

Fostering Skills for Global Citizenship Through Teacher Education in India

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Abstract:

The challenges in academia today extend beyond simply producing individuals with the necessary qualifications and skills for employment. There is also a need to cultivate thoughtful, well-rounded, and creative individuals. Despite the emphasis on cultural respect across nations, the world is still grappling with common challenges like climate change, conflict resolution, and sustainable development. The aim of global citizenship education (GCED) is to create active learners who have the knowledge, skills, and values to actively participate in creating an inclusive, secure, peaceful, and sustainable society. In our increasingly interconnected and diverse world, it is crucial to emphasize the development of global citizenship skills. This paper explores the concept of global citizenship education, its necessity, and the crucial role of educators in integrating global citizenship education to cultivate skills among learners through teacher education. It also aims to make educators feel responsible and important by highlighting their role in shaping the future through transformative education that empowers learners to make informed decisions and take action at the individual, community, and global levels.

Keywords: Global Citizenship Education, skills, SDG 4, transformative education

Introduction

As we move forward in the 21st-century world, though we enjoy technological advancement and scientific innovations, we are somehow ignoring the unrest, instability, competition and crises that co-exist. Despite the advancements in technology and scientific innovations, we are faced with various issues such as climate change, poverty, hunger, intolerance, extremism, and illiteracy. The pressing global challenges demand immediate attention, and utilizing education as a tool to tackle these issues can be a highly effective approach. In 2012, The Global Education First Initiative (GEFI) was introduced by the United Nations Secretary-General, Ban Ki-moon, with the primary goal of improving access to education, enhancing the quality of learning, and promoting global citizenship. Subsequently, global citizenship education was incorporated into the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) as target 4.7, emphasizing the acquisition of knowledge and skills necessary to advance sustainable development through education for sustainable development, human rights, gender equality, peace promotion, non-violence, global citizenship, appreciation of cultural diversity, and the contribution of culture to sustainable development by 2030. Moreover, the National Education Policy 2020 advocates for the integration of global citizenship education into educational institutions. Although global citizenship education is not a novel concept globally or in India, the country has long embraced the idea of

Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam, which translates to "the world is one family." Notably, concepts such as peace education, value education, and human rights education have historically been ingrained in the Indian education system, albeit taught separately in the classroom. Global Citizenship Education (GCED) plays a crucial role, not only in integrating different components, but also in transforming learners into active and responsible citizens. This transformation is achieved through experiential learning, a method that allows learners to engage in real-world experiences and reflect on these experiences to develop a deeper understanding of global issues and their role in addressing them.

Global citizenship education is a transformative force. It equips learners with the knowledge, skills, values, and attitudes needed to contribute to a more inclusive, just, and peaceful world. This form of education is not just about imparting information, but about instilling a sense of responsibility and empowerment. It draws on concepts and methodologies from human rights education, peace education, education for sustainable development, and education for international understanding, embracing a multifaceted approach. It adopts a lifelong learning perspective, starting from early childhood and extending through all levels of education into adulthood. It encompasses both formal and informal approaches, including curricular and extracurricular interventions, as well as traditional and non-traditional pathways to engagement. The integration of global citizenship education into the education system offers numerous benefits. It enhances the quality of learning, promotes a culture of peace and non-violence, fosters appreciation of cultural diversity, and equips learners with the skills to address global challenges.

Core Conceptual Dimensions of Global Citizenship Education (GCED)

According to UNESCO, Global Citizenship Education consists of three conceptual dimensions or domains of learning. These include:

Cognitive (Knowledge): This domain focuses on developing knowledge and conceptual understanding of global citizenship, such as understanding human rights, social justice, and sustainable development.

Socio-Emotional (Affective): This focuses on developing positive attitudes and values related to global citizenship, such as respect for diversity, empathy, and solidarity.

Behavioral (Psychomotor): This focuses on developing the skills and competencies needed to take action as a global citizen, such as critical thinking, problem-solving, and effective communication.

All these three domains are crucial to providing a holistic learning environment as well as experiences to learners. The integration of cognitive, affective, and psychomotor domains will impart the abilities to learners to emerge as global citizens.

In addition to the domains mentioned above, to become a global citizen, a learner needs to be curious, creative, collaborative, inclusive, open-minded, reflective, informed, responsible, and, most importantly, open-minded. Moreover, global citizenship is a lifelong learning process where we learn, unlearn, re-learn, and continuously reflect on our perspectives and actions. Global citizenship does not mean travelling to numerous countries, speaking multiple languages, being part of several cultures, or practising various religions; rather, it refers to being responsible and taking reflective actions in our own communities so that we can shape a more inclusive, just equitable, peaceful, secure and sustainable world for all.

Therefore, a teacher's role in teacher education has become very significant in promoting global citizenship education and making global learners. As a teacher plays an important role in shaping the minds and behaviour of learners, various pedagogies and necessary changes must be incorporated in

schools and universities so that a positive mindset and outlook towards global citizenship can be developed among learners and responsible as well as accountable citizens can be made through the teacher education system.

Preparing learners for the globalized world

This section mentions the ways a teacher can prepare learners for the globalized world and address the global challenges. These are:

- 1. Equipping global skills:** Teachers must provide learners with the skills necessary to function in an interconnected, complex, and globalized world.
- 2. Fostering cultural diversity and understanding:** Teachers should address the diverse needs of their students, promote cross-cultural understanding through activities such as cultural exchange programs, and create an inclusive and respectful learning environment for all students.
- 3. Integrating global perspective and context:** Incorporating global perspectives and context into teaching is essential for making learning more relevant and engaging and promoting international understanding among students. Teachers should address topics such as the causes of conflict and human rights violations in war-prone areas, gender inequality across different nations, as well as global issues like climate and food crises and their widespread impact on societies. These are crucial issues that affect not only the nations directly involved but also have far-reaching consequences due to the interconnected nature of humanity.
- 4. Cultivating global citizenship:** Teachers should instill global citizenship skills such as empathy, critical thinking, problem-solving, leadership, and respect for diversity and the environment into their teaching.
- 5. Addressing global and local challenges:** Educators should integrate important global and local issues, such as sustainability, social justice, and human rights, into their teaching in order to prepare students to tackle these challenges at the grassroots level.
- 6. Improving teaching methods:** Teachers should include innovative teaching approaches like inquiry-based learning, project-based learning, design thinking, and others that are effective and engaging for students.
- 7. Adapting curriculum frameworks:** The curriculum should be revamped to incorporate activities that raise awareness of local issues and practical challenges and teach students how to confront them.
- 8. Fostering Networking and Collaboration:** Schools should include activities that help learners develop communication, collaboration, networking, and teamwork skills.
- 9. Staying relevant to the changing world:** Pedagogical methods and learning activities should impart skills that are relevant to the evolving world.
- 10. Empowering students to make a global impact:** Learners should be made aware of local and global issues through various courses and activities, fostering sensitivity, accountability, responsibility, and empathy to enable them to make a global impact.

Conclusion

Our rapidly changing world is witnessing a rise in conflicts, challenges, instability, insecurity and many other problems. This is a reminder that showing empathy, fostering love and unity, and taking responsibility for each other are crucial for the protection and advancement of humanity. These values are fundamental to Global Citizenship, as they encompass both our mindsets and actions. Therefore, it is

essential to instill global citizenship skills in learners through teacher education, nurturing traits such as compassion, empathy, and mindfulness. This equips them to not only recognize the issues, challenges, and conflicts in society but also to address them with responsible actions. By integrating skills for global citizenship into teacher education, we can prepare educators and learners for a world that is increasingly interconnected and global. As a result, global citizenship education is not only essential but also transformative and should be incorporated into the education system.

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