

# Navigating Political Ideologies in Global Citizenship Education: Toward Justice, Equity, and Inclusion

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## Abstract

This study explores how Global Citizenship Education (GCED) can adapt to the influence of diverse political ideologies to effectively address justice, equity, and inclusion on a global scale. As globalization intensifies, GCED has become vital for fostering a shared sense of humanity that transcends national boundaries. This research examines how ideological frameworks—including Realism, Nationalism, Neonationalism, Universalism, Cosmopolitanism, Particularism, and Society of States—interpret and shape GCED's foundational approach to global justice, revealing both opportunities and challenges. Findings suggest that for GCED to remain relevant and impactful, it must adopt flexible, inclusive pedagogical strategies that respect ideological diversity while advancing a collective commitment to global justice. By re-envisioning GCED to embrace varied perspectives, this study underscores its potential to address the evolving demands of an interconnected world, equipping students to engage thoughtfully and ethically with global complexities.

**Keywords:** Global citizenship education, realism, nationalism, neonationalism, universalism, cosmopolitanism, particularism, society of states

## INTRODUCTION

As globalization reshapes societal norms and connects communities across borders, the role of education in fostering global citizenship has gained increasing importance. Global Citizenship Education (GCED) aims to develop globally aware, ethically responsible individuals who are committed to justice, equity, and inclusion on a global scale. Its overarching goal is to empower learners to engage thoughtfully and collaboratively with global challenges, transcending national boundaries to foster a sense of shared humanity.

However, achieving these ideals within GCED is complicated by the diversity of political ideologies that influence its frameworks. Understanding how these ideologies interpret justice, civic responsibility, and cultural identity is essential for designing curricula that align with democratic principles while addressing the complexities of a globalized world. Each ideology—whether Realism, Nationalism, Neonationalism, Universalism, Cosmopolitanism, Particularism, or Society of States—offers distinct perspectives on justice, civic responsibility, and cultural identity.

Diverse ideological perspectives can lead to conflicting interpretations of key GCED concepts, such as justice, equity, and the responsibilities of a global citizen. For example, cosmopolitanism advocates for an ethical commitment to humanity that transcends borders (Held, 1995), while nationalism emphasizes the preservation of cultural identity and sovereignty, sometimes in opposition to global integration (Fukuyama, 2018). Realism tends to focus on national interests and security, which can conflict with GCED's emphasis on collective global responsibility (Mearsheimer, 2003). Universalism, as advocated by Nussbaum (1997), promotes a shared humanistic ethic but may overlook the complexities of cultural diversity in favor of common human values. Neonationalism emphasizes sovereignty and cultural homogeneity, often resisting global interconnectedness and challenging GCED's goals of inclusivity and cross-border collaboration (Westheimer, 2019; Darian-Smith, 2020). Particularism highlights cultural and national distinctiveness, enriching GCED's respect for diversity but sometimes hindering shared global goals by prioritizing localized interests (Taylor, 1994). The Society of States perspective balances state sovereignty with international cooperation, aligning with GCED's aim for mutual understanding but often prioritizing state interests over individual global citizenship (Bull, 1977). These ideological differences present

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Received : 12 December 2024

Accepted : 3 February 2025

Online Published : 20 June 2025

2025 JSER, Available online at  
<https://www.journalser.com>

**Cite this article as:** Auh, Y., Kim, C. (2025). Redefining U.S. governance: executive authority, democratic challenges, and global consequences. *Journal of Social and Educational Research*, 4(1), 25-42. <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.15698642>



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both opportunities for enrichment and significant pedagogical challenges.

### Developing GCED curricula for a diverse world

To remain effective, GCED curricula must account for the diverse ideological frameworks that influence perceptions of justice, civic responsibility, and cultural identity. From the perspective of democratic nations, GCED can:

- **Promote Inclusive Dialogues:** Foster critical discussions that explore ideological differences, encouraging learners to navigate complex global issues with empathy and understanding.
- **Balance Universal and Particular Perspectives:** Design curricula that uphold universal values like human rights while respecting cultural specificities, ensuring inclusivity and relevance.
- **Prepare Globally Responsible Citizens:** Equip students with the skills to address global challenges, such as climate change and social inequality, through collaborative and ethically grounded approaches

One of the key pedagogical challenges in GCED is designing curricula that honor ideological diversity without compromising the commitment to global justice and inclusion. Teaching students to respect diverse viewpoints while fostering a shared commitment to global ethics requires flexible, inclusive educational strategies that balance universal principles with cultural sensitivity (Banks, 2008). Additionally, educators must navigate contested definitions of justice and balance competing priorities within GCED's goals (Tarozzi & Torres, 2016; Miller, 2007). Understanding and integrating diverse ideological perspectives into GCED is essential for cultivating globally responsible citizens in a complex and interconnected world. By aligning curricula with democratic principles and emphasizing justice, equity, and inclusion, educators can ensure that GCED remains relevant and impactful.

This study explores how GCED can navigate the challenges posed by diverse ideological influences while maintaining its commitment to justice, equity, and inclusion. By examining frameworks such as neonationalism, particularism, and the Society of States, it underscores the need to re-envision GCED to account for ideological diversity. This research aims to provide educators with practical strategies to create an inclusive global education that fosters mutual understanding and equips learners to address the complexities of an interconnected world.

## METHOD

This study employs a literature review methodology to examine the intersection of political ideologies and Global Citizenship Education (GCED), focusing on their implications for advancing global justice in education. By synthesizing insights from foundational texts, theoretical frameworks, and a structured analytical approach, this literature review situates the study within existing scholarship and highlights its contribution to the field.

### Foundational texts and key resources

A broad range of primary and secondary sources were analyzed to explore how justice, equity, and inclusion are framed within GCED. Foundational texts such as UNESCO's *Global Citizenship Education: Preparing Learners for the Challenges of the 21st Century* (2014) and various UN declarations provided essential context and benchmarks for global education policies. Scholarly works on global justice and citizenship further elucidated the complexities of integrating diverse ideological perspectives into GCED frameworks. Comparative education literature and political philosophy texts informed an understanding of the historical and contemporary underpinnings of justice in education.

### Theoretical perspectives on political ideologies

Ideological frameworks from international relations and citizenship theory reveal how assumptions and values shape GCED objectives. Key ideologies analyzed include:

- **Realism and Nationalism:** These perspectives emphasize sovereignty, self-interest, and the primacy of the nation-state, often posing challenges to the universalist goals of GCED.
- **Neonationalism:** This contemporary ideology underscores renewed emphases on national identity and protectionism, potentially conflicting with global citizenship ideals.
- **Universalism and Cosmopolitanism:** These frameworks advocate for shared human values and global responsibilities, aligning closely with the inclusive aspirations of GCED.
- **Particularism and the Society of States:** These theories highlight cultural specificity and respect for diverse traditions while recognizing the cooperative dynamics between states in addressing global issues.

### Analytical Framework

A structured framework explores citizenship definitions, global responsibility, and education's role in fostering a balanced global society. Patterns of alignment and conflict between ideologies and GCED objectives are identified.

## RESULTS

This study uncovers critical insights into how political ideologies shape and influence the conceptualization and implementation of Global Citizenship Education (GCED). By examining a spectrum of ideological frameworks—such as Realism, Nationalism, Neonationalism, Universalism, Cosmopolitanism, Particularism, and the Society of States—the research highlights their profound impact on advancing justice, equity, and inclusion in global education. The findings are as follows:

1. **Ideological Tensions and Their Implications:** GCED operates at the intersection of competing ideological forces, each shaping its priorities and challenges. Universalist and cosmopolitan perspectives champion global unity and shared responsibility, emphasizing inclusivity and collective action. Conversely, nationalist and particularist

ideologies often prioritize sovereignty, local identity, and cultural preservation, which can create tensions with the universal aspirations of GCED. These competing frameworks illuminate the challenges of aligning diverse political, cultural, and philosophical outlooks with the shared goal of fostering global citizenship

**2. The Necessity for Contextual Responsiveness:** One of the most pressing findings is the need for GCED frameworks to remain contextually responsive. Rigid, one-size-fits-all approaches to global education risk alienating communities whose values and priorities may not align with universalist ideals. Instead, GCED must embrace adaptability, recognizing and incorporating the cultural, national, and political contexts of learners. This localized approach ensures relevance and fosters authentic engagement with global issues.

**3. The Centrality of Justice and Equity:** Justice and equity emerge as indispensable pillars for meaningful GCED. The study highlights that some ideological assumptions embedded in educational systems perpetuate systemic inequities, particularly in marginalized or underrepresented communities. To address this, GCED must prioritize educational content and practices that challenge inequitable power structures and amplify the voices of those often excluded from global dialogues. Justice-oriented GCED fosters a sense of agency among learners, empowering them to advocate for fairness both locally and globally.

**4. Opportunities for Ideological Integration:** Despite the inherent tensions, the findings suggest significant opportunities for integrating diverse ideological perspectives within GCED. Such integration does not require ideological uniformity but rather a willingness to engage in dialogue and mutual respect. By acknowledging the merits and limitations of various frameworks, GCED can build a balanced approach that bridges divides. This integration enhances inclusivity, making GCED more adaptable to the complexities of a globalized world while fostering a shared commitment to common goals such as sustainability, peace, and cooperation.

**5. Global Citizenship as a Dynamic Construct:** The findings underscore the evolving nature of global citizenship itself. Rather than a static concept, it is a dynamic construct influenced by shifting political, cultural, and economic landscapes. As such, GCED must remain an evolving field that reflects the realities of globalization, technological advancements, and socio-political changes. By embedding flexibility and innovation into its design, GCED can better address emerging challenges while staying true to its foundational commitment to global justice.

**6. Educational Equity Across Borders:** Another critical finding relates to the disparities in how GCED is accessed and implemented across nations and communities. Wealthier nations often dominate global education discourse, while resource-limited regions struggle to

implement even basic elements of GCED. Bridging this gap requires international collaboration, equitable funding, and knowledge-sharing initiatives that empower all nations to contribute to and benefit from GCED.

The findings highlight that while political ideologies present challenges to the universal application of GCED, they also offer opportunities to create a more inclusive and adaptable educational framework. By navigating ideological tensions and prioritizing contextual responsiveness, GCED can uphold its commitment to justice, equity, and global cooperation. This study reaffirms the need for GCED to evolve as a flexible and justice-oriented model, capable of addressing the complexities of a fragmented yet interconnected world.

### Synthesis of findings

This literature review situates itself within the broader discourse on GCED by examining the ideological influences shaping its objectives and implementation. It emphasizes the importance of integrating diverse perspectives to promote inclusivity and justice, fostering the creation of globally relevant and contextually responsive frameworks.

Building upon the insights drawn from the literature review, which examined the ideological foundations and challenges shaping Global Citizenship Education (GCED), the following section delves into the core findings of this study. It synthesizes key themes that emerged from the analysis, offering a deeper understanding of how diverse political ideologies influence GCED's implementation and outcomes. Readers can expect to explore the tensions, opportunities, and pathways for integrating ideological diversity into GCED to foster justice, equity, and inclusivity.

### SOCIAL Justice in The Global Dimension

The concepts of education and globalization, along with their interconnected values, remain highly contested among different philosophical and political schools of thought (Rizvi, 2009; Torre, 2009; Tully, 2008). As GCED continues to evolve, it faces the challenge of advancing citizenship education within a global context (Hahn, 1998). However, without a universally accepted definition, theorists question whether globalization is merely a construct devised by influential stakeholders to serve specific agendas (Baylis, et al., 2020). The increasing attention to global justice within GCED highlights a tension between global integration and nationalist values, raising questions fundamental to GCED and international relations: When should self-determination yield to human rights protection? Is global democracy feasible without central governance? Can nationalism coexist with global justice? And can a consensus on global justice be reached?

Historically, citizenship education has primarily focused on local sovereignty and human rights, with some emphasis on environmental awareness and shared responsibility. Law (2004) discusses how national policies often prioritize economic and cultural protectionism over global justice,

responding to globalization by safeguarding national institutions and cultural identities. Miller (2007) suggests that social justice principles, such as equality of opportunity and equitable resource distribution, could apply globally. However, he argues that self-determining national communities may require unique interpretations of justice to sustain their autonomy.

In recent years, GCED has been promoted to foster shared global values, marking a shift away from traditional, locally focused forms of engagement. Yet, as the field has evolved, scholars have emphasized new priorities: poverty and inequality (UNESCO, 2018), value creation and social responsibility (Sharma, 2020), and a transformative approach centered on human rights, environmental sustainability, and respect for diversity (Tarozzi & Torres, 2016). Addressing these themes introduces challenges, as Torres and Bosio (2020) highlight the global costs of GCED implementation and the lack of standardized mechanisms for evaluating effectiveness. At its core, GCED aims to promote global justice, yet achieving this goal requires examining diverse political ideologies and their impact on its objectives and methodologies.

Since 2020, emerging social movements—including climate activism, indigenous rights, and calls for economic justice—have expanded GCED's focus on global justice. Climate activists emphasize environmental sustainability as integral to global citizenship, linking ecological preservation with human rights (Roemhild & Gaudelli, 2021). Indigenous rights movements highlight the importance of cultural preservation and sovereignty, advocating for GCED to recognize diverse cultural perspectives and avoid a colonial mindset (Smith, 2021). The economic justice movement, gaining momentum post-COVID-19, pushes for educational frameworks that address inequality and support equitable resource access worldwide (Stiglitz, 2016).

These new priorities reflect a recognition that fostering global justice within GCED requires accommodating diverse ideological perspectives. Nationalism and neo-nationalism, for instance, increasingly challenge GCED's emphasis on global integration, advocating for cultural preservation and national identity against globalist agendas (Fukuyama, 2018). In contrast, cosmopolitanism promotes an ethical commitment to humanity, supporting educational approaches that transcend national boundaries (Held, 1995). Universalism, as championed by Nussbaum (1997), advocates for curricula centered on shared human values, though critics argue this may overlook cultural specificity.

This ideological diversity within GCED often leads to contested values and priorities, making it a complex field. Understanding how these ideologies intersect with GCED is essential for developing adaptable, culturally sensitive pedagogies that honor diversity while fostering shared ethical principles. This approach enables educators to cultivate globally conscious students prepared to contribute to an equitable and inclusive global society.

The following sections will discuss these ideological perspectives, considering the implications of competing political and economic agendas. This analysis will support the development of curricular frameworks and pedagogical practices that address GCED's goals, enhancing its legitimacy and avoiding ideological bias.

## **POLITICAL IDEOLOGIES AND THEIR PLACEMENT IN GCED**

As Global Citizenship Education (GCED) seeks to cultivate globally aware, ethically responsible individuals, it must navigate a diverse landscape of political ideologies. Each ideology brings distinct perspectives on justice, responsibility, and the role of education in shaping societal values, offering unique interpretations of what it means to be a "global citizen." These ideological frameworks—ranging from nationalism to Society of States—inform differing views on civic duty, cultural identity, and global cooperation within educational contexts.

Understanding these perspectives is essential, as GCED must balance universal principles with respect for local traditions and national sovereignty. This section explores how each political ideology influences the goals, content, and pedagogical approaches within GCED. By examining these ideologies, we can gain insight into the ideological foundations that both support and challenge GCED's mission to foster an inclusive and just global society.

### **Realism and conservatism in global citizenship education (GCED)**

Realism, a cornerstone of international relations theory, emphasizes state sovereignty, power dynamics, and the primacy of national interest in an anarchic global system characterized by competition and conflict (Morgenthau, 1948). This pragmatic perspective holds that world politics is inherently conflictual, with actors primarily pursuing power for self-preservation (Dunne, 1997). Education, through the lens of realism, serves as a mechanism to prepare individuals to navigate these global interactions, often prioritizing national security and state-centric interests over universal justice and ethical responsibility (Dunne, 1997). This approach frequently contrasts with GCED's goals of fostering global solidarity and transcending national boundaries.

Conservatism, often described as the "ideological godfather of realism," reinforces this focus on state sovereignty and continuity. It advocates for preserving societal structures, traditions, and norms while maintaining skepticism toward radical change and universalist ideals (Oakeshott, 1994). Together, realism and conservatism provide a framework for GCED that prioritizes stability, national identity, and pragmatic engagement with global challenges.

### **The role of realism in GCED**

Realism's roots trace back to Thucydides and Hobbes in 1651, who emphasized the inevitability of conflict in a world without



overarching authority. Hobbes argued that in an anarchic international system, justice is unattainable as states act solely in their own interest to ensure survival (Tran, 2023). This perspective dismisses moral universalism as unrealistic in a competitive world, where idealistic interventions often lead to destabilization (Fiott, 2013).

Despite its skepticism toward universalism, realism acknowledges the influence of globalization in shaping transnational obligations and rights. From this standpoint, GCED is viewed as a new form of currency that aligns with global power dynamics. Zajda (2018) and Stromquist (2009) outline four distinct conceptualizations of GCED, each reflecting different dimensions of global influence:

- **World culture:** Sociological perspectives emphasize the emergence of a global society characterized by diversity and universal recognition of human rights.
- **Conservative framing of global citizenship:** Conservatism frames global citizenship as a form of respectful engagement among nations, prioritizing cooperation and education about global issues without undermining existing power structures (Carr, 2004). This approach encourages a pragmatic understanding of global dynamics, aligning with realism's focus on the strategic deployment of GCED.

#### Critiques and limitations of realism and conservatism

While realism and conservatism provide valuable insights into state-centric approaches to education, they face criticism for perpetuating existing inequities and resisting transformative global change. By prioritizing state sovereignty and national interests, these frameworks often conflict with GCED's broader goals of promoting universal human rights and ethical responsibility. Critics argue that such approaches risk maintaining power imbalances and fail to address interconnected global challenges like climate change, social justice, and systemic inequality (Carr, 2004; Harrison, 2003).

#### Modern challenges to realism and conservatism

- **Technological Advancements:** Advances in information and communication technology (ICT) challenge realism's state-centric focus by empowering transnational movements and decentralized power structures. Platforms like social media and blockchain facilitate global collaboration, enabling movements like Fridays for Future to advocate for climate action beyond state boundaries. These shifts expose realism's inadequacy in addressing collective global challenges like cybersecurity and misinformation, which require cooperative solutions rather than sovereign competition.
- **Global Citizenship and Interconnected Challenges:** Conservatism's emphasis on continuity may hinder education's ability to address 21st-century global issues such as environmental sustainability, migration, and global health crises. GCED must adapt to these transnational

demands by fostering understanding of shared responsibilities and equipping learners with tools to address interconnected challenges like climate change, displacement, and pandemics. This requires a shift toward dynamic, inclusive, and globally responsive educational models.

#### GCED's Multifaceted Nature

Zajda (2018) and Stromquist (2009) highlight GCED's complex role in serving sociological, political, economic, and grassroots agendas,:

- **World Culture:** Emphasizes diversity and universal human rights but risks neglecting cultural specificities.
- **New-Era Realism:** Frames GCED as a tool for dominant powers to advance self-interests under the guise of global citizenship.
- **Corporate Citizenship:** Explores the role of corporations as global actors, raising concerns about commodifying citizenship.
- **Planetary Vessel:** Aligns with grassroots efforts to address issues like climate change and sustainability but often lacks institutional support.

#### Reconciling universalism, realism, and pragmatism in GCED

GCED aspires to universalist ideals of shared human values, global solidarity, and ethical responsibility. However, these aspirations often clash with the realities of global power dynamics and state-centric ideologies like realism and conservatism. To address these tensions, GCED must balance local and global perspectives, integrating cultural narratives with universal ethics while fostering critical inquiry into systemic inequalities and power structures.

The interplay between realism, conservatism, and GCED highlights the complexities of integrating state sovereignty, stability, and pragmatic engagement with the transformative goals of global citizenship. Realism and conservatism emphasize the preservation of cultural and national identities, often resisting universalist frameworks that appear to undermine local autonomy. For GCED to remain relevant and impactful, it must adapt to these perspectives while promoting inclusivity, collaboration, and ethical responsibility.

Bridging these ideological divides requires GCED to evolve into a more inclusive and adaptive framework. By critically reflecting on realist and conservative principles, GCED can balance the preservation of national and cultural identities with the urgent need for global solidarity and cooperation. This approach prepares learners to navigate the complexities of an interconnected world, equipping them with the tools to address contemporary global challenges while honoring diverse cultural contexts.

## Nationalism in global citizenship education

Nationalism emphasizes allegiance to a nation, valuing the cultural identity and sovereignty of its people, and prioritizing the pursuit of self-governance. It plays a pivotal role during nation-building, tying individuals to their communities through shared history and heritage (MacCormick, 1999; Miller, 1995). While nationalism and patriotism are closely related, nationalism highlights cultural connections and historical legacies, whereas patriotism focuses on values and sentiments tied to love of one's country. Mylonas & Tudor (2021) identifies two primary manifestations of nationalism: (1) the attitude of caring about national identity and (2) actions aimed at achieving or maintaining self-determination. Modern nationalism thrives in societies that emphasize collective obligations, wherein individuals are expected to contribute to the well-being of their nation, sometimes at the expense of personal interests.

### Moral universalism and nationalist priorities

Nationalists often challenge the concept of moral universalism, placing greater importance on duties owed to fellow citizens within the state. MacCormick (1999) and Miller (2016) assert that while humanitarian responsibilities are commendable, they are secondary to obligations toward compatriots. This perspective reinforces the notion that national identity is essential for social solidarity. Miller (2016) elaborates on this view, suggesting that an overarching national identity is vital for cohesive societies: "[...] such identity is necessary for basic social solidarity, and it goes far beyond simple constitutional patriotism.

Nationalism's resistance to universalism frequently intersects with debates surrounding the role of Global Citizenship Education (GCED). While GCED seeks to foster global solidarity and ethical responsibility, nationalists often view these objectives as potentially eroding national sovereignty and cultural uniqueness. Instead, they advocate for education systems that prioritize local traditions and historical narratives to strengthen national unity (Taylor, 1994).

### Nationalism and GCED: Global trends and challenges

GCED has been widely promoted among members of the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), focusing on values of inclusion and justice. However, BRICS nations (Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa) have emphasized a more nationalistic approach, centering on civic duties related to nation-building and unity. This direction has reinforced realist approaches to citizenship education and contributed to the rise of neo-nationalism in various regions.

The resurgence of nationalist politics can often be traced to socio-political triggers such as economic inequality, cultural anxiety, and global instability. In the case of Great Britain, events like increased migration, terrorist attacks, and disputes over economic policies contributed to the 2016 Brexit decision. This reflects how nationalist movements can be fueled by

public perceptions of economic, institutional, and social decline. Rising economic inequalities, both globally and within nations, have exacerbated these sentiments, as has cultural anxiety stemming from rapid globalization. Many individuals perceive their communities as increasingly fragmented and beyond their control, fostering resentment and fear (UNESCO, 2018).

### Digital Media and Nationalism's Growth

The rapid expansion of digital communications has amplified nationalist rhetoric in both positive and negative ways. While digital platforms provide spaces for nationalistic pride and identity, they also facilitate the spread of misinformation and "fake news." This contributes to societal fragmentation and reinforces exclusionary practices. Such dynamics have driven protectionist policies, xenophobic rhetoric, and public acts of violence, posing significant challenges to the inclusive goals of GCED.

These trends question the viability of current GCED frameworks in promoting peaceful and just societies. For example, nationalism's emphasis on exclusionary practices and economic protectionism often conflicts with GCED's advocacy for universal human rights, environmental sustainability, and global cooperation (Paulson & Rappleye, 2007).

### The emotional dimension of nationalism

Emotions play a pivotal role in shaping nationalist ideologies. For some, nationalism inspires devotion and pride in one's community, fostering a sense of belonging and security. For others, it evokes fear, anger, and resentment, often triggered by external pressures such as economic instability or migration. This duality highlights the complex nature of nationalism's impact on GCED. On one hand, it strengthens identity and solidarity within nations; on the other, it risks perpetuating exclusionary practices that undermine GCED's foundational values (Eiranen, 2022).

**Reshaping Media Access:** Project 2025 also proposes reforms in how the executive branch interacts with the media, including reconsidering media access to the White House. The document suggests that media presence and influence over the executive branch should be curtailed to prevent undue interference with the administration's goals, reflecting a broader intention to limit external checks on presidential authority.

### International Competitiveness and Security

#### Nationalism's impact on GCED's core values

Nationalism's emphasis on local identity and sovereignty challenges GCED's broader vision of fostering equity and justice across borders. BRICS nations' nationalist approaches to education focus on consolidating national unity, which can marginalize efforts to promote global solidarity. For instance, these frameworks often prioritize national economic competitiveness over cooperative solutions to global challenges like climate change or migration. Such approaches may

inadvertently reinforce exclusionary and protectionist practices, limiting the transformative potential of GCED.

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The rise of nationalism also poses a direct challenge to the inclusivity and sustainability of GCED practices. Policies rooted in nationalism often prioritize nation-building over global cooperation, creating tension between fostering global awareness and preserving national identity. This conflict underscores the need for educators to navigate these ideological tensions carefully, ensuring that GCED remains a tool for inclusion rather than division.

### **A renewed vision for GCED in a nationalist context**

Given the resurgence of nationalism, GCED must adapt to engage constructively with nationalist ideologies without compromising its commitment to fostering inclusive global communities. A renewed understanding of GCED should address the following:

1. **Inclusive Civic Education:** GCED frameworks should promote the coexistence of national pride with global solidarity, emphasizing shared humanity without erasing cultural distinctiveness.
2. **Critical Thinking and Media Literacy:** Equipping learners with skills to critically evaluate information and recognize biases is essential in countering the divisive effects of misinformation and exclusionary rhetoric.
3. **Conflict Resolution and Peacebuilding:** GCED should incorporate strategies that focus on resolving tensions between nationalist and globalist perspectives, fostering peaceful coexistence.

By addressing these challenges, GCED can navigate the complexities of nationalism while upholding its foundational values of equity, justice, and inclusion.

### **Neonationalism in global citizenship education**

Neonationalism represents a powerful resurgence of nationalist sentiment, emerging as a reaction to globalization and the perceived erosion of national sovereignty and cultural identity (Pojar et al., 2022). Unlike traditional nationalism, neonationalism explicitly rejects multiculturalism, cosmopolitan ideals, and transnational cooperation, instead emphasizing the protection of national interests and the preservation of cultural homogeneity. This ideology often positions itself in opposition to global frameworks such as the United Nations and UNESCO, which are viewed as vehicles of

"globalist" agendas that threaten local values and governance (Giddens, 1990). Consequently, neonationalism regards Global Citizenship Education (GCED) with suspicion, perceiving it as an external imposition that challenges national autonomy and seeks to universalize values that may conflict with national priorities.

### **Key characteristics of neonationalism**

- **Resistance to Universalism and Multilateralism:** Scholars like Huntington (1993) argue that cultural and civilizational identities will increasingly drive global conflict, underscoring neonationalism's rejection of universalist frameworks. Neonationalist movements often resist norms imposed by global bodies, framing such initiatives as threats to national sovereignty. This perspective is reflected in movements like Brexit and "America First" policies, which prioritize reclaiming control from international influence (Judis, 2016).
- **Focus on National Identity in Education:** Neonationalism's influence on education centers on promoting national history, identity, and values. Leaders like Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orbán advocate for "illiberal democracy," privileging national interests over global cooperation (Körösi & Gyulai, 2020). This approach narrows the scope of GCED, focusing on national achievements and heritage while discouraging engagement with diverse perspectives.
- **Opposition to Multiculturalism:** Neonationalism frames cultural diversity as a threat to societal cohesion rather than an enrichment. By fostering an "us versus them" mentality, it prioritizes national interests over international solidarity, often reducing empathy for those outside the national group (Ulver & Laurell, 2020). Statements like "our people come first" reflect this cultural protectionism, which challenges GCED's commitment to inclusivity and universal human rights.

### **Challenges for GCED in the face of neonationalism**

The rise of neonationalism poses significant challenges for GCED. Educational curricula influenced by neonationalist ideologies risk undermining the inclusivity and interconnectedness inherent in GCED. By prioritizing national pride and cultural homogeneity, neonationalism limits opportunities for students to develop a global perspective or engage with diverse viewpoints. This narrowing of focus threatens to alienate students from broader global issues, reinforcing a worldview that prioritizes protectionism over shared responsibility.

Neonationalism's educational impact is also evident in its framing of global challenges. Issues like migration, climate change, and international cooperation are often interpreted through a lens of cultural and national protectionism. This framing discourages empathy for external groups, fostering a polarized understanding of global dynamics that undermines GCED's mission to build global solidarity.

## Strategies for GCED to address neonationalism

To adapt to the rise of neonationalism, GCED must balance its commitment to global understanding with the concerns surrounding identity and sovereignty:

- **Engaging with Local Identities:** Scholars like Andreotti (2006) propose employing a "soft" approach to GCED that respects local identities while introducing global perspectives. By addressing students' sense of belonging, educators can bridge the gap between national pride and global empathy, fostering a form of citizenship that values both local heritage and global interconnectedness.
- **Critical Thinking and Empathy Development:** GCED can counter neonationalist narratives by encouraging critical thinking and empathy. By helping students analyze nationalist rhetoric and understand its implications, GCED can challenge exclusionary ideologies while promoting shared responsibility.
- **Balancing National and Global Perspectives:** Educators can design curricula that integrate national history and cultural pride with global themes. For example, lessons on national achievements can be paired with discussions about international cooperation, illustrating the interconnectedness of local and global narratives.
- **Building Bridges Through Shared Values:** Highlighting universal human values, such as justice and sustainability, without directly challenging nationalist narratives can create opportunities for constructive dialogue. This approach allows GCED to engage with neonationalist concerns while fostering an inclusive and globally aware mindset.

## Reevaluating GCED in a neonationalist era

Neonationalism demands a reevaluation of GCED's strategies. While GCED traditionally emphasizes global solidarity and universal values, it must now navigate the complexities of rising nationalist sentiments. By acknowledging neonationalist concerns and engaging with them constructively, GCED can promote a balanced approach that respects national pride while fostering global responsibility.

This dual focus on local and global perspectives allows educators to design curricula that meet the needs of students in a rapidly changing world. By addressing identity and sovereignty alongside global challenges, GCED can remain a vital tool for building bridges between nations and promoting a future grounded in both cultural respect and shared responsibility.

## Universalism in global citizenship education

Universalism forms the foundation of human rights, rooted in the idea of the universality of human nature and codified in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (United Nations, 1949). Drawing on the classical thought of Max Weber and Georg Simmel, universalism asserts that certain principles, rights, and norms should apply universally to all individuals,

transcending cultural, social, and national boundaries. This belief is deeply tied to the concept of inclusionism, where access to fundamental services, such as universal healthcare, is viewed as a right for all. As Alston & Goodman (2013) argues, exclusion from such services based on affordability creates stigma and perpetuates inequality.

## The ethical and political dimensions of universalism

From an ethical standpoint, universalism aligns with Kantian ethics, advocating that moral norms should be universalized and not restricted by cultural or national principles. Universalism's political dimension, however, emphasizes the equal treatment of all global citizens under a shared legal and moral framework. Hampden-Turner and Trompenaars (2020) suggest that universalism seeks to create systematic order by imposing rules, laws, and norms equitably across populations, fostering fairness and efficiency.

## Universalism and humanity's shared characteristics

Universalism emphasizes the broadly shared characteristics of humanity, underpinning the moral imperative to treat all individuals with dignity and respect. (Gewirth, 1988) highlights the historical adoption of universalism as a principle to ensure services are accessible to everyone without humiliating loss of status or dignity. This principle combats the stigmatization associated with selective access, reinforcing a sense of equality and social cohesion.

Gewirth (1988) extends this principle, advocating that universalism requires equal and impartial consideration for all individuals' goods and interests. From this perspective, universalism is integral to fostering equitable access to opportunities, resources, and rights, aligning seamlessly with Global Citizenship Education's (GCED) goals.

## Universalism's role in GCED

Universalism provides a conceptual framework that supports GCED as a mechanism to promote educational and social justice. GCED is rooted in moral and legal universalism, as articulated in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other international covenants. These foundations assume that every child has the right to acquire the skills, capacities, and dispositions necessary to become a global citizen (UNESCO, 2014).

Drerup (2020) argues that universalism offers a general platform for understanding GCED as an ideal educational entity, advocating for universally valid educational standards that emphasize equity and inclusivity. Within this framework, GCED embraces political universalism by promoting democratic education, aiming to create a global democracy informed by local and national contexts.

## Critiques and limitations

While universalism aligns closely with the ideals of GCED, it faces criticism for potentially overlooking cultural specificities.



Critics argue that imposing universal norms may inadvertently marginalize local traditions and values, creating tensions between global frameworks and localized identities (Assiter, 2016). Additionally, universalism's emphasis on uniformity can lead to resistance from groups that view such norms as eroding cultural or national sovereignty.

### Universalism and GCED's aspirations

Despite these challenges, universalism remains central to GCED's vision. It provides a moral and legal basis for advocating educational justice and inclusivity on a global scale. By relying on the principles of universalism, GCED can promote a shared framework of rights and responsibilities that transcends national and cultural divides while fostering respect for diversity. Universalism thus enables GCED to balance its global aspirations with the need to address local and national contexts.

### Cosmopolitanism in global citizenship education

Cosmopolitanism contributes to the theory of universalism by emphasizing the shared morality that binds all human beings into a single global community (Vincent, 2023). It asserts that moral obligations extend beyond national or cultural boundaries, aiming for the protection of human dignity through international law and shared ethical commitments. Mylonas & Tudor (2021) articulates this universal moral obligation, stating that "political arrangements should faithfully reflect this universal moral obligation." Cosmopolitanism thus provides a moral and philosophical foundation for Global Citizenship Education (GCED), aligning with its commitment to fostering interconnectedness and global solidarity.

Nussbaum (1997) extends this cosmopolitan vision by arguing for the necessity of educating "citizens of the world," rather than narrowly focusing on national identities. She asserts that by embracing the idea of global citizenship, individuals can learn to respect and engage with diverse cultural values while addressing universal challenges. Her work emphasizes that "we should regard our humanity as more fundamental than our nationality" and that education must cultivate this broader sense of identity to promote ethical responsibility on a global scale.

### Core principles of cosmopolitanism

- **Obligations Beyond Borders:** Cosmopolitanism holds that individuals have moral obligations to all human beings, not just those tied to them by familial or national bonds. Appiah (2006) identifies two key principles: (1) the moral responsibility to others that transcends ties of kinship and citizenship, and (2) the recognition of the value of individual human lives, emphasizing the significance of diverse cultural practices and beliefs. Nussbaum (1997) reinforces this idea by advocating for an education that fosters empathy and moral concern for distant others, challenging students to think critically about their place in a globalized world.

- **Multicultural and Environmental Responsibility:** Education, from a cosmopolitan perspective, should offer rich multicultural resources that enable individuals to shape their life plans and fulfill their moral obligations by engaging with diverse cultural values (Cavallar, 2015). Furthermore, cosmopolitanism underscores the need to protect the environment from the adverse effects of technological development, advocating for sustainable practices that benefit humanity as a whole (Baylis et al., 2020). Nussbaum adds that protecting the environment is not merely a practical necessity but a moral imperative tied to the idea of justice for future generations.

### Post-national citizenship and education

The rise of globalization since the 1990s has sparked interest in redefining citizenship beyond the confines of the nation-state, giving rise to post-national citizenship (Miller, 2016). This concept responds to diminishing traditional identities and the erosion of economic and cultural structures tied to national citizenship (Tambini, 2001). Nussbaum's (1997) cosmopolitan approach aligns with this shift, urging education systems to move beyond parochialism and foster "world citizenship" that transcends national boundaries. Education is seen as a critical tool in fostering cosmopolitan thinking, encouraging learners to adopt a "think globally, act locally" approach that promotes social connections and civic participation across national boundaries. Saleem (2022) supports this stance, asserting that education should prepare students to contribute to a more just, secure, and sustainable world.

### Challenges to cosmopolitanism

While cosmopolitanism aligns with the ideals of GCED, it faces practical and philosophical challenges:

- **The Dilemma of Global Citizenship:** Miller (2016) argues that citizenship is inherently tied to the political structures of the state, making global citizenship unlikely to mirror the full functions of national citizenship. Instead, cosmopolitanism must focus on political reciprocity and shared principles that transcend state boundaries. Nussbaum counters this limitation by suggesting that global citizenship does not need to replicate national citizenship but should instead focus on fostering a shared commitment to justice and ethical responsibility.
- **Potential for Escalating Conflict:** Cosmopolitan obligations to both local and global communities can escalate conflicts if not guided by universally accepted human rights principles. Nussbaum highlights the need for a consistent framework of justice that respects cultural diversity while addressing universal challenges. She asserts that balancing obligations to fellow citizens with responsibilities to distant others requires education that cultivates critical thinking and moral reasoning.

## Educational implications of cosmopolitanism

Cosmopolitanism emphasizes education as a means to cultivate a global perspective while respecting local affiliations. By promoting shared human values and fostering cross-cultural understanding, it aims to build bridges between diverse communities without negating local identities (Hansen, 2010). Nussbaum argues that this dual focus—grounding individuals in their local contexts while encouraging a broader sense of global responsibility—is essential for addressing contemporary global challenges such as inequality, environmental degradation, and cultural conflict.

Cosmopolitan education supports liberal and critical education as a universally accessible mechanism for self-examination and civic responsibility. Nussbaum (1997) emphasizes the role of literature, philosophy, and history in this endeavor, stating that "the world citizen must cultivate the narrative imagination" to understand the experiences and perspectives of others. Through this approach, cosmopolitanism seeks to prepare individuals not only to navigate the complexities of a globalized world but to actively contribute to its betterment.

### GCED through a cosmopolitan lens

Cosmopolitanism provides a philosophical foundation for GCED, promoting the following.

- **Global Solidarity and Social Connection:** Education should emphasize social connections that transcend national boundaries, fostering solidarity and participation in global civic life. This approach aligns with the cosmopolitan vision of securing a more equitable and sustainable future.
- **Integration of Local and Global Values:** While focusing on universal principles, cosmopolitanism respects local affiliations and immediate cultural identities. By integrating global and local perspectives, GCED can create curricula that resonate with learners' lived experiences while expanding their worldview.
- **Sustainability and Justice:** Cosmopolitanism calls for education that prioritizes environmental sustainability and global justice. By addressing shared challenges, such as climate change and inequality, GCED can align with cosmopolitan ideals to promote a better world for future generations.

Cosmopolitanism provides a robust framework for GCED by emphasizing shared morality, global solidarity, and ethical responsibility. Drawing on the work of thinkers like Nussbaum and Appiah, it underscores the importance of education in cultivating empathy, critical thinking, and a commitment to justice. While challenges to its implementation remain, cosmopolitanism's focus on universal values and interconnectedness positions it as a vital philosophical foundation for addressing the complexities of global citizenship in the 21st century.

## Particularism in global citizenship education

Particularism, as a theory of global order, contrasts sharply with universalism. It emphasizes the unique, exceptional, and context-specific characteristics of cultural and political entities rather than imposing overarching universal norms. This dichotomy between universalism and particularism is central to the debates surrounding global governance and Global Citizenship Education (GCED). Should GCED align with universal principles of solidarity, or should it acknowledge the pluralism inherent in a world of diverse political and cultural systems? (Bogdandy & Dellavalle, 2009).

Unlike universalism, particularism incorporates the perspectives of international relations, recognizing that GCED might foster pockets of shared understanding through a network of interest groups addressing global challenges. However, particularism suggests that GCED is unlikely to support the creation of a unified global political community. Instead, it focuses on fostering consensus on critical issues like climate change but cautions against the naïve assumption that GCED could transform deeply entrenched values or political cultures (Hampden-Turner & Trompenaars, 2020).

### Particularism: A framework of relationships

Particularism is a political theory rooted in relationships rather than rules, with an emphasis on the distinctiveness of each culture or political group. The Oxford Dictionary defines particularism as "exclusive attachment to one's own group, party, or nation," advocating for autonomy and self-interest within broader structures. From this perspective, particularists resist global norms that they perceive as cultural colonialism, rejecting attempts to impose economic liberalism or universal human rights standards on culturally distinct groups (Tully, 1995). This resistance aligns with the work of anthropologist Franz Boas, who argued that all cultures follow unique historical trajectories and develop distinct practices and values (Nagel, 2005).

Particularists also object to universalism's approach to distributive justice, arguing that ethical standards differ greatly across cultures. Imposing uniform criteria on culturally dissimilar groups, they contend, risks injustice and oversimplification. Huttunen & Heikkinen (1998) notes that global citizenship often implies adopting ethical universalism, which runs counter to national particularism and its emphasis on preserving cultural identity and autonomy.

### GCED through a particularist lens

From a particularist perspective, GCED faces inherent limitations due to its reliance on universalist ideals. For example, the G20 often fails to reach consensus on global issues due to divergent political and cultural priorities dominated by Western perspectives (Bogdandy & Dellavalle, 2009). This highlights the difficulty of achieving truly inclusive global governance, a challenge mirrored in GCED's efforts to promote universal norms in a diverse world.

However, particularism does not entirely dismiss the concept of global citizenship. Instead, it advocates for a version of GCED that acknowledges cultural differences and emphasizes open communication among political communities. This approach suggests that progress can be made through non-violent actions and intergenerational civic responsibility, fostering cooperation on global issues while respecting local contexts (Stromquist, 2009; Kaldor, 2003).

### Global citizenship and the pandemic: A turning point?

The global coronavirus pandemic has further exposed the tensions between universalism and particularism in global citizenship. During this crisis, many Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) struggled to maintain their memberships as economic hardships reminiscent of the 2008 financial crisis affected individuals worldwide. The pandemic highlighted the fragility of the global citizenship movement, raising critical questions about its future.

Particularists may argue that the pandemic represents an opportunity to reconsider the actors and goals of global citizenship in the post-pandemic era. Who will lead this movement? How will its character evolve? Will it continue to align with liberal internationalism, or will new forms of social and political mobilization emerge? These uncertainties underscore the need for GCED to adapt to shifting priorities and to consider particularist perspectives alongside universalist ideals.

### The limitations of GCED and the role of particularism

The pandemic has brought into sharp relief the limitations of GCED's universalist framework. Particularism can offer an alternative lens through which to examine these challenges. By de-centering the study of GCED from universalism, particularism opens up new opportunities for understanding and addressing the complexities of global citizenship in a diverse world. For instance, particularism emphasizes the importance of local identities and cultural values in shaping global education, challenging GCED to balance universal principles with respect for diversity.

This shift may require GCED to redefine its core objectives. Should it focus on fostering consensus on critical global issues while respecting cultural differences? Or should it advocate for a more inclusive form of universalism that accommodates particularist concerns? These questions are central to the ongoing evolution of GCED and its ability to remain relevant in a rapidly changing world.

### A renewed agenda for GCED

Looking ahead, GCED must embrace the opportunity to integrate particularist perspectives into its framework. This entails:

**Respect for Cultural Diversity:** GCED must prioritize understanding and valuing cultural differences, recognizing

that universalist approaches may not always resonate in diverse contexts.

**Open Communication Channels:** Encouraging dialogue among political and cultural communities is essential for addressing global challenges like climate change and economic inequality. This approach aligns with particularism's emphasis on relationships and mutual understanding.

**Intergenerational Responsibility:** GCED should focus on fostering civic responsibility and sustainable practices across generations, building a foundation for long-term global cooperation.

**Non-Violent Transformation:** Particularism emphasizes non-violent actions as a means of achieving global progress, aligning with GCED's commitment to creating a just and peaceful world.

By incorporating particularist insights, GCED can evolve into a more inclusive and adaptable framework, capable of addressing the diverse needs and priorities of global citizens in the 21st century.

### Society of states in global citizenship education

The concept of a society of states originates from the English School of international relations theory and is predicated on the belief that sovereign states can form a cooperative global order by establishing shared rules and norms based on mutual agreement (Linklater, 2006; Bull, 1977). This framework focuses on achieving global justice through social contracts, recognizing that justice can differ in its application across domestic and international contexts. However, the society of states emphasizes that these differences should not undermine the broader goals of cooperation and stability facilitated by institutional agreements that respect sovereignty and independence (Rawls, 1971).

Baylis (2020) describe this system as a "norm-governed relationship" in which members accept limited but shared responsibilities toward one another and the society as a whole. Such a system requires sincerity, justification, and honesty among states, as enforcement mechanisms in international law are often limited.

### Core principles of the society of states

- **Mutual Respect and Shared Interest:** At the heart of the society of states is the principle that each state must respect the interests and sovereignty of others. This mutual respect fosters cooperation and the development of common rules that prioritize shared survival goals (Bull, 1977).
- **Historical Foundations:** The society of states is rooted in historical frameworks such as the medieval concept of *Societas Christiana*, which envisioned a collective community of Christian states bound by shared moral and political values (Linklater, 2006). While these origins offer a foundation for understanding cooperative

governance, they are criticized for their inability to address modern global challenges such as human rights, environmental crises, and multiculturalism.

- **Global Inequality and Western Hegemony:** Critics, including Hurrell (2016), argue that the traditional society of states framework perpetuates global inequalities by prioritizing the interests of Western powers. These biases often exclude perspectives from the Global South, limiting the inclusivity and effectiveness of international cooperation.
- **Conflicts of Shared Values:** Nagel (2005) highlights the paradox that even communities with shared values can find themselves in irreconcilable conflict due to differing interpretations or priorities. This reflects the challenge of creating a cohesive society of states in a world marked by cultural and political diversity.

### The society of states and globalization

Fraser (2010) argues that globalization has reshaped perceptions of justice, requiring a rethinking of how justice is conceptualized and implemented at the global level. The society of states must contend with globalization's dual impact: it fosters interconnectedness and mutual dependence while amplifying inequalities and conflicts rooted in historical power dynamics. Hurrell (2007) identifies three critical ways in which globalization has influenced the society of states:

- **Capitalism and Economic Transformation:** The globalizing force of capitalism has restructured regions and societies through deepening systems of exchange and production, often benefiting core powers at the expense of peripheral region.
- **Global Political Competition:** The emergence of a global political system has intensified competition among states, framing the Earth as a single stage for advancing the interests of dominant powers.
- **Institutional Globalization:** Institutional forms such as the nation-state, international law, and spheres of influence, originally rooted in European expansion, have been globalized through colonialism and subsequent decolonization. These structures often fail to address the diverse needs of a multipolar world.

While proponents of the society of states claim that it promotes stability and democracy, critics argue that it reinforces inequalities and reflects politically motivated agendas that prioritize the interests of dominant states (Sharma 2020).

### Challenges for the society of states

The society of states framework faces significant challenges in addressing contemporary global issues. Hurrell (2007) contends that mainstream Western international relations theories are inadequate for understanding the complexities of the Global South. Moreover, Fraser (2010) emphasizes that self-determining communities require a new logic of global justice that transcends traditional notions of sovereignty and sustainability. Mackinder (1904) frames the international

system as a closed political space, highlighting the limitations of existing global governance structures in addressing global challenges. These limitations underscore the need for new inquiries into how regional, local, and global dynamics can coexist in a sustainable and equitable manner.

### Integrating GCED into the society of states

- **Global Citizenship Education (GCED)** can play a vital role in addressing the limitations of the society of states by fostering critical thinking, inclusivity, and sustainability. To align GCED with the principles of the society of states, curricula must:
- **Emphasize Intergenerational Responsibility:** GCED should teach students about their role in shaping future global affairs, focusing on sustainability, diversity, and equity to prepare them for the challenges of a rapidly changing world.
- **Balance Local and Global Perspectives:** By integrating regional and local contexts, GCED can help students understand how global challenges impact their communities and encourage them to develop localized solutions.
- **Promote Multilateralism and Dialogue:** GCED can introduce students to the mechanisms of multilateral institutions, emphasizing the importance of non-violent cooperation and mutual respect in resolving global conflicts.
- **Critique Inequalities in Global Governance:** Teaching students to analyze and challenge the inequalities perpetuated by the society of states will empower them to advocate for more inclusive and equitable systems.
- **Develop Critical Inquiry Skills:** GCED should encourage learners to question Western-centric perspectives and explore alternative viewpoints, fostering a more comprehensive understanding of global governance.

### Designing GCED curricula for the society of states

To align with the principles of the society of states, GCED curricula should include:

- **Social Contract Theory:** Teach students about the role of social contracts in shaping global governance, emphasizing mutual responsibilities and shared interests.
- **Justice and Human Rights:** Address issues of global justice through case studies on topics such as migration, climate change, and economic inequality.
- **Multilateralism in Practice:** Introduce students to the workings of international institutions like the United Nations, focusing on their role in fostering cooperation and addressing global challenges.
- **Sustainability and Equity:** Highlight the importance of sustainable development goals and equity, teaching students to balance environmental, social, and economic priorities.



## **The Future of GCED in a society of states**

As globalization continues to reshape the international system, GCED must adapt to address the evolving dynamics of the society of states. By fostering critical inquiry, empathy, and civic responsibility, GCED can empower learners to navigate the complexities of global governance and contribute to a more equitable and sustainable world.

Hurrell (2007) argues for an approach that bridges the global, regional, and local dimensions of governance. GCED can facilitate this by preparing students to engage with diverse perspectives and by fostering a sense of shared responsibility for addressing the challenges of an interconnected world.

## **PEDAGOGICAL CHALLENGES IN GLOBAL CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION (GCED)**

Integrating complex concepts such as political ideologies, global citizenship, and global justice into GCED poses profound pedagogical challenges. The process requires a nuanced, adaptive approach that respects ideological diversity while fostering critical thinking, global awareness, and ethical responsibility among learners (Banks, 2015; Andreotti & De Souza, 2012). GCED seeks to prepare students for a deeply interconnected world, engaging them with diverse political perspectives, each offering unique insights into justice, citizenship, and community. The central challenge lies in creating curricula that respect and accommodate ideological pluralism while promoting equity, inclusion, and shared global responsibilities. This balance demands culturally sensitive and innovative teaching methodologies (Rizvi, 2009).

### **Cultural sensitivity and inclusivity in curriculum design**

A core challenge in GCED lies in designing culturally inclusive curricula that integrate global and local values. GCED aims to foster a shared sense of humanity and collective responsibility, yet it must avoid imposing a homogenized worldview that overlooks the specificity of local cultural contexts. This is particularly critical in settings influenced by nationalistic or neo-nationalistic ideologies, where GCED's global focus may be perceived as a threat to national identity and sovereignty (Fukuyama, 2018).

### **The tension between global and local values**

Traditional global citizenship frameworks emphasize universal ideals such as peace, mutual understanding, and cooperation. While foundational, these values often fail to capture the specificity of local narratives and histories. Smith (2021) emphasizes that for GCED to succeed, it must respect and incorporate local cultural narratives, enabling students to engage with global issues from their unique perspectives. This approach bridges local and global contexts, allowing students to contextualize global responsibilities within their lived realities.

## **Decolonizing methodologies**

Decolonizing educational methodologies, which prioritize indigenous knowledge systems and cultural preservation, are increasingly recognized as essential to effective GCED (Smith, 2021; Torres & Bosio, 2020). These methodologies challenge Eurocentric frameworks, fostering curricula that celebrate diverse cultural contributions to global citizenship. By integrating decolonized approaches, GCED can empower marginalized communities and ensure a more inclusive global discourse.

## **Navigating ideological conflicts and political perspectives**

GCED must grapple with a wide range of political ideologies that influence conceptions of justice and citizenship. This includes navigating tensions between universalist and particularist approaches, as well as addressing the challenges posed by realism, nationalism, and cosmopolitanism.

### **Universalism vs. particularism**

Universalist frameworks advocate for global norms and shared human rights, while particularism emphasizes local and cultural specificity. These conflicting paradigms present a significant challenge for GCED, which must balance global ideals with cultural diversity (Bogdandy & Dellavalle, 2009; Tully, 1995). Particularist critiques caution against the imposition of universal norms, highlighting the risk of cultural homogenization and the marginalization of local perspectives.

### **Cosmopolitanism and global solidarity**

Cosmopolitanism advocates for a transnational identity and shared human community, emphasizing moral obligations that transcend national boundaries (Held, 1995). GCED rooted in cosmopolitan ideals encourages learners to see themselves as part of a global community, fostering empathy and collaboration. However, critics argue that cosmopolitanism risks undervaluing local identities and traditions, necessitating a careful balance in GCED curricula (Appiah, 2006).

### **Nationalism and realism**

Nationalist and realist perspectives prioritize sovereignty, national interest, and self-determination, often questioning the feasibility of transnational justice frameworks (Mearsheimer, 2003). Educators must navigate these ideologies sensitively, fostering discussions on the responsibilities and limitations of global citizenship while respecting students' cultural and national identities. This requires pedagogies that encourage critical reflection on global issues without alienating learners rooted in nationalist or realist paradigms.

### **The challenge of neonationalism**

Neonationalism poses a particularly acute challenge for GCED, emphasizing cultural homogeneity and sovereignty while resisting global frameworks (Wang, 2021). Neonationalist

rhetoric often frames GCED as an external imposition, undermining its goals of inclusivity and shared responsibility. Educators must engage with these critiques constructively, promoting dialogue that reconciles national pride with global cooperation.

### GCED and the society of states

The concept of a society of states offers valuable insights for integrating GCED into global governance frameworks. By emphasizing mutual respect, shared interests, and multilateral dialogue, the society of states aligns with GCED's goals of fostering global justice and cooperation (Bull, 1977). However, the society of states also highlights the limitations of Western-centric models, necessitating a more inclusive approach to global citizenship.

### Challenges in assessing global citizenship competencies

Assessing global citizenship competencies, including critical engagement with political ideologies and empathy, presents unique challenges. Traditional assessment methods often fail to capture the complexity of these skills, necessitating alternative approaches:

- **Values-Based Assessment.** Bourn (2020) advocates for values-based assessment frameworks that evaluate students' engagement with global citizenship principles rather than relying solely on rote knowledge. These frameworks emphasize competencies such as empathy, intercultural understanding, and critical analysis.
- **Innovative Assessment Strategies.** Alternative assessment methods include reflective portfolios, project-based assessments, and peer evaluations. These approaches allow students to demonstrate their understanding of GCED concepts in ways that reflect real-world engagement. Sant (2018) argues that such methods are critical for fostering skills like critical inquiry and collaboration, which traditional exams often fail to assess.
- **Assessing Systemic Understanding.** Miller (2007) emphasizes the importance of assessing students' ability to critically analyze systemic inequalities and their implications for global justice. This requires educators to develop assessment tools that capture nuanced competencies, ensuring learners can engage meaningfully with complex global challenges.
- **Addressing Cost and Sustainability in GCED.** Implementing GCED globally is often constrained by financial and resource limitations, particularly in the Global South. Resource-intensive initiatives like curriculum development, teacher training, and material production exacerbate educational inequities (Sharma, 2020). This financial burden raises questions about the long-term sustainability of GCED programs.
- **Global Partnerships and Collaborative Models.** International organizations like UNESCO play a crucial role in supporting GCED initiatives, particularly in underserved regions. However, Stiglitz (2016) cautions that these partnerships must avoid top-down models that

impose standardized approaches without considering local needs. Sustainable GCED implementation requires collaborative models that build local capacity while respecting cultural autonomy.

- **Innovative Resource Solutions.** Global partnerships, public-private collaborations, and technology-based solutions offer potential avenues for addressing resource constraints. For instance, digital platforms can expand access to GCED resources, enabling equitable implementation even in resource-limited contexts.

### ADDRESSING PEDAGOGICAL CHALLENGES IN GLOBAL CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION (GCED)

To effectively implement Global Citizenship Education (GCED), educators and policymakers must address several key pedagogical challenges. These challenges require thoughtful strategies to ensure that GCED achieves its transformative goals of fostering globally minded, socially responsible individuals.

One critical area is the integration of universal and particular perspectives. GCED must balance global norms with cultural specificity to create inclusive curricula that resonate across diverse contexts. This approach ensures that global principles such as human rights and sustainability are meaningful and relevant to local traditions and practices, fostering a sense of shared responsibility without erasing cultural uniqueness.

Another essential focus is critical inquiry and dialogue. GCED should encourage learners to engage with diverse perspectives, enabling them to navigate ideological conflicts constructively. By fostering open, respectful discussions, students can develop the skills to analyze complex global issues critically while appreciating the value of different viewpoints. This approach prepares them to be active participants in addressing global challenges.

Innovative assessment methods also play a crucial role in advancing GCED. Traditional metrics often fall short of capturing the full scope of competencies needed for global citizenship. Therefore, assessments must evolve to evaluate skills such as empathy, intercultural communication, and critical thinking. These tools will provide a more comprehensive understanding of students' readiness to contribute to an interconnected world.

Equally important is the sustainable implementation of GCED. Equitable access remains a significant challenge, particularly in resource-constrained regions. International collaboration and localized adaptation are necessary to ensure that GCED reaches all learners, regardless of geographic or socioeconomic barriers. Tailoring programs to local needs while maintaining global relevance can create a more inclusive and impactful educational framework.

Finally, empowering educators is fundamental to the success of GCED. Professional development programs must equip teachers with the tools to facilitate nuanced discussions and

foster intercultural understanding in their classrooms. Educators are the catalysts for meaningful engagement with GCED principles, and their preparation is crucial for its long-term success.

By addressing these challenges thoughtfully, GCED has the potential to foster a dynamic and inclusive educational experience. It prepares students to engage meaningfully with global issues, navigate cultural diversity, and contribute to a more just and interconnected world. This vision of education is not only vital for individual growth but also essential for building sustainable, equitable global communities.

## DISCUSSION

This study examines the intricate intersection of political ideologies, global citizenship, and social justice within education, highlighting the challenges of merging these complex concepts into effective pedagogical strategies. By analyzing the discourse surrounding Global Citizenship Education (GCED) and its responses to current global events, this paper reveals both the transformative potential and persistent challenges of fostering global citizenship through education. Through critical examination, this study aims to chart pathways toward a more just, inclusive, and sustainable global society.

### Contemporary geopolitical conflicts and their impact on education and global citizenship

Today's geopolitical conflicts—including BREXIT, neo-nationalist surges post-2016 U.S. election, the conflicts in Ukraine, Israel-Palestine, and crises in Myanmar and Sudan—underscore the need for GCED to emphasize empathy, intercultural understanding, and conflict resolution. These events, along with the global COVID-19 pandemic, prompt GCED to reassess priorities to address not only immediate social and economic impacts but also the interconnected challenges of global health equity, environmental sustainability, and peacebuilding (Torres & Bosio, 2020; Smith, 2021).

As GCED adapts to these geopolitical realities, it can deepen its focus on teaching skills necessary for addressing global issues, such as critical thinking, collaborative problem-solving, and advocacy for social justice. The pandemic's illustration of our interconnected vulnerabilities suggests GCED's growing relevance in tackling complex global challenges through curricula that integrate health, environmental stewardship, and resilience (Stiglitz, 2016). This reorientation enables GCED to respond not just to local issues but to the broader systemic inequalities and conflicts affecting societies globally.

### Challenges in formalizing global citizenship

Formalizing global citizenship remains a significant challenge due to globalization's multifaceted nature and the lack of universally agreed-upon definitions (Giddens, 1990). Without

clear definitions or formal legal frameworks, global citizenship lacks legitimacy and enforceability, limiting its institutionalization (Held, 2013). Unlike national citizenship, which is granted and regulated by states, global citizenship remains a normative concept rather than a legally recognized status, complicating efforts to define its rights and responsibilities (Banks, 2015).

Despite this ambiguity, civil society and grassroots movements play a pivotal role in advancing the ideals of global citizenship. NGOs and advocacy groups mobilize communities, foster intercultural dialogue, and promote policy reforms. By engaging in community projects and advocacy, these organizations bridge divides and promote solidarity, thereby operationalizing GCED's principles in practical ways (Andreotti, 2021; Smith, 2021). Such movements contribute to realizing global citizenship by promoting equity, justice, and environmental sustainability on a global scale.

### The imperative of social justice in GCED

Social justice is increasingly central to GCED, extending beyond traditional topics like peace and environmental sustainability to include equity and human rights. Freire (1970) asserts that social justice is fundamental to a fair society, demanding the dismantling of systemic inequalities and the promotion of inclusive policies. Integrating social justice into GCED equips learners to engage critically with global issues, encouraging them to act as agents of positive change (Sen, 2000; Nussbaum, 2003).

This emphasis on social justice calls for a critical, reflexive approach in GCED, one that encourages students to challenge dominant narratives and explore structural barriers to equality (Andreotti, 2014). By fostering critical thinking and civic responsibility, educators can cultivate awareness and empathy, encouraging students to recognize their roles in advancing equity and social change. Experiential learning projects and participatory research are effective pedagogical tools that deepen understanding of social justice by situating it in real-world contexts (Banks, 2015; Kiely, 2005).

### Fostering consensus and measurable outcomes

For GCED to realize its transformative potential, it must establish measurable outcomes that capture its broader goals, such as critical thinking, empathy, and civic engagement (Andreotti & de Souza, 2011). Traditional academic assessments often fail to reflect the complexity of these competencies. Instead, innovative approaches—such as project-based learning, reflective portfolios, and community engagement assessments—allow students to demonstrate their understanding and commitment to global citizenship in more meaningful ways (Davies et al., 2005).

GCED's expansion also requires interdisciplinary perspectives and experiential learning. Fields like sociology, environmental studies, and anthropology provide valuable insights, enriching students' understanding of global interconnectedness and

fostering a sense of personal responsibility. Collaboration between educational institutions, government agencies, and civil society organizations can provide the resources and support needed to scale up GCED programs, making them more sustainable and impactful (Stein & Andreotti, 2016; McCowan, 2009).

### The continuing global movement for justice and inclusion

The global movement for justice and inclusion serves as a catalyst for social transformation, uniting individuals and organizations committed to a just and sustainable world. By amplifying marginalized voices and challenging systemic inequities, this movement aligns closely with the goals of GCED, emphasizing collective action and solidarity in addressing global challenges such as poverty, inequality, and climate change (Andreotti, 2021; Bourn, 2020).

As GCED continues to develop, it must integrate these principles of social justice, experiential learning, and collaborative action to empower students as responsible global citizens. Tailoring GCED to diverse cultural contexts and fostering partnerships across sectors ensures its relevance and effectiveness in preparing students to engage with the complexities of an interconnected world.

### Conclusion

Global Citizenship Education (GCED) occupies a critical space in shaping how individuals engage with an interconnected and complex world. Rooted in universalist ideals of shared humanity, justice, and equity, GCED also navigates tensions posed by political ideologies like realism, conservatism, and neoliberalism. These ideologies highlight the importance of state sovereignty, national identity, and pragmatic engagement, challenging GCED's aspirations for global solidarity and ethical responsibility.

While these tensions present challenges, they also offer opportunities for GCED to evolve. By balancing local and global perspectives, integrating cultural narratives, and addressing systemic inequalities, GCED can become a dynamic and inclusive framework. Incorporating the principles of cosmopolitanism, such as obligations beyond borders and a commitment to environmental and cultural sustainability, further strengthens its philosophical foundation. As Nussbaum emphasizes, fostering empathy, critical thinking, and a global perspective is essential for preparing learners to address pressing global issues while respecting diverse cultural identities.

The multifaceted nature of GCED, as outlined by Zajda and Stromquist, highlights its ability to address sociological, political, economic, and grassroots dimensions. These perspectives underscore the importance of reconciling universalist ideals with pragmatic realities, ensuring GCED remains relevant in a world shaped by globalization and technological advancements.

Achieving GCED's transformative potential requires collaboration, innovation, and sustained commitment to equity. By promoting interdisciplinary learning, culturally sensitive pedagogy, and measurable outcomes, GCED can empower informed, engaged, and responsible global citizens. In doing so, it contributes to building a more just, inclusive, and sustainable global society. While challenges persist, GCED's adaptability and commitment to addressing ideological diversity make it a powerful tool for fostering global understanding and collective action.

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**Ethical approval:** The study was not involving human experimentation.

**Consent to participate:** No interviews were included in the study.

**Availability of data:** Data are available in the article.

**Competing interests:** The author(s) declared no potential conflicts of interest with respect to the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

**Funding:** The present submission has not received any funding.

**Authors' Contributions:** The author has contributed to the present submission.

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