



## **Global Citizenship Education towards Fostering a Resilience Future and Cross-Cultural Understanding in Nigeria**

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### **Abstract**

The paper advocated that Global Citizenship Education represents a transformative educational approach aimed at preparing students for a resilient future to navigate and contribute to an increasingly interconnected world. The paper adopted the use of theoretical and literature review to explain the need for Global Citizenship Education, by focusing on global awareness, respect for cultural diversity, and active engagement by the individual students. The paper opined that a deep understanding of Cross-Cultural dynamics is required to equip students with essential skills in tackling global challenges. Global Citizenship Education might possibly help students to develop resilience, empathy, enhance their global competency, and actively engage in meaningful activities. Implementation of Global Citizenship Education can be a crucial educational framework for the 21st century; offering students with the tools and attitude necessary for responsible global citizenship and resilient in a rapidly evolving world.

**Keywords:** Global; Citizenship Education; Fostering; Resilient Future, Cross Cultural Understanding and Nigeria.



## Introduction

In today's world, that is characterized by rapid globalization and unprecedented interconnectivity fostering a resilient future and cross-cultural understanding has become more vital than ever before. As people, ideas, and cultures become increasingly intertwined across borders, the ability to navigate and appreciate this diversity is essential for harmonious coexistence and building a resilient future for students. Traditional educational systems, however, often focus predominantly on local and national or regional perspectives. This localized approach can inadvertently narrow students' views, limiting their exposure to and appreciation of the myriad cultures and viewpoints that shape our global society. Traditional education typically emphasizes content that aligns with national narratives and local histories, which, while important, can sometimes overshadow the rich tapestry of global experiences.

Beineke and Zepp, (2021) opined that this focus might inadvertently lead to a limited understanding of international issues and cultural differences, as students may not be adequately prepared to engage with or appreciate the complexities of a globalized world. In a classroom setting that prioritizes local and nationalistic perspectives, students may miss out on opportunities to develop the skills and attitudes needed for effective interaction with people from diverse cultural backgrounds.

To solve the problem of limited understanding of international affairs and fostering resilience in students, Barker and Clark (2020) opined that Global Citizenship Education (GCE) offers a progressive and inclusive approach that seeks to address these gaps. GCE is designed to equip students with the knowledge, skills, and attitudes necessary for thriving in a complex and interconnected world. It emphasizes the importance of understanding global interdependencies, recognizing and respecting cultural diversity, and actively participating in efforts to address global challenges. Unlike traditional education, GCE is not confined by national borders or local contexts; instead, it fosters a broader perspective that encourages students to think globally and act responsibly. By incorporating GCE into educational curricula, students are exposed to a variety of cultural perspectives and global issues, enabling them to develop a more comprehensive understanding of the world. This approach goes beyond mere awareness; it cultivates the ability to engage empathetically with people from different backgrounds and to participate in meaningful dialogue about global challenges. Through this educational lens, students learn to appreciate the richness of cultural diversity and the value of collaborative problem-solving in addressing issues such as climate change, human rights, social justice and many others (Iroriteraye-Adjekpovu & Nwabuaku, 2024).

The importance of Global Citizenship Education in fostering Cross-Cultural Understanding in Nigeria cannot be underestimated. The critical need of fostering a resilient future for peaceful cohabitation among the various ethnic groups in Nigeria and the global community can only be achieved through the implementation and practice of Global Citizenship Education (Jimoh & Adebajo, 2022). This could help in fostering resilience nurture and cross-cultural understanding among students, individuals and citizens within and outside Nigeria. This is the thrust of this position paper.



## **Pedagogical Approaches to Global Citizenship Education for a Resilient Future**

### **Curriculum Design**

An effective Global Citizenship Education (GCE) curriculum is designed to weave global issues and diverse perspectives into the fabric of various academic subjects, offering students a resilience future and a comprehensive/interconnected understanding of the world. This integrative approach not only enriches students' knowledge of different cultures but also encourages them to approach global challenges from a range of viewpoints, thereby fostering a deeper and more nuanced comprehension of these issues. Thematic Units are one of the key strategies for designing an effective GCE curriculum. By embedding themes such as climate change, human rights, and global justice into the curriculum, educators can highlight the relevance of these critical issues across multiple discipline.

According to Beineke and Zepp (2021), thematic units can facilitate the exploration of these topics in a way that transcends individual subjects, allowing students to see the connections between them, for example, environmental science and social justice or economics and human rights. This approach not only broadens students' understanding of global issues but also helps them recognize the interdisciplinary nature of these challenges. By studying themes like climate change or global inequality from scientific, historical, and ethical perspectives, students gain a more comprehensive view of how these issues impact different countries, cultures and societies.

### **Global Case Studies**

The use of global case studies could represent another effective strategy for integrating global perspectives into the curriculum. By using real-world examples to illustrate the interconnectedness of global issues and the influence of cultural differences, case studies enable students to connect theoretical knowledge with practical experiences. Miller and Eimicke (2023) emphasize that case studies are powerful tools for demonstrating how global challenges, such as pandemics, economic crises, or human rights abuses, manifest in different contexts and affect diverse populations. Through detailed examinations of specific events or situations, students can explore the complexities of global dynamics and understand how cultural, political, and economic factors interplay in shaping these issues. For instance, a GCE curriculum might incorporate a case study on the impact of climate change on different regions, comparing how rising sea levels affect island nations versus coastal cities on different continents. Such a case study would allow students to explore not only the scientific aspects of climate change but also its socio-economic and cultural implications. Similarly, examining global human rights issues through case studies of different countries or communities can help students understand how local practices and international norms intersect and affect individuals differently across the globe.

### **Teaching Methods**

In Global Citizenship Education (GCE), pedagogical methods play a crucial role in transforming theoretical knowledge into practical, meaningful learning experiences (Atubi & Ogheneakoke, 2020, Khan & Tabassum (2024) & Keppens et al. 2024). These methods emphasize active, experiential learning and are designed to immerse students in diverse perspectives, thereby fostering a deeper understanding of global issues and cultures. Two particularly effective pedagogical strategies in GCE are collaborative projects and role-playing or simulations. Collaborative Projects are a cornerstone of experiential learning in GCE. By



engaging students in joint initiatives with peers from various cultural backgrounds, these projects facilitate cross-cultural dialogue and teamwork. According to Dooly and O'Dowd (2022), such collaborative projects can take various forms, including virtual exchanges and joint research initiatives. Virtual exchanges, for example, involve students from different countries working together on shared tasks, such as collaborative research or problem-solving activities conducted through digital platform. These projects not only allow students to interact with and learn from peers in different cultural contexts but also help them develop essential skills in communication, cooperation, and cultural sensitivity. The collaborative nature of these projects encourages students to navigate cultural differences, negotiate diverse viewpoints, and work towards common goals. This hands-on approach to learning helps students understand global issues from multiple perspectives and prepares them to engage in international collaboration. By working together on real-world problem, students gain practical experience in addressing global challenges and develop a greater appreciation for the complexities of intercultural interactions.

Role-playing and Simulations are another powerful pedagogical method in GCE, providing dynamic ways for students to explore and empathize with different cultural experiences. Barker and Clark (2020) highlight the effectiveness of these methods in helping students understand diverse viewpoints and cultural contexts. Role-playing exercises involve students assuming the roles of individuals from various cultural backgrounds or participating in scenarios that require them to navigate different cultural norms and practices.

Simulations, on the other hand, recreate real-world situations, allowing students to experience and respond to them in a controlled setting. These methods offer students an immersive learning experience that encourages them to step outside their cultural frameworks and view the world through the eyes of others. For example, a simulation of an international negotiation on climate change might require students to represent different countries with varying interests and perspectives. Through this exercise, students can better understand the complexities of global diplomacy and the challenges involved in reaching a consensus on international issues. Role-playing and simulations also foster empathy by allowing students to engage with the emotional and social dimensions of cultural experiences. By actively participating in scenarios that reflect real-world conflicts, injustices, or cultural practices, students can develop a more nuanced and empathetic understanding of the diverse experiences of others.

## Assessment and Evaluation

Assessing the effectiveness of Global Citizenship Education (GCE) requires a nuanced approach that evaluates not only students' knowledge about global issues but also their development of intercultural skills. To capture the full spectrum of learning outcomes associated with GCE, educators employ various assessment tools that emphasize both cognitive understanding and practical competencies. Two particularly effective methods for this purpose are reflective journals and portfolios. Reflective Journals are a valuable tool for assessing students' growth in GCE. By encouraging students to maintain reflective journals, educators provide them with a space to document their personal experiences and insights related to cross-cultural interactions. According to Wang and Zhang (2024), reflective journals promote deeper self-awareness and learning by allowing students to articulate their thoughts and reflections on their experiences. These journals can include entries about interactions with peers from different cultural backgrounds, reflections on global issues discussed in class, or personal insights gained from experiential learning activities such as simulations or collaborative projects. The process of regularly writing in a reflective journal helps students internalize their



learning and make connections between theoretical concepts and real-world experiences. It encourages them to think critically about their cultural assumptions, biases, and growth in intercultural understanding. Moreover, reflective journaling fosters a habit of self-evaluation, which can lead to more profound personal development and a greater appreciation for diverse perspectives.

Portfolios offer another comprehensive method for assessing GCE effectiveness by providing a tangible collection of students' work and achievements over time. Portfolios can include a variety of artifacts such as research papers, project reports, presentations, and reflections on global issues. Kim and Lee (2023) highlight that portfolios are particularly useful for showcasing students' engagement with global issues and their development of intercultural competencies. A well-constructed portfolio allows educators to review and assess the breadth and depth of students' involvement in GCE activities. It provides a holistic view of their progress and achievements, illustrating how they have applied their knowledge and skills in practical contexts. For example, a portfolio might include evidence of a student's participation in international collaborations, detailed accounts of their contributions to solving global problems, and reflections on their intercultural learning experiences. Portfolios also enable students to track their growth and development over time. By curating their work and reflecting on their learning journey, students gain a better understanding of their strengths and areas for improvement. This self-assessment component encourages continuous learning and motivates students to engage more deeply with GCE principles.

### **Positive Impacts of Global Citizenship Education**

Global Citizenship Education (GCE) holds significant potential for transforming students into informed, empathetic, and active participants in an increasingly interconnected world. By integrating diverse perspectives and emphasizing critical skills, GCE offers a multifaceted approach to education that prepares students to engage with global challenges in meaningful ways. Its potential impacts can be broadly categorized into enhancing empathy, promoting global competence, and encouraging civic engagement.

**Enhancing Empathy:** One of the most profound impacts of GCE is its ability to foster empathy among students. Exposure to diverse perspectives through the GCE curriculum helps students understand and appreciate experiences and viewpoints different from their own. According to Johnson (2021), by engaging with a variety of cultural narratives, histories, and experiences, students develop a deeper sense of empathy and reduce prejudice. This empathetic understanding is crucial in combating stereotypes and fostering a more inclusive worldview. For instance, through storytelling, simulations, or cross-cultural exchanges, students can gain insights into the lives of people from various backgrounds, thus cultivating a genuine appreciation for diversity and a commitment to social justice.

**Promoting Global Competence:** GCE also plays a critical role in equipping students with the skills necessary for thriving in a global world. As noted by Smith and Licklider (2022), students acquire essential global competencies such as problem-solving, communication, and collaboration. These skills are not only vital for academic success but also for professional and personal effectiveness in an interconnected world. For example, problem-solving skills are honed as students tackle complex global issues, while communication and collaboration are developed through projects and discussions with peers from different cultural contexts. By fostering these competencies, GCE prepares students to navigate and address global challenges, work effectively in diverse teams, and engage in meaningful cross-cultural interactions.





**Encouraging Civic Engagement:** Beyond personal and professional development, GCE motivates students to become actively involved in global and local initiatives. Jenkins (2023) emphasizes that GCE encourages students to take part in activities that address pressing social and environmental issues, thereby fostering a sense of global responsibility. Through service-learning projects, advocacy campaigns, and community engagement, students apply their knowledge and skills to make a positive impact. This engagement not only reinforces their learning but also cultivates a commitment to social responsibility and a desire to contribute to the common good. For example, students might participate in campaigns to raise awareness about climate change, volunteer in local community projects, or advocate for human rights, demonstrating their active role in addressing global challenges.

### Challenges of Global Citizenship Education

Implementing Global Citizenship Education (GCE) presents several significant challenges that need to be addressed to ensure its effectiveness and sustainability. These challenges span curriculum integration, teacher preparation, and cultural sensitivity, each of which plays a crucial role in the successful incorporation of GCE principles into educational systems.

**Curriculum Integration** is a major hurdle in the implementation of GCE. Integrating global issues into existing curricula involves substantial adjustments to traditional teaching approaches and content. According to Wilson and Tisdell (2021), this integration can be complex as it requires educators to blend global perspective into established subjects without disrupting the coherence of the existing curriculum. This process often demands a rethinking of instructional strategies and content delivery to ensure that global issues are not merely appended but are embedded in a way that enhances the overall learning experience. Educators must find ways to align global issues with subject-specific goals while maintaining educational standards and objectives. This might involve redesigning lesson plans, developing new assessment methods, and ensuring that global perspectives are meaningfully incorporated across various disciplines.

**Teacher Preparation** is another critical challenge. Effective implementation of GCE relies heavily on educators who are well-prepared to teach its concepts and employ appropriate pedagogical methods. As highlighted by Connor and Morris (2024), many teachers may require additional training and support to effectively deliver GCE content and engage students in experiential and interactive learning methods. This includes professional development opportunities that focus on global issues, intercultural competence, and innovative teaching strategies that promote active learning. Teachers need to be equipped with the knowledge and skills to facilitate discussions on complex global topics, use diverse pedagogical approaches, and handle the sensitive nature of some issues. Ongoing support and resources are essential to help educators adapt to these new demands and integrate GCE effectively into their teaching practices.

**Cultural Sensitivity** is another significant challenge in implementing GCE. Ensuring that the education provided respects and accurately represents diverse cultures requires careful consideration and ongoing reflection. As Taylor (2023) notes, it is crucial to avoid stereotypes and misrepresentations while addressing global issues. This involves not only presenting diverse cultural perspectives accurately but also engaging in continuous reflection and adaptation to address any biases or gaps in representation. Educators must be mindful of how cultural contexts are portrayed and ensure that the materials and approaches used in GCE are inclusive and respectful. This requires a commitment to understanding and incorporating



diverse cultural viewpoints, as well as an openness to feedback and ongoing professional development to address cultural sensitivity issues.

## Conclusion

This paper concludes that Global Citizenship Education offers a transformative approach to preparing students for a resilient future and participation in an increasingly interconnected world. By emphasizing global awareness, respect for diversity, and active engagement, GCE fosters cross-cultural understanding and equips students with the skills needed to address global challenges. Despite challenges in implementation, the benefits of GCE in promoting a resilient future, empathy, global competence, and civic engagement make it a valuable educational approach for the 21st century.



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