanding and a critical consciousness. The discourses regarding development education practice were similar in each country. The main differences to emerge were in the activities they provided for non-formal education. It is here that they have most to gain from sharing practice, in terms of the opportunities they create and the pedagogies and spaces for reflection they open. Where they did open these spaces, the possibilities for critical understanding, engagement and networking for collective action were high and offered opportunities for transformation.

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