

# Integrating Global Citizenship Education: A Phenomenological Inquiry

Helen Chavez<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>(Researcher)

<sup>1</sup>Institution

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**Abstract:** This qualitative study investigated the challenges, coping mechanisms, and insights experienced by teachers in implementing Global Citizenship Education (GCE) in their classrooms. The study was conducted with seven teachers from Jose Timbol Sr. Central Elementary School at Sta. Maria, Davao Occidental (Sta. Maria West District). The study found six key challenges: integrating global citizenship into the curriculum, lack of training and resources, addressing cultural sensitivity, balancing national education standards with global citizenship, gaining parental and community support, and engaging students in global citizenship education. The coping mechanisms identified include adapting the curriculum, practicing self-directed learning and resource creation, localizing global topics, using interactive methods like project-based learning, engaging parents and the community, and integrating global topics into national standards. Lastly, the study revealed that teachers insights as follows: Global issues affect students' local lives, Balancing global citizenship education with national standards is challenging, and Active engagement boosts students' interest in global citizenship education. This research contributes valuable insights into the complexities and effectiveness of teaching GCE in the local educational context of Davao City.

**Keywords:** *Global Citizenship Education, Teaching Strategies, Philippines, Teacher Experiences, Educational Practices.*

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## I. INTRODUCTION

Global Citizenship Education (GCE) has become an important focus in education, promoting learners' awareness, empathy, and responsibility toward global issues. Teachers play a key role in fostering students' understanding and engagement with GCE, but their lived experiences in applying GCE, particularly from a phenomenological perspective, have been largely overlooked.

Educators implementing Global Citizenship Education (GCE) faced challenges shaped by cultural diversity, geopolitical tensions, and the need to balance global values with local norms. In the Philippines, systemic issues like limited resources and overcrowded classrooms, along with Western-centric curricula, hindered meaningful GCE delivery. In Davao City, local factors such as language barriers, socio-economic inequalities, and ongoing conflicts further complicated GCE efforts, requiring a context-sensitive approach. This phenomenological study explored teachers' lived experiences across these levels to inform more inclusive and effective GCE practices that empower students as responsible global citizens.

This study aimed to explore teachers' lived experiences with Global Citizenship Education (GCE) using a

phenomenological approach, focusing on the challenges and opportunities in diverse educational settings. The insights gained were intended to inform policies, curriculum design, and professional development to improve the inclusivity and effectiveness of GCE.

The literature on teaching global citizenship highlights diverse theoretical frameworks, pedagogical methods, and practical tools aimed at preparing students for an interconnected world. A key focus is on critical and reflexive pedagogy, urging educators to consider power dynamics and cultural complexities. Practical resources and innovative approaches, like participatory action research and student-led projects, promote global competencies and active civic engagement. Technology integration offers new opportunities for cross-cultural learning but raises concerns about digital equity.

Social constructivism, drawing from Vygotsky and Piaget, explains how knowledge in Global Citizenship Education (GCE) is built through social interaction and collaboration, highlighting the role of dialogue, reflection, and experiential learning in developing critical thinking, empathy, and intercultural competence. Complementing this, critical pedagogy, inspired by Paulo Freire, emphasizes raising critical consciousness and addressing social justice by

challenging power structures and inequalities. It encourages students to analyze oppression and engage in reflective action, empowering them to become active agents of change.

## II. METHOD

This study employed a qualitative research design grounded in phenomenology to explore educators' lived experiences and meanings related to teaching global citizenship. Phenomenology was chosen for its focus on capturing the subjective, nuanced perspectives of teachers through in-depth interviews and reflective dialogue. This approach enabled the researcher to uncover the core structures shaping participants' understanding while setting aside personal biases to center the educators' voices. Additionally, phenomenology's emphasis on the "lived world" allowed the study to account for the diverse socio-cultural and institutional contexts influencing how global citizenship education was experienced and practiced.

The study was grounded in four key philosophical assumptions shaping its framework and methodology. Ontologically, it viewed reality as socially constructed and subjective, shaped by cultural and historical contexts. Epistemologically, knowledge was seen as co-created through interaction and reflection, influenced by power dynamics. Axiologically, the research prioritized social justice, equity, and ethical practices like informed consent. Methodologically, a qualitative interpretivist approach was used to explore educators' nuanced perspectives on global citizenship education through in-depth, context-rich data collection.

The study adopted a constructivist ontology, viewing reality as subjective and shaped by cultural, social, and historical contexts. This perspective emphasized multiple realities and prioritized participants' diverse experiences and interpretations of teaching global citizenship. Using qualitative methods like interviews, observation, and document analysis, the research aimed to capture the complex, context-dependent meanings and practices of global citizenship education within varied educational settings.

This study involved seven teachers from Jose Timbol Sr. Central Elementary School in Sta. Maria, Davao Occidental, selected through purposive sampling. Participants were chosen based on specific criteria: having at least five years of teaching experience, expertise in global citizenship education, and active incorporation of global citizenship principles in their teaching. This method ensured the selection of knowledgeable teachers who could provide detailed insights relevant to the study's focus on global citizenship education.

The researcher used two main data collection methods: in-depth interviews (IDIs) and a focus group discussion (FGD). The IDIs involved one-on-one interviews with participants using open-ended questions to explore their individual experiences and practices in teaching global citizenship, conducted in a private setting to ensure

confidentiality. Following the interviews, a focus group discussion was held to facilitate group interaction where participants could discuss shared experiences, differing views, and collective insights on the topic. Both methods were guided by an interview guide to maintain consistency and depth in data collection.

Data analysis in this study used Colaizzi's method, ideal for phenomenological research as it systematically explored participants' lived experiences and identified key themes. The process involved repeatedly reading transcripts to understand the narratives, extracting significant statements, and coding these to find recurring themes. These themes were then grouped into clusters and refined through thematic categorization to ensure clarity and coherence. The researcher distilled the core meaning of each theme through abstraction, synthesizing individual experiences into broader insights relevant to the study. Reflexivity was maintained throughout to ensure rigor and transparency, with member checking potentially used to confirm the accuracy and credibility of the findings.

## III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Six key themes emerged regarding the challenges teachers faced in integrating Global Citizenship Education into their teaching: incorporating global citizenship into the curriculum, lack of training and resources, addressing cultural sensitivity and relevance, balancing national education standards with global citizenship, securing parental and community support, and engaging students effectively.

Several key coping mechanisms to promote Global Citizenship Education were employed, including adapting the curriculum to include global topics, practicing self-directed learning and creating resources, localizing global issues to make them relevant to students' local contexts, using interactive methods like project-based learning to engage students, involving parents and the community to support learning, and integrating global topics into national education standards to balance local curriculum requirements with global citizenship goals.

Teachers' experiences in implementing Global Citizenship Education revealed key themes which are global issues affect students' local lives, balancing global citizenship education with national standards is challenging, and active engagement boosts students' interest in global citizenship education.

The study identified six main challenges teachers face in integrating Global Citizenship Education (GCE), including curriculum overload, lack of training and resources, cultural sensitivity, balancing national standards with GCE, gaining parental and community support, and student engagement. To overcome these, teachers adapt curricula, engage in self-directed learning, localize global topics, use interactive methods like project-based learning, involve parents and communities, and align global topics with national standards. Key insights from their experiences highlight that global issues are directly relevant to students' local lives, balancing

GCE with national standards remains challenging, and active student engagement significantly enhances interest and learning outcomes in GCE.

Teachers face several challenges in integrating Global Citizenship Education (GCE) into their instructional practices, including rigid national standards, lack of training and resources, and the need to address cultural sensitivity. Engaging students and gaining parental and community support also prove difficult, while balancing global topics with core national curriculum requirements remains a major concern.

To overcome these obstacles, teachers adapt the curriculum to include global topics creatively, engage in self-directed learning, and develop their own resources. They localize global issues to make them relevant to students' lives and use interactive methods like project-based learning to boost engagement.

Teachers' experiences reveal that global issues are directly connected to students' local realities, making GCE meaningful and necessary. However, balancing national standards with GCE remains challenging and requires ongoing support and policy adjustments.

Future directions for enhancing Global Citizenship Education (GCE) include encouraging students to actively engage with global issues through discussions, projects, and real-world applications. Teachers should pursue professional development, adapt curricula to include global topics, use interactive methods like project-based learning, and involve parents and the community to boost engagement. School leaders need to support these efforts by providing resources, training, and fostering a culture that values global citizenship. Education officials are encouraged to review curricula to better integrate GCE with national standards and offer necessary support to teachers. Finally, future research should investigate the long-term effects of GCE on students, assess teaching strategies, and examine the impact of community and parental involvement.

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