Global Education in the Spanish Educational Policies of Elementary and Primary Education: Utopia or Reality?

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Abstract: Global education is becoming increasingly relevant at the international level, since forming critical citizens who act against inequalities and in favor of sustainable development is undoubtedly the path to where social transformation should be headed. The role of formal education in developing global competence in students is undeniable, which makes it necessary to include it in educational policies. This study uses a qualitative perspective since a documentary analysis is made to investigate the treatment of global education in the current educational curricula in Spain for Elementary Education and Primary Education. The results show deficiencies when dealing with several key issues for the correct teaching of global education.
Key words: global citizenship education, educational policies, elementary education, primary education

Globalusis švietimas Ispanijos pradinio ugdymo švietimo politikoje: utopija ar realybė?

Santrauka. Globalusis švietimas tampa vis aktualesnis tarptautiniu lygmeniu, nes kritiškų piliečių, veikiančių prieš nelygybę ir už tvarų vystymąsi, ugdymas neabejotinai yra tinkamiausias socialinių transformacijų kelias. Formuojant mokinių globaliąją kompetenciją, labai svarbus vaidmuo tenka formaliajam ugdymui, todėl tai turi būti įtraukiama į švietimo politiką. Šiame tyrime naudojama kokybinė prieiga, tyrime atlikta dokumentų apie globaliojo švietimo traktavimą dabartinėse Ispanijos pradinio ugdymo programose analizė. Tyrimo rezultatai atskleidė trūkumus sprendžiant keletą pagrindinių globaliojo švietimo ugdymo problemų.
Pagrindiniai žodžiai: globalusis pilietiškumo ugdymas, švietimo politika, pradinis ugdymas

Introduction

The concept of global citizenship has a long history whose origins can be traced back to Stoic philosophy (Boni et al., 2020). However, Global Citizenship Education is becoming increasingly important due to the need to train people who actively participate in the transformation and cessation of the injustices of the globalized society in which we live. In this sense, at the international level, institutions such as the United Nations have issued a series of recommendations at the international level that are materialized in the 2030 Agenda with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and that mark the path to be followed at the international level (UN, 2015). The fourth of these SDGs focuses on issues related to the importance of promoting sustainable development, as well as peaceful conflict resolution, global citizenship, equality and respect for the diversity of cultures in society (UN, 2015), which are fundamental aspects for the achievement of global citizenship.

In addition, UNESCO speaks of the importance of educating for global citizenship (UNESCO, 2015) and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) incorporates global competence in its well-known PISA Report to assess students at the international level, as it considers it essential to work in the classrooms of any country "to end racism and discrimination, education cannot be solely responsible, but it can teach young people the importance of questioning cultural prejudices and stereotypes" (OECD, 2018, p. 6).

Along the same lines, for decades the European Union has been trying to complete the curricula of all educational levels in member countries to include in them issues directly related to global education such as solidarity, social justice, gender equality, environmental sustainability, peace... (Pastor-García et al., 2019).

Despite the growing presence of Global Citizenship Education (hereafter, GCE) in international debates, defining this concept is somewhat complicated due to the fact that it is a term that is not exempt from multiple interpretations and criticisms. Many studies have tried to establish a definition, such as Boni et al. (2020), Gaventa and Tandon, (2010) or Santamaría-Cárdaba (2020), however, there is currently no unanimity on this issue given that there are various critical opinions on the subject, as reported by Boni et al. (2020). In this sense, social movements have been wary of the use of the concept of global citizenship, considering it too institutionalized, linked to social democracy and with Eurocentric overtones (Garcés, 2018).

Beyond the criticisms made from political practice, we find those from the academic and intellectual perspective that focus on considering it as a term linked to Western culture, based on a Eurocentric democracy that does not pay attention to the diverse existing cultures (Barber & Battistoni, 1999, Walzer, 1999). Other voices add to these criticisms by considering that global citizenship does not take into account the fact that people's lives have undergone a strong privatization process, which favors global capitalism and acts to the detriment of community ties (Barcellona, 1996). Or those for whom the concept seems idealistic, as it fails to present a truly transformative process because it does not place geopolitics and the complex processes of political economy at the center of its

action, and therefore does not challenge the fundamental bases of the current centers of power (Falk, 2004). Having exposed some of the dissonant voices, it should be noted that today many authors allude to this concept by adding the adjective critical, with Critical GCE being the current trend when it comes to naming this educational process, which not only involves the formation of a global citizenship but must also develop in it the ability to think critically (Andreotti, 2006; Johnson & Morris, 2012; Santamaría-Cárdaba et al., 2021).

Taking as a reference the definitions established by Bourn (2015), Celorio (2017), Lourenço (2018) and Pashby et al. (2020) it should be noted that in this study Critical GCE is understood as an educational process in which the aim is to form autonomous citizens with critical awareness who think globally and act in favor of social justice and the fulfilment of Human Rights in order to transform society into a more sustainable and humane one.

Although the term GCE has not found a unanimously accepted definition, there is consensus on the four key dimensions that this type of education should contemplate: awareness raising, training, political advocacy and social mobilization (Boni & León, 2013), understood as: "a strategic action [...] a way of looking, feeling, acting and analysing reality" (Vicente Ferrer Foundation, 2014, p. 7). Therefore, GCE training must take on these dimensions to ensure the formation of global citizens who think critically and are able to act accordingly. The dimensions of GCS taken as a reference in this study are those proposed by Ortega (2007): sensitization, training, awareness-raising and mobilization. In this regard, the main features of each of these dimensions are highlighted below:

- Sensibilization "is a short-term action that warns about the causes of poverty and the structures that perpetuate it" (Ortega, 2008, p. 17).
- Training: this is a medium- and long-term action which includes educational processes that seek to develop skills and values by addressing issues related to exclusion or poverty.
- Awareness-raising: medium- and long-term action aimed at making people understand the social inequalities that exist both in their own country and at the North-South level.
- Mobilization: short- and medium-term action that seeks to make citizens active and understand that their actions can influence political decisions and can alter "social, economic and/or political structures in areas ranging from the local to the global" (Fueyo et al., 2015, p. 14).

GCE can be promoted through formal, nonformal and informal education (Argibay & Celorio, 2005); however, this paper focuses on Spanish formal education, i.e. that which is regulated through public policies that shape school curricula. We intend to analyze the presence of global citizenship education in current educational legislation since we understand that, if GCE is considered a priority objective in educational curricula, it can be interpreted that the government is interested in students developing as empowered, proactive and critically aware global citizens (Lourenço, 2017). If so, formal education would be promoting "an integral education, in which the social values of equity, justice,

solidarity, cooperation and coexistence are the guidelines that orient the curricular structuring of scientific, social, technical or artistic areas of knowledge" (Argibay & Celorio, 2005, p. 61).

Therefore, we believe it is necessary to promote global citizenship education in formal education in order to transform the world we live in into a fairer and more sustainable place. And this is where the aim of this research is focused: to analyze the public policies that regulate Early Childhood Education (0–6 years) and Primary Education (6–12 years) in Spain in order to discover how global citizenship education is treated.

Methodology

The methodological perspective of this study is qualitative, using documentary analysis as an approach technique (Bohnsack et al., 2010) given that using "published texts has an advantage..., it means that these are the ideas that in one way or another have circulated, have publicly influenced" (De Miguel, 1975, p. 15).

The documents analyzed in this study are institutional, specifically officially produced public documents (Verd & Lozares, 2016) which, moreover, can be considered as agents since they determine teachers' practices as they focus on the educational legislation in force. The documents that regulate the curriculum in Spain for the Infant Education (Royal Decree 1630/2006, of 29 December, establishing the minimum teaching requirements for the second cycle of Infant Education) and Primary Education (Royal Decree 126/2014 establishing the Primary Education curriculum) are analyzed with the intention of highlighting the importance given to the treatment of aspects related to Global Citizenship Education at these educational levels.

The official educational curricula in Spain have a particular structure that articulates all the key aspects of the regulations. On the one hand, general objectives are established that must be acquired throughout the entire educational stage, whether it is Pre-school or Primary Education. On the other hand, the different areas of knowledge are organized in which objectives, learning standards and assessment criteria are established for each content and for each educational level.

One problem that arises when analyzing legislative texts is the lack of dynamism that we find in them, due to their structure, as opposed to the analysis of other types of documents such as life stories, interviews, etc. One of the characteristics of the texts selected to carry out this work is that they are static texts, an aspect that makes it somewhat difficult to analyze their content (Soriano-Miras & Trinidad, 2014). For this reason, we studied the educational legislation in force in Spain in an attempt to establish the relationship between the normative precepts and the current social reality, in order to answer the question of whether GCE is an aspect that is given the necessary importance in today's society.

In order to guide the analysis, the following categories and subcategories have been established and are shown in Table 1. On the one hand, the categories are based on the division of the objectives of GCE promoted by Ortega (2007): sensitizing, training, raising awareness and mobilizing, and on the other hand, the subcategories emerge from the

review of the existing academic literature on GCE (Andreotti, 2006; Argibay & Celorio, 2005; Boni & León, 2013; Boni et al, 2020; Bourn, 2015; Celorio, 2017; Dieste et al., 2019; Pashby et al., 2020, among others). These categories emerging from the literature were subjected to validation by national and international experts before being applied to our research, which makes our analysis more rigorous.

Table 1. *Categories and subcategories of analysis.*

CATEGORY	SUBCATEGORY
1.SENSIBILI-ZATION	1.1. To understand the political, economic, social and cultural relations between countries that show the reasons for the increase in exclusion and inequality
	1.2. To learn about the situation of poverty and its causes
	1.3. To be committed to sustainable development
	1.4. To raise awareness of inequalities
2. TRAIN	2.1. Encourage the acquisition of attitudes and values so that people are responsible for their actions, since they affect not only themselves but also others
	2.2. To provide all citizens with the possibility to express themselves freely and the ability to make decisions
3. AWARE-NESS	3.1. To train responsible, active and dialogic people who resolve conflicts without violence
	3.2. Develop a critical awareness of reality and disseminate the importance of respect, equality, solidarity and tolerance.
	3.3. Promote the formation of a critical citizenry that is involved in political issues and social mobilization actions.
4. MOBILIZE	4.1. Forming a citizenry that denounces injustices and acts against political decisions that support dehumanized development.
	4.2. Propose solutions to change the unjust established international order and denounce situations of injustice that lead to dehumanized development.

Source: Prepared by the authors.

Once the texts to be analyzed had been selected and the categories and subcategories had been configured, a detailed reading of each of the documents was carried out in which the categories were identified. The information was recorded by marking the sentence as the unit of analysis (ending in either a full stop or a semicolon).

In the following section, the results obtained from the analysis of the aforementioned legislative documents and their discussion with the academic literature on the subject of GCE are presented.

Results

Throughout this section, we study the presence of the GCE in Royal Decree 1630/2006, of 29 December, which establishes the minimum teachings for the second cycle of Pre-

school Education, and in Royal Decree 126/2014, which establishes the Primary Education curriculum. This analysis, as mentioned above, is configured according to the educational level and following the division of the aims of the GCE proposed by Ortega (2007): Sensibilization, Training, Awareness-raising and Mobilization.

GCE in the Early Childhood Education Curriculum

Sensitization in aspects related to Global Citizenship Education in Early Childhood Education stage

When it comes to proposing measures from the official curriculum to sensitize students to issues related to exclusion and existing inequality, it can be observed that only allusion is made to the need to live in society and the understanding that without rules of coexistence, community life would be more complex. In this sense, everything concerning the political, economic, social and cultural relations established between countries or the consequences that may derive from them on exclusion and inequality are not mentioned either explicitly or implicitly. On the other hand, the rules of coexistence in the evaluation of the area of knowledge of the environment is once again affected when it is pointed out as an aspect to assess the acquisition "of awareness of the need for social, it will be estimated by verbalizing some of the consequences that, for the life of people, would have the absence of social organizations, as well as the need to be provided with rules to coexist" (Royal Decree 1630/2016, p.480). Here, the need for reflection on the aspects that concern coexistence in society is exposed, but it is not made explicit whether it should be done at a local, global level or both.

The students' awareness of poverty and its causes is a deficiency that has been found in the Early Childhood Education curriculum, since at no time do they cover these situations existing in the social reality. Likewise, linked to the existing social problems, it can be pointed out that sustainable development does not appear in these regulations, although there are allusions to the need to take care of nature and act respectfully with the environment, as can be seen in the following stage objective: "To observe and explore their family, natural and social environment" (Royal Decree 1630/2006, p. 474).

In relation to the awareness of inequalities, the Infant Education curriculum does not pay special attention to this issue, as in fact the term inequality does not even appear in all the regulations; however, there is an allusion to the importance of respecting differences as can be seen in the following stage objective: "to know one's own body and that of others, their possibilities of action and to learn to respect differences" (Royal Decree 1630/2006, p. 474).

The results obtained from analyzing the proposed subcategories on training in the Early Childhood Education curriculum are shown below.

Training on aspects related to Global Citizenship Education at the Early Childhood Education stage

The official curriculum of Early Childhood Education seeks to train people to act responsibly and respectfully with others, as can be seen in two of the objectives; the first in the

area of self-knowledge and personal autonomy: "To adapt their behavior to the needs and requirements of others, developing attitudes and habits of respect, help and collaboration, avoiding behaviors of submission or domination" (Real Decreto 1630/2006, p. 477) and the second of the area of knowledge of the environment: "To know different social groups close to their experience, some of their characteristics, cultural productions, values and ways of life, generating attitudes of trust, respect and appreciation" (Royal Decree 1630/2006, p. 479). However, these results indicate that more could be done in terms of awakening a sense of responsibility in the students of Early Childhood Education.

The formation of people who can make their own decisions and express themselves freely is a purpose pursued by GCE, as these are essential skills when developing active people. The Early Childhood Education curriculum does not directly develop the ability to decide and only alludes to the ability to express oneself in the objective: "Develop communicative skills in different languages and forms of expression" (Royal Decree 1630/2006, p. 474) and in the following objective of the area of self-knowledge and personal autonomy, specifically in: "Identify one's own feelings, emotions, needs or preferences, and be able to name them, express them and communicate them to others, identifying and respecting, also, those of others" (Royal Decree 1630/2006, p. 477).

The results obtained from analyzing the presence of the subcategories included in the awareness-raising category are detailed below.

Raising awareness of aspects related to Global Citizenship Education at the Early Childhood Education stage

Awareness of issues related to GCE is not especially reinforced in the official curriculum, since neither student participation in political issues nor social mobilization are aspects that are addressed in the analyzed regulations. However, the formation of active people who peacefully resolve conflicts is present in this curriculum, as can be seen in one of the general objectives: "To relate with others and progressively acquire elementary guidelines for coexistence and social relations, as well as to exercise in the peaceful resolution of conflicts" (Royal Decree 1630/2006, p. 474).

Regarding the acquisition of a critical awareness of reality and the development of attitudes of respect, equality or solidarity, this is present in the curriculum analyzed. ; specifically in the area of self-knowledge and personal autonomy and also in the following objective of the area of knowledge of the environment: "To know different social groups close to their experience, some of their characteristics, cultural productions, values and ways of life, generating attitudes of trust, respect and appreciation" (Royal Decree 1630/2006, p. 479). However, the word solidarity does not appear on any occasion in the regulations and the same happens with equality and tolerance, being something that should be solved in order to transmit to students the need to stop inequality from an early age.

Finally, the following section deals with the results of the analysis related to mobilization in the Early Childhood Education curriculum.

Mobilization in aspects related to Global Citizenship Education at the Early Childhood Education stage

The importance of mobilizing citizens to achieve social transformation is a key issue for GCE, as the population must act to change existing social injustices and inequalities. However, the Early Childhood Education curriculum does not include any formative issue to educate people to act against injustices, dehumanized development, unjust international order and policies that cause dehumanized development, but, if they begin to include the importance of providing guidelines for social behavior and being respectful or peaceful problem-solving .

In summary, the analysis carried out reveals that the regulations for early childhood education have several shortcomings, especially when it comes to awakening citizen mobilization, solidarity, tolerance or trying to make students understand the situation of poverty in the world and its causes, as well as its consequences. Next, after showing the results of the presence of GCE in the Early Childhood Education curriculum, we move on to study its treatment in the Primary Education regulations.

GCE in the Primary Education curriculum

Sensitization in aspects related to Global Citizenship Education in Primary Education stage

When analyzing awareness of GCE issues in the Primary Education curriculum, it can be seen that socio-political issues that cause exclusion and inequality are only dealt with from the perspective of learning to live actively in society, but no reference is made to the existing relations between countries and their consequences in the form of inequalities. Furthermore, when it comes to proposing measures from the official curriculum to raise students' awareness of issues related to exclusion and existing inequality, we can observe that only allusion is made to the need to live in society and the understanding that without rules of coexistence, community life would be more complex. This can be seen in the objectives of the Social Sciences area when the regulations state that:

> It is also contemplated as an end, to the achievement of which the Spanish educational system is oriented, the preparation for the exercise of citizenship and for active participation in economic, social and cultural life, with a critical and responsible attitude and with the ability to adapt to the changing situations of the knowledge society. (Royal Decree 126/2014, p. 19373)

GCE emphasizes the importance of promoting sustainable development and, in view of this, the curriculum analyzed presents profound shortcomings, since it only alludes to this issue on three occasions with the aim of preserving the environment. By way of example, sustainable development appears in the section on cross-cutting elements, pointing out that:

> Primary Education curricula will incorporate curricular elements related to sustainable development and the environment, the risks of sexual exploitation and abuse, risk situations derived from the use of Information and Communication Technologies, as well as protection against emergencies and catastrophes. (Royal Decree 126/2014, p. 19356)

Raising students' awareness of relevant issues such as poverty and its causes is not covered in the official curriculum of this educational stage. However, it can be noted that the term inequality is included in the regulations on three occasions, all of them among the learning standards of the area of Social and Civic Values, which has an optional nature and, therefore, not all students take this subject, for example: "Identifies and critically analyzes social inequalities" (Royal Decree 126/2014, p. 19419).

After showing the results related to awareness of these issues in the primary school curriculum, the results obtained in the category related to training are shown.

Training on aspects related to Global Citizenship Education at the Primary Education stage

The formation of responsible people is one of the issues that must be covered in official curricula if we want to educate people capable of living together in society. In this sense, the Primary Education curriculum does develop a sense of responsibility in learners, as can be seen in the following general objective: "To develop habits of individual and teamwork, effort and responsibility in study, as well as attitudes of self-confidence, critical sense, personal initiative, curiosity, interest and creativity in learning, and entrepreneurial spirit" (Royal Decree 126/2014, p. 19353).

Additionally, students need to be able to express themselves in order to relate adequately; in this sense, the official curriculum promotes the development of student expression in the subjects of Spanish Language and Literature, Physical Education and Social and Civic Values. As an example, among the learning standards of the subject of Physical Education, the development of students' expression is appreciated, especially in the following: "They expose their ideas coherently and express themselves correctly in different situations and respect the opinions of others" (Royal Decree 126/2014, p. 19409).

On the other hand, the ability to make decisions is something necessary in GCE, since global citizens must be able to act in defense of Human Rights and social justice. The analyzed curriculum includes this issue in Social Sciences, specifically in the following learning standard of the first block of common contents: "Plans group work, coordinates teams, makes decisions and accepts responsibilities" (Royal Decree 126/2014, p. 19374). And, in the following learning standard of the mathematics area: "Makes decisions in the processes of problem solving valuing the consequences of the same and their convenience for their simplicity and usefulness" (Royal Decree 126/2014, p. 19388).

Having shown the results on the aspects linked to training, we go on to detail those obtained by studying the subcategories marked on awareness.

Raising awareness of aspects related to Global Citizenship Education at the Primary Education stage

GCE requires students to be aware of various issues that facilitate coexistence and improve social relations at a global level. In this aspect, the official curriculum analyzed alludes on several occasions to the peaceful resolution of conflicts, as can be seen in

the following general objective: "To develop their affective capacities in all areas of the personality and in their relationships with others, as well as an attitude against violence, prejudices of any kind and sexist stereotypes" (Royal Decree 126/2014, p. 19354).

The acquisition of critical awareness, as mentioned above, is a relevant issue for GCE, since citizens must be able to think for themselves and contrast information to make decisions based on their own judgment. In this aspect, the Primary Education curriculum refers to this issue on several occasions, as in the following general objective: "To be initiated in the use, for learning, of Information and Communication Technologies by developing a critical spirit towards the messages they receive and elaborate" (Royal Decree 126/2014, p. 19354). And, in subjects such as Spanish Language and Literature, Physical Education or Social and Civic Values.

On the other hand, the Primary Education curriculum does try to sensitize students to issues related to solidarity, equality, and tolerance. Specifically, these aspects are addressed, on the one hand, in the optional subject of Social and Civic Values and, on the other hand, in the subject of Social Sciences, when it is stated that:

> The ultimate purpose of the area is to achieve the transmission and implementation of values that favor personal freedom, responsibility, democratic citizenship, solidarity, tolerance, equality, respect and justice, as well as helping to overcome any type of discrimination. (Royal Decree 126/2014, p. 19373)

These results reveal that, despite addressing these issues in the regulations, their presence is reduced since they are only addressed in two areas, one of them being optional, which means that not all students take it. In the words of Arvayo-Mata and Rodríguez (2015): "it is the task of schools to inculcate this type of values and customs, so that little by little mentalities are transformed" (p. 27).

When it comes to educating citizens to mobilize and actively participate in political issues, the official curriculum does not work on these issues. In fact, the only thing related to political issues appears in the third block of contents, called "Living in society", of the area of Social Sciences: on the one hand, about this topic appeared a content linked to the political organization of Spain, which is: "the social, political and territorial organization of the Spanish State" (Royal Decree 126/2014, p. 19376); and, on the other hand, in the following learning standard in which European policies are taken into consideration: "Explain what is the European Union and what are its political and economic objectives and locate on a map the member countries and their capitals" (Royal Decree 126/2014, p. 19376).

If the aim is to form an active citizenship that transforms the world into a more sustainable and just place, it is necessary to work on the importance of mobilizing to confront social injustices. In fact, it should not be forgotten that public education should form citizens who actively participate in democratic societies, which makes it necessary to teach from educational centers the need to participate in political and social issues (Bolivar, 2016).

Next, after showing the results related to awareness of *GCE* issues, we will go on to detail those obtained in the last category established – mobilization.

Mobilization in aspects related to Global Citizenship Education at the Primary Education stage

When analyzing in the Primary Education curriculum various issues related to mobilization, it has been possible to appreciate several shortcomings in such regulations, since they do not cover at any time the proposal of solutions to change the unjust international order or the denunciation of situations of injustice that cause a dehumanized development. In this sense, the only allusion to citizen mobilization that appears in said regulation is participation in social life; in fact, this reference is particular since it is only made in the area of Social and Civic Values, which is optional and may not be taken by all students, in the following learning standard: "Actively participate in civic life valuing equal rights and co-responsibility of men and women" (Royal Decree 126/2014, p. 19419).

In summary, the Primary Education curriculum covers more issues than that of the previous educational stage, but it still does not give relevance to the mobilization of students as agents of social change and does not include poverty, its causes and consequences among the issues that students should learn. The conclusions drawn from this study are detailed in the following section.

Discussion

The reduced treatment of issues linked to the increase in exclusion and inequality between countries reveals the need to improve educational policies, since the Early Childhood Education stage is of special relevance for students to develop moral structures that focus on building a more just society (García-Peinado et al., 2011; Nixon & Adwinkle, 2005). However, although a priori it seems a complex content to work on at these ages, studies such as Puig and Espino (2018) show that it is not only possible, but necessary to form a global citizenship with critical awareness. And the same happens in the Primary Education curriculum, since there is no allusion to the existing inequalities between countries and their causes, so as Coque et al. (2012) state, it is necessary that educational regulations include the teaching of global inequalities.

> ...in the distribution of wealth and power, its causes and consequences, and the role that, as an active subject in a globalized world, it has in building fairer structures that allow all citizens to enjoy the same opportunities and possibilities to develop a life of dignity and full rights. (Coque et al., 2012, p. 90).

Along the same lines, there is a lack of work on poverty in the curricula of Early Childhood Education and Primary Education, which makes it important to add the treatment of this issue in order to show students the social reality. In the opinion of authors such as Jiménez et al. (2014), teaching younger students about the growing social inequality is necessary, since the need to encourage social commitment to try to curb poverty is becoming more and more imperative. In this sense, educational institutions must contemplate these issues in educational curricula because "fighting injustices is not only in the hands of governments, policy makers and administrations, but the school has much to say and do" (Perinés & Hidalgo, 2018, p. 35).

Sustainable development is an issue that does not have a high presence in the curricula of both Early Childhood Education and Primary Education. In this sense, teaching students in Early Childhood Education to preserve the environment and act in favor of sustainable development is essential; in fact, authors such as Perdomo (2020) or Seijo et al. (2017) present didactic experiences in this educational stage on environmental awareness with positive results. Cortés and García-Morís (2014) or Espinet (1995) use stories in their studies to transmit the need to act in favor of sustainable development in a successful way, thus approaching the way students learn at these ages. Based on these results, the teaching of Sustainable Development remains very limited in both educational stages, since the educational curricula should promote the Sustainable Development Goals to form citizens committed to Human Rights and social justice (Dieste et al., 2019; Goren & Yemini, 2017).

Regarding inequalities, the curricula of both educational stages show shortcomings, which are especially incipient in the Early Childhood Education stage. In this line, these shortcomings should be solved because it is necessary to raise awareness among students to understand the existing inequalities, so studies such as Gorospe, Aberasturi and Barragán (2016), Kenneth (2010) or Méndez-Núñez and Murillo (2017) stress the need for Early Childhood Education teachers to be properly trained to educate in favor of social justice and the same applies to students in Primary Education.

The sense of responsibility in Early Childhood Education should be worked on more in the curriculum, since when dealing with "the value of responsibility in children in […] Early Childhood Education, obedience to adults is being worked on, making it impossible for children to adopt a different perspective from their own, and thus begin to develop prosocial behaviors" (Monsalvo & Guaraná, 2008, p. 8). And the same happens with the ability to express themselves and make decisions because, as Brown et al. (2009), or Gallego and Gutiérrez (2015) point out, from educational policies, the ability to make decisions is beneficial for students in early childhood education because, in this way, they begin to develop independent attitudes without parents being present to guide their decisions, thus shaping critical thinking from an early age.

Additionally, the inclusion of these aspects in the curriculum is also a relevant issue in the training of Primary Education students, since developing social responsibility is crucial for the comprehensive training of students and for coexistence in society (González et al., 2018). The same occurs with the ability to express oneself in increasingly multicultural classrooms by accepting the perceptions of others either orally, in writing, bodily or using technologies (Aranda & Pantoja, 2005; Sánchez, 2019). Even, decision making should acquire greater presence in Primary Education regulations given that developing autonomy and self-regulation is beneficial for students (Bolivar, 2019). From this perspective, Chalarca and González (2016) state that:

> The issue of decision making, therefore, becomes vital for all subjects in all contexts, which offers the possibility to think in a problematic way about decision making in the classroom, to the extent that, as it is a microcosm in scale of the social world, the constitutive bases for future decision makers are configured and generated in the classroom. (p. 71)

Awareness of the issues present in GCE does not have a significant weight in the regulations analyzed, which is something that should be solved given the importance of raising public awareness of social inequalities. In this line, authors such as Bisquerra et al. (2015), Motos and Saurí (2019) and Terzi (2014) point out that educating emotions to accept the diversity of opinions, be supportive and learn to manage conflicts to improve coexistence and curb inequality is a challenge of Early Childhood Education. This, in turn, is a challenge for society, since violence should never be an option for resolving conflicts and, therefore, GCE seeks to develop skills to solve problems in a respectful and peaceful manner. In fact, in the opinion of Carrillo-Pérez (2016), García (1998) or Pérez and Galiana (2015), in today's society there is a growing concern about problems related to violence, so the school has an undeniable role in the development of peaceful attitudes for conflict resolution. Therefore, GCE promotes the peaceful resolution of problems since it promotes the defense of peaceful societies that actively cooperate with each other and help each other trying to equalize the existing social differences.

Additionally, the above results reveal that the training of critical thinking should be more present in all regulations, paying special attention to the Primary Education curriculum, since the systematic implementation of activities to develop this thinking has beneficial results for the comprehensive education of students (Sousa & Vieira, 2019). In this sense, attempts should be made to promote critical thinking from all areas, as it can be worked on, for example, using information and communication technologies (Hernández et al., 2015), in the area of science (Blanco-López et al., 2017) or mathematics (Tenreiro-Vieira & Vieira, 2013) to ensure the formation of global citizens who think critically.

Ultimately, the aspects linked to the mobilization of students to actively participate in all aspects of society by defending the fulfillment of Human Rights and a more sustainable and humane development are an issue that is not addressed in the official curricula. In this sense, as García-Cano et al. (2017) warn, not only should active citizenship be promoted from the educational curricula, but it is also necessary for teachers to possess the correct training for this purpose. Likewise, Sánchez (2008) points out in his study on the fight against inequalities in Early Childhood Education that it is necessary for these issues to be promoted from the institutions because "a government that relies on universal suffrage cannot succeed if those who elect and obey its rulers are not educated" (Dewey, 1916, p. 81). Therefore, in accordance with the above, citizen participation should be promoted from the educational curricula to confront inequalities and denounce any situation of injustice. In the words of Cox et al. (2005):

> All these competencies [...] are acquired and are an important part of political socialization. But their acquisition depends as much on the organization and culture of the school, on the nature of the interactions among peers and between students and teaching and administrative staff, on the pedagogical forms used by teachers as on the explicit instruction of content to develop these competencies. (p. 8)

Conclusions

The public policies that regulate Early Childhood Education and Primary Education in Spain present shortcomings to form global citizens with critical conscience as we expose in the following lines, in which we detail the conclusions that have been obtained from the documentary analysis of the official curricula already mentioned.

The Organic Law 8/2013 for the improvement of educational quality, which regulates the Royal Decrees we have analyzed, establishes as purposes of education in Spain: training for peace, social cohesion, life in common, cooperation and solidarity among peoples, respect for human rights, as well as the acquisition of values conducive to sustainable development, aspects proper to GCE. However, as has become evident, the achievement of this goal is not explicitly stated throughout the curricula of Pre-school and Primary Education. Therefore, we are in a position to affirm that we are incurring in a manifest contradiction, since the work of GCE is not being given the importance it requires.

On the one hand, in relation to the aspects linked to awareness-raising, there is a lack of teaching students about the causes of the increase in exclusion, inequality and poverty in both Pre-school and Primary Education. Next, we found that the aspects linked to training in GCE reveal that educational policies should have a greater impact on autonomous decision making, especially in Early Childhood Education. Likewise, the aspects linked to awareness-raising should improve their treatment in the curricula analyzed, since student participation in political issues and the development of attitudes of respect, equality or solidarity are key issues that should undoubtedly be worked on in schools, since formal education should go beyond the mere transmission of content. On the other hand, mobilization is the category with the lowest presence in the educational policies analyzed, which reveals that both in Early Childhood Education and Primary Education the formation of an active citizenship that thinks critically and acts to transform society into a more sustainable and fair society, as promoted by the aims of education, should be promoted.

Therefore, we can affirm that it is necessary to include all these issues related to GCE in the regulations since it would improve the training provided to students in these educational stages and, in addition, it is one of the aims that education seeks to achieve. Therefore, as proposals for improvement, we point out aspects related to fostering in students' attitudes that promote social mobilization, raising students' awareness by teaching them about the causes of poverty, causes and consequences of inequalities , encouraging the development of their autonomy and decision-making capacity, and working on the acquisition of values such as respect and solidarity. These improvements should be implemented by making it compulsory to work on them in the official curricula, both explicitly in certain subjects and transversally, in the form of contents common to all of them. In addition, this research has several future lines of research, such as analyzing the presence of GCE in curricula in other countries and carrying out comparative studies or analyzing the new educational legislation (called LOMLOE) that is expected to be implemented in Spain during the 2022/2023 academic year to see if the situation of GCE has changed.

Consequently, the treatment of education for the formation of critical global citizens presents contradictions and shortcomings in the educational policies analyzed, which leads us to assume what Castellví and González-Monfort (2020) pointed out: "despite the urgency of educating for a critical global citizenship, it seems that this project is still utopian [...] and that its penetration in official curricula is merely anecdotal" (p. 172).

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