

Creativity and Global Citizenship Education: A Sustainable Pedagogy for Empathy, Innovation and Ethical Actions

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Abstract

The 21st century has seen both benefits and problems as a result of globalization. As the world grows more interconnected due to faster communication and the disintegration of nation - state borders; humanity faces difficulties and complications in areas like sustainability, conflict resolution, environmental concerns, etc. Investigating these global concerns and coming up with solutions rely heavily on a person's capacity for critical, original and creative ideas. Creativity is not restricted by age, geography, or cultural norms. Thus, it is appropriate to foster creative skills in future generations so they can act both locally and globally and make well-informed decisions. Developing engaged students with the values, knowledge, and abilities to contribute to the development of a sustainable, inclusive, and peaceful society is the goal of global citizenship education, or GCE. Reviews indicate that considering and cultivating creativity and GCE together rather than separately increases their benefits exponentially (Glaveanu 2020). In the framework of GCE, the current study examines the conceptual links between creativity and global citizenship education as well as various pedagogical approaches that can help learners develop their creative abilities.

Keywords: Creative skill, Global citizenship education

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Introduction

According to UNESCO, “The encouragement of creativity from an early age is one of the best guarantees of growth in a healthy environment of self-esteem and mutual respect – critical ingredients for building a culture of peace.” Today's curricula around the world place a high value on critical thinking, problem-solving, analytical abilities, and creativity. “The argument over preserving and fostering human creativity from elementary school onward is becoming increasingly important. Creativity has been incorporated into the curriculum in many Western and Asian countries. (2020, Nazir). Individual, social, and global issues can be addressed and navigated with by means of creativity and adaptability. It has been acknowledged that in knowledge-based economies, creativity is a critical survival skill. In the near future, creativity will be the most important human trait as the world advances toward robotics, artificial intelligence, scientific breakthroughs, and space exploration.

Growing globalization, internet interconnectedness, and the urgent issues facing humanity—such as social injustice, inequality, migration, and climate change—have all contributed to the rise in significance of global citizenship education, or GCE. It entails actively participating in cooperative problem-solving and critical thinking at the local and global levels in order to comprehend various cultures and points of view. By presenting students the information, abilities, and attitudes they need to understand and respond to complicated, interrelated situations, educational systems play a critical role in promoting global citizenship.

Concept of Global Citizenship Education (GCE)

Global Citizenship Education (GCE) aims to empower learners to engage and assume active roles, both locally and globally, to face and resolve global challenges and ultimately to become proactive contributors to a more just, peaceful, tolerant, inclusive, secure and sustainable world (UNESCO 2014, p. 15). As target 4.7 of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), GCE focuses on acquiring the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development by 2030 through education for sustainable development, human rights, gender equality, peace promotion, nonviolence, global citizenship, a respect for cultural diversity, and the role of culture in sustainable development. Three conceptual components or learning domains make up Global Citizenship Education, according to UNESCO. These consist of:

- i. **Knowledge-based cognitive:** Developing knowledge and conceptual understanding of global citizenship, including an awareness of social justice, human rights, and sustainable development, is the major goal of this area.
- ii. **Socio-Emotional (Affective):** This emphasises cultivating ideals and attitudes associated with global citizenship, such as empathy, solidarity, and tolerance for diversity.
- iii. **Behavioural (Psychomotor):** This focuses on cultivating the abilities and proficiencies required to act as a global citizen, including effective communication, problem-solving, and critical thinking.

For learners to have a comprehensive learning environment and experiences, all three of these domains are essential. Students will acquire the skills necessary to become global citizens through the integration of cognitive, emotional, and psychomotor domains. A learner must possess the following qualities in addition to the ones listed above in order to become a global citizen: curiosity, creativity, teamwork, inclusivity, open-mindedness, reflection, knowledge, responsibility, and, most significantly, open-mindedness. Furthermore, global citizenship is a continuous process of learning throughout our lives, during which we constantly examine our viewpoints and behaviours. In order to create a more inclusive, just, equitable, peaceful, secure, and sustainable world for everybody, global citizenship entails being responsible and acting thoughtfully in our own communities. It does not entail visiting many different countries, speaking multiple languages, belonging to multiple cultures, or practicing multiple religions.

The ability to develop and exhibit problem-solving abilities, critical thinking, teamwork, creativity, etc. are among the learning outcomes linked to the GCE. GCE education aims to inculcate a sense of empowerment and responsibility in addition to knowledge. It embraces a comprehensive approach and incorporates ideas and practices from education for sustainable development, education for peace, education for human rights, and education for international understanding. It embraces a lifelong learning approach that begins in early childhood and continues through all educational levels and into adulthood. In addition to educational and extracurricular initiatives, it includes both official and informal techniques, as well as conventional and unconventional avenues to participation. It cultivates an understanding of cultural variety, raises the standard of education, encourages a culture of peace and non-violence, and gives students the tools they need to tackle global issues. Students are encouraged to acquire critical thinking, empathy, and problem-solving skills in schools and curriculum frameworks that include global citizenship education. These abilities are crucial for navigating a complicated, linked world. By fostering creativity—an essential skill for addressing global challenges - teachers can empower students to contribute positively and effectively as global citizens. GCE represents a paradigm shift towards recognizing our shared responsibilities in a diverse and interconnected world, and understanding its background provides a foundation for exploring its complexities and implications.

Concept of Creativity

Creativity is generally understood as an ability that results in producing something partly or entirely new; ability to generate, reformulate, or discover novel ideas, solutions and visualization or performance of something in a manner different from what was thought possible or normal previously. Therefore, the creative process initiates with a thought and this ability to think in numerous new ways is referred to as creativity in psychology. According to Plucker et al. (2004), creativity is the “interaction among aptitude, process, and environment by which an

individual or group produces a perceptible product that is both novel and useful as defined within a social context.” This definition lead to the understanding that creativity is a personal feature which stems from an interaction between person and context in which the individual or group exists. It also highlights the criteria of originality and utility as key indicators of creativity within a social context. Runco & Jaeger (2012) argued that “Creativity requires both originality and effectiveness”, which reiterates the classic binary criteria of originality and usefulness in understanding the concept of creativity.

The following are the main components of creative skills:

- i. Cognitive factors which comprise of problem-solving skills, divergent and convergent reasoning, etc.
- ii. Emotional and motivating elements, such as resilience, curiosity, risk tolerance, and intrinsic motivation.
- iii. Personality traits such as adaptability, willingness to try new things, self-reliance, etc.
- iv. Cultural and environmental elements, such as constructive criticism, cultural variety, and the availability of supporting surroundings.
- v. Factors dependent on skill namely, craftsmanship, teamwork, communication, etc.

Relationship between Creativity and Global Citizenship Education (GCE)

Glaveanu (2020) in his review on creativity and GCE, noted that there were few studies investigating the relationship between creativity and GCE. The author reported that the studies indicated significant association between them particularly Tidikis & Dunbar, 2017 (found that global citizenship helps explain variance in creativity beyond one of its main predictors i.e. openness to experience) and Divsalar & Soleymannpour, 2014 (positive significant correlation between global citizenship issues in relevant components of creativity). Another study conducted by Lilley et al. (2015) proposed markers for global citizens, that listed features typically associated with creativity such as “leaves comfort zone” and “thinks differently”. Their research revealed the key characteristics of the global citizen as “openness, tolerance, respect, and responsibility (self/others/planet)”. According to these studies, creativity plays a significant role in the development of global citizens and can be enhanced by global citizenship values. At the core of discussions on global citizenship was the fundamental division between local and global.

Glaveanu (2020) identified five common features of creativity and global citizenship education namely seeking differences, valuing multiplicity, promoting dialogue, increasing participation, and acting ethically. They are briefly discussed below:

- i. **Seeking Differences:** When it comes to creativity, the creation of novelty or newness is ascribed to the existence of differences since without them, it would be impossible to define the essential component of creativity, which is novelty. Heterogeneity at the identity level causes variances in GCE. Thus, looking for distinctions fulfils the goals of GCE and creativity.
- ii. **Multiplicity valuation:** A key element of creativity is flexibility in thought and behaviour, which necessitates shifting perspectives to other points of view in order to become self-aware and appreciate fresh, imaginative interpretations of the world. Comparably, GCE places a strong emphasis on appreciating various points of view in an uncritical, reflective manner as well as being conscious of perceiving the world in different ways.
- iii. **Fostering Dialogue:** When it comes to creativity, dialogues entail looking at an issue from several angles, and GCE seeks to foster the critical consciousness that goes along with these discussions in order to combat the detrimental consequences of globalization.
- iv. **Growing Participation:** As more people engage in creative endeavours, they are able to think beyond the box and develop original ideas. It offers a variety of viewpoints and concepts to address the idea of plurality relegating insular understandings in the setting of GCE.
- v. **Behaving ethically:** Value, utility, and appropriateness are frequently included in the definition of creativity. In GCE, acting ethically is represented in the duty of global citizens to themselves, others, and the environment (UNESCO 2014), which also necessitates a critical analysis of what is morally right and why.

The interrelations indicate that GCE may help find creative solutions to common problems and creative skills may leverage GCE. As concluded by Glaveanu (2020), considering ‘the two indispensable qualities’ for the world of tomorrow, together increase their benefits exponentially as they hold the key to transforming education, people, and institutions in the right direction.

Creativity and GCE in Indian Education

Both internationally and in India, the idea of teaching global citizenship is not new; ideas like human rights education, value education, and peace education have long been part of the Indian educational system. Citizenship education is embedded in school-level subjects such as Civics, Social Science, and Life Skills topics. The National Education Policy 2020 (NEP 2020) advocates for the integration of global citizenship education into educational institutions. It places a strong emphasis on encouraging students' creativity through interdisciplinary education, hands-on learning, flexible learning paths, student autonomy, technology integration, and a variety of languages and artistic mediums.

The National Curriculum Framework-School Education 2023 (NCF-SE) advocates providing students the abilities they need to think critically and solve problems creatively. It places a strong emphasis on a variety of pedagogical approaches, including inquiry-based, play-based, and dialogue-based approaches. It also encourages students to investigate connections between various subjects, which helps them grasp concepts more holistically and stimulates their creativity.

Rationale for Studying the Relationship between Creativity and Global Citizenship Education

Since today's problems are complex and frequently call for creative solutions, the relationship between creativity and global citizenship is an important field of study. When dealing with problems that call for creativity and flexibility, traditional methods might not be sufficient. Creativity includes more than just creative expression; it also includes the capacity to produce original notions, ideas, and viewpoints that allow people to tackle issues from novel perspectives.

One can have a better understanding of how encouraging creativity can improve global citizenship by researching this relationship. Creative people are frequently better at empathy and perspective-taking, two skills that are essential for cross-cultural cooperation and successful communication. Additionally, developing creativity can enable people to become proactive change agents and make constructive contributions to their communities and the global society.

Relationship Between Creativity and Global Citizenship

The relationship between creativity and global citizenship is multifaceted and significant, particularly in the context of an increasingly interconnected world. Some key dimensions of this relationship are discussed below:

i. Innovative Problem-Solving:

- a. Handling Global Issues: People that are creative are better able to think critically and come up with novel solutions to challenging global problems including poverty, social injustice, and climate change. It is required of global citizens to address these issues, and effective action requires creative problem-solving.
- b. Adaptive Thinking: People who think creatively tend to be more flexible, which helps them deal with a constantly shifting global environment. For global citizens who need to react to changing social, economic, and environmental settings, this flexibility is essential.

ii. Empathy and Perspective-Taking:

- a. Cultural Understanding: Being creative frequently entails having the ability to view things from various angles, which cultivates empathy for other people. Because it fosters tolerance and empathy for all cultures and points of view, this empathetic engagement is essential to global citizenship.

- b. **Intercultural Communication:** People from various backgrounds can connect and communicate more successfully when they use creative expression as a universal language. This mutual comprehension strengthens teamwork in tackling global concerns.

iii. Critical Thinking and Reflection:

- a. **Promoting Conversation:** Creativity encourages people to consider their values and views and to challenge the status quo. For global citizens who must have meaningful conversations about global issues and their ramifications, this critical attitude is crucial.
- b. **Challenging Stereotypes:** Innovative methods can assist in dispelling preconceptions and stereotypes, enabling people to interact with others in a more genuine and open manner. Fostering a feeling of global citizenship requires this open-mindedness.

iv. Activism and Social Responsibility:

- a. **Inspiration for Change:** People are frequently motivated to imagine and promote a better society by creativity. More inclined to take the initiative and participate in social activism, creative thinkers strive for constructive change both inside and outside of their communities.
- b. **Collaborative Projects:** A lot of artistic pursuits, including music, art, and design, promote teamwork among people from various backgrounds. These partnerships have the potential to foster a sense of shared responsibility and act as a catalyst for social change.

v. Education and Skill Development:

- a. **Curriculum Integration:** Creative educational frameworks foster the teamwork, communication, and critical thinking abilities needed for global citizenship. Students are more equipped to handle global issues when creativity is incorporated into citizenship education.
- b. **Lifelong Learning:** Promoting creativity cultivates a love of learning and discovery, which is essential for global citizens who have to constantly adjust to new knowledge, cultural norms, and world events.

vi. Cultural understanding and interchange:

- a. **Artistic Expression:** Engaging in creative pursuits can foster an understanding of cultural diversity and act as a vehicle for cultural interchange. Being exposed to other artistic traditions and tales helps global citizens see the world more fully.
- b. **Bridging Divides:** Social, political, and cultural divides can be overcome by creativity. People can cooperate to achieve shared objectives through creative collaborations, which strengthens the idea that all people are interconnected.

Pedagogical strategies that can foster creativity in the context of GCE

To support a transformative learning experience successfully, UNESCO (2014) suggested that teaching and learning resources should embody three teaching pedagogies namely: **i. Engagement:** It promotes action-oriented, learner-centered, and interactive learning; where students are given the chance to apply what they have learned in authentic contexts while incorporating their own experiences. **ii. Living Together:** This teaching pedagogy encourages the development of values, attitudes, and cohabitation skills. **iii. Peace:** This approach provides students the opportunity to think, analyse, and work toward world peace through an understanding of the diverse contributions made by different historical cultures and civilizations.

Global citizenship education (GCE) benefits greatly from creativity because it helps students think critically, solve challenging problems, and interact with people from different backgrounds and viewpoints.

The following section discusses a few teaching techniques that can encourage creativity in the context of teaching global citizenship.

1. Project Based Learning (PBL)

It encourages students to think creatively by giving them the opportunity to experiment with different ideas, take charge of their education, and explore new concepts.

2. Multidisciplinary Method

Complex situations can be understood more thoroughly through interdisciplinary approaches. Better problem-solving and innovative solutions can result from combining several viewpoints and approaches. It can result in more effective solutions by taking into account different points of view.

3. Learning Through Inquiry

By encouraging curiosity, critical thinking, and problem-solving abilities, this method enables children to learn new things and form their own distinctive viewpoints. Students foster critical thinking and creativity by posing questions and investigating responses via investigation and debate.

4. Collaborative Education

Collaboration encourages a variety of viewpoints and idea sharing, which can spark original thought. Besides, students can see other viewpoints, build on each other's ideas, and improve their communication and teamwork abilities.

5. Methods Based on the Arts

These exercises offer chances for individual expression, creative problem-solving, and perspective-taking. Students can creatively convey their understanding of global citizenship by incorporating literature, music, theatre, and art.

6. Learning through Service

Students who participate in community service initiatives develop a sense of responsibility while applying their creativity in practical settings. Students can be encouraged to come up with innovative solutions by collaborating with regional or international organizations and creating initiatives that cater to particular community needs.

7. Digital Narrative

Students can creatively express their opinions on global concerns by using technology to communicate stories. Students can utilize technology to create digital art, blogs, or movies that demonstrate their knowledge and viewpoints on global citizenship.

8. Simulations and Role-Playing

Students can strengthen their imagination, problem-solving abilities and capacity for unconventional thinking through creative play. Students can experience global concerns from various perspectives through activities like role-playing scenarios that demand negotiation and teamwork or simulations of international talks. These activities help students develop empathy and creative problem-solving skills.

9. Innovative Techniques for Solving Problems

Techniques like mind mapping and brainstorming encourage original ways to problem-solving.

Teachers can foster students' creativity and equip them to interact critically and creatively with the intricacies of the global society by including these pedagogical approaches into their teaching of global citizenship. Integrating the above techniques incorporates both creativity and global citizenship education resulting in an accelerated benefit for the students.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the paper iterates that there exists a reciprocal relationship between creativity and global citizenship with common features such as seeking differences, valuing multiplicity, promoting dialogue, increasing

participation, and acting ethically. Creativity acts a catalyst in developing the set of values, attitudes and abilities for global citizenship education. In order to develop children who can think critically, sympathize with different viewpoints, and collaborate to find lasting solutions, it will be favourable to encourage creativity in educational frameworks and social efforts in the context of global citizenship education. Therefore, it is essential to acknowledge and foster this link in order to develop responsible, involved citizens who can help create a more just and equitable world.

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