LECTURERS' PERCEPTIONS OF GLOBAL CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION IN TEACHING INTERNATIONAL STUDIES STUDENTS

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Abstract: In an era of globalization, global citizenship education (GCED) has become an essential component of university curricula. This paper explores lecturers' perceptions while implementing a GCED curriculum for International Studies majors at a university in Vietnam. Qualitative analysis of interviews, course reflections, and teaching materials reveals that lecturers' perceptions of global citizenship (GC) and GCED align with UNESCO's framework. These views are primarily shaped by international experiences, media, and academic exchanges. The paper concludes with practical implications for improving GCED at the university level.

Key words: Global citizenship (GC); global citizenship education (GCED); teachers' perceptions; curriculum implementation; internationalization of education

NHẬN THỨC CỦA GIẢNG VIÊN VỀ GIÁO DỤC CÔNG DÂN TOÀN CẦU CHO SINH VIÊN NGÀNH QUỐC TẾ HỌC

Tóm tắt: Trong bối cảnh toàn cầu hóa, giáo dục công dân toàn cầu (GDCDTC) đã trở thành một thành phần thiết yếu trong chương trình giảng dạy đại học. Bài báo này tìm hiểu nhận thức của giảng viên (GV) trong quá trình thực hiện chương trình giảng dạy theo định hướng GDCDTC cho sinh viên ngành Quốc tế học tại một trường đại học ở Việt Nam. Phân tích định tính dữ liệu từ phỏng vấn, phản tư về khóa học và tài liệu giảng dạy của GV cho thấy nhận thức của họ về công dân toàn cầu và GDCDTC có nhiều điểm tương đồng với khung lý thuyết của UNESCO. Những nhận thức này chủ yếu được hình thành bởi trải nghiệm sinh sống và học tập ở nước ngoài, truyền thông và các hoạt động trao đổi học thuật. Từ những kết quả thu được, bài báo đưa ra các đề xuất thực tiễn nhằm cải thiện GDCDTC ở cấp đại học.

Từ khóa: Công dân toàn cầu; giáo dục công dân toàn cầu; nhận thức của giảng viên; quốc tế hóa giáo dục

1. Introduction

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) has emphasized the importance and urgency of global citizenship education (GCED) in the 21st century. Globalization promotes the interconnections and interdependence among nations and regions around the world. While this brings many opportunities for mutual development, it also creates many challenges on an international scale. In that context, education must ensure that learners are equipped with the necessary knowledge and skills to be able to understand, coexist with others, and collectively solve global issues (UNESCO, 2013). In response to this call, many

nations, including Vietnam, have been promoting global citizenship education in their primary, secondary, and tertiary education programs. The Vietnamese Ministry of Education and Training's Decision No. 2161/QD-BGDDT, dated June 26, 2017, issued the Plan for Implementing Sustainable Development Goals in Education and Training until 2025 with an orientation to 2030, which specifies to the implementation of global citizenship education at different levels in the education system (MOET, 2017).

The International Studies Department (ISD) in this study is a department at a university in Vietnam. With the specific task of teaching about the culture, politics, and society of various countries and regions, the ISD considers GCED a crucial component of its curriculum. Most subjects integrate knowledge and skills aimed at guiding learners to become global citizens in the new era. This study was conducted to survey the perceptions of lecturers in the ISD regarding GCED when teaching students in the department, thereby contributing to improving the quality of training in the field of International Studies in particular and other disciplines in general, in the context of integration and development. The study aims to answer three research questions:

1. What are the perceptions of lecturers in the ISD regarding GCED and its importance?

2. To what extent do individual experiences inform lecturers' perceptions of GCED?

3. How are the lecturers' perceptions of GCED reflected in their teaching practices?

2. Theoretical framework

2.1 Global citizenship and global citizenship education

The concept of global citizenship has been mentioned in many documents of international organizations such as Oxfam Education, UNICEF, UNESCO, etc. Oxfam (2015) defines a global citizen as someone who understands the wider world, values diversity, and recognizes their role in it; they are committed to social justice, actively engage at local and global levels, work with others for a fair and sustainable world, and take responsibility for their actions.. According to UNICEF, a global citizen is someone who understands interconnectedness, respects diversity, does not accept injustice and fights against it, and takes meaningful actions (Crawford, 2013). In 2015, UNESCO also officially introduced the concept: "Global citizenship refers to a sense of belonging to a broader community and common humanity. It emphasizes political, economic, social and cultural interdependency and interconnectedness between the local, the national and the global" (p. 14).

Some Vietnamese scholars have also offered definitions comparable to the aforementioned ones, albeit in a more simplified form. For example, according to Pham, V. T. (2022), each person needs to be a citizen before thinking of becoming a global citizen, meaning they must carry the mission of "building a more civilized, more compassionate, and healthier society" (p. 14).

In this study, a global citizen is understood in line with UNESCO's conceptualisation, referring to an individual who feels a sense of belonging to a shared humanity and acknowledges the political, economic, social, and cultural interconnectedness of local, national, and global communities.

According to Inter-agency Network for Education in Emergencies (INEE, 2013), global citizenship education helps learners develop the capacity for analysis, critical thinking, and collaborative action to create positive change. This approach is based on lifelong learning, is suitable for all ages, and is implemented through diverse forms of education. Gaudelli (2016) shares a similar approach with INEE; however, he also addresses the existing contradictions within GCED. He further elaborates that GCED must also be an education that actively engages with the inheritance of a global legacy and how we can educate to address past harms and contradictions in pursuit of contemporary and future redress.

The issue of GCED has also been mentioned in many documents of international organizations as well as in many important studies related to this topic worldwide. To ensure consistency, this study is primarily based on the theoretical framework for global citizenship education introduced by UNESCO (2015). Accordingly, UNESCO proposes that GCED consists of three main pillars:

(1) Cognitive: Learners understand global issues, human rights, the interdependence between nations, and the importance of sustainable development.

(2) Socio-emotional: Fostering attitudes of respect for diversity, empathy, and responsibility towards the global community.

(3) Behavioral: Encouraging positive actions towards justice, peace, and sustainable development.

After its release in 2015, this UNESCO conceptual framework has been widely used in many studies to develop, design, and evaluate the effectiveness of GCED. O'Meara et al. (2018) studied the strategies that teacher educators can use to enhance the GC competencies of pre-service teachers. Ait-Bouzid (2020) used the UNESCO framework to investigate GC values in English language textbooks. In recent years, this framework has continued to be used to study the perceptions of teachers, students, or other relevant stakeholders in global citizenship education activities. In the Netherlands, UNESCO's GCED objectives were used to survey teachers, coordinators, and principals at secondary schools to assess the practical implementation of the GCED process (Duarte, 2023). In Finland, the UNESCO framework was used to study the perceptions of teachers and principals at schools of various levels (Kasa et al., 2023). In South Korea, this framework was used by Lee (2023) to survey the perceptions of students at a university, revealing that students' perceptions had not yet reached UNESCO's three ideal pillars. A large number of studies in many different countries have used UNESCO's GCED framework, making various diverse contributions that have rendered this framework increasingly popular and provided many aspects to explore.

2.2 Lecturers' Perceptions

Marton (2000) describes perception as a structure, comprising what is at the focal point of attention, what is relevant in the background, and the co-existing but irrelevant elements. All past experiences are present in one's perception and shape how a person understands a new situation. Therefore, an individual's perceptions of a certain object are formed and changed through experience and learning.

In the field of education, teachers' experiences as learners themselves can contribute to forming their perceptions of the teaching-learning process and have an influence throughout their careers (Holt-Reynolds, 1992). Additionally, perception combined with the teaching context can also affect the teacher in different ways (Beach, 1994). Based on the factors mentioned above, in examining the "perceptions of lecturers at the ISD regarding GCED", this study focuses on the following key aspects: (1) lecturers' understanding of GC and GCED, (2) lecturers' beliefs about GCED, (3) the influence of lecturers' academic backgrounds and personal experiences on their perceptions when applying GCED, and (4) how lecturers' perceptions of GCED are manifested in their teaching practices.

2.3 The implementation of global citizenship education in Vietnam and related research

In Vietnam, theoretical research on global education has also garnered attention, with education researchers pointing out that global citizenship education is a pressing issue today. Pham M. et al. (2016) summarized several key issues regarding global citizenship education, including the concept of a global citizen, the qualities of a global citizen, and orientations for building a global citizenship education curriculum in Vietnamese K-12 schools. Nguyen (2016) also identified several approaches to global citizenship education, including a curriculum-based approach, establishing online forums, a sports- and arts-based approach, and a community-based approach that promotes youth initiatives. Bui (2024) pointed out several issues in GCED in Vietnam today, such as the lack of common criteria, the failure to call for the participation of the whole society, and the challenges in connecting GC values with national values. She also proposed solutions to improve the effectiveness of global citizenship education activities in Vietnam today.

In general, research on global citizenship education currently focuses mainly on the K-12 level. Although many researchers have pointed out the importance of GCED at the university level, there is still very little empirical and practical research on the implementation of global citizenship education at universities. This study provides insights into lecturers' perceptions of implementing a global citizenship-oriented curriculum for International Studies majors, thereby contributing to the still limited research in this area.

3. Methodology

3.1 Research design

This research was conducted using a qualitative approach to explore the perceptions of lecturers from the ISD at a university in Vietnam, regarding GCED. Data were collected from three main sources, and triangulation was employed to enhance the reliability and analytical depth of the study: (1) semi-structured interviews with lecturers, (2) lecturers' written reflections on a specific course, (3) analysis of teaching materials, including the course syllabus and several lecture slides. This approach allows for a comparison between articulated cognition, reflected actions, and documented materials, thereby clarifying the relationship between the lecturers' educational perspectives and their pedagogical practices in the context of GCED.

3.2 Research participants and sampling

The research participants were nine lecturers from the ISD. Due to the specific nature of the department, all its lecturers have experience teaching courses on topics with international

dimensions, such as world cultures, international politics, sustainable development, and globalization. The purpose of the research was informed to the participants before the interviews and consent was obtained. For confidentiality reasons, interviewees have been kept anonymous. They are referred to as Lecturer 1 (L1) to Lecturer 9 (L9).

3.3 Data collection

Data for this study were collected from three main sources to ensure triangulation for increased reliability and analytical depth:

(1) Semi-structured interviews: Each lecturer was interviewed either in person or online for approximately 40–60 minutes. The interview guide centered on several aspects: their understanding of and beliefs about GCED, the influence of their personal backgrounds, and their methods for integrating GCED into their teaching.

(2) Reflections on a specific course: Following the interview, lecturers were invited to write a short reflection (300–500 words) on a course they believed was relevant to GCED. The reflection focused on the design, implementation, and assessment of the course, as well as lessons learned from their teaching practice.

(3) Lecturers' teaching materials: Lecturers provided the syllabus and several lecture slides for the course they reflected on. These materials served as a basis for analyzing the extent to which GCED was integrated into the course content, teaching methods, and learning objectives.

The data triangulation process in this study is illustrated in Figure 1.

Figure 1

Data Triangulation Process for Analyzing Lecturers' Perceptions of GCED
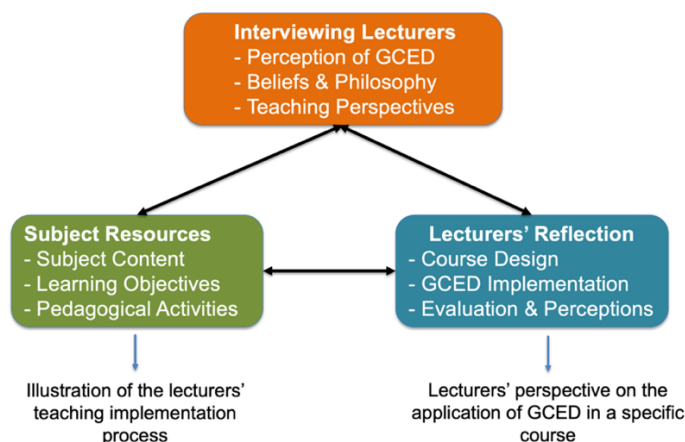
3.4 Data analysis

The primary data analysis method employed was thematic analysis. Qualitative data from the in-depth interviews were analyzed thematically, following the method introduced by Burnard (1991). In this process, the interview transcripts were read through to establish main headings and subheadings based on the research questions and the content of the transcripts. The headings used for coding were initially derived from UNESCO's conceptual framework for GCED (2015),

including: (1) the three main pillars of GCED and (2) pedagogical approaches and orientations for developing global citizenship competencies. However, during the analysis of interview responses, reflections, and teaching materials, if new, systematic content or themes emerged, new codes were also added to the coding process. The aim of this analytical process is to address the first two research questions. Furthermore, data from the reflections and teaching materials were cross-referenced with the interview data mainly to answer the third research question regarding how lecturers' perceptions of GCED are reflected in their teaching practices.

4. Results

4.1 Lecturers' perceptions of GCED and its importance

4.1.1 Perceptions of GCED

Through interviews, lecturers from the ISD demonstrated their perceptions of GCED in a multi-dimensional and comprehensive manner. They generally viewed the foundation of GCED as the expansion of knowledge and the formation of a global mindset for students. This includes equipping students with the knowledge of "international matters and issues that are present not just in Vietnam, but globally" (L1). L5 indicated some examples for these issues such as immigration, discrimination, or environmental pollution. L4, L7, L9 emphasized the necessary of developing a global mindset, which means "striving for common universal values" (L4), perceiving "connections that transcend national and regional borders upon which modern society is organized" (L7), and "the strong interdependence between countries within the globalized context" (L9).

Beyond the foundation of knowledge, GCED also focuses heavily on developing practical skills so that students can act effectively in diverse contexts. These skills include "the ability to identify global issues and strategies to tackle them at various levels" (L5) as well as adaptability skills to "work and exist in many different environments." (L1). In addition to knowledge and skills, lecturers highlighted the socio-emotional dimension of GCED. In parallel, GCED has a profound humanistic aspect, focusing on promoting emotion, understanding, and equality. For L4, the goal of GCED is to develop mutual understanding by reducing prejudice, helping learners see everyone as equal regardless of their background, "so that there's no discrimination, whether rich or poor, and then gradually, people will have a mutual understanding"(L4). Similar to L4, L5 valued empathy for different cultural contexts, identifying it as essential for fostering respect and cooperation:

> *Students see more clearly that, in reality, no one is in a bubble or on an island, but everything is related to each other. And we are a link in a very big chain, it's not just about the individual, but it is a part of a system.* (L5)

Several lecturers noted that GCED ultimately aims to translate awareness into responsibility and action. There was a shared belief that when learners are equipped with knowledge and understanding of global issues, they will naturally form a sense of responsibility, as L1 indicated "When they are educated, or they understand the issues happening around them, global issues, issues in the world, then along with that, they will have responsibility". The objective is not to solve every major problem, but to create positive change even through small actions, as they all contribute to improving common issues (L1, L5, L8).

Taken together, it can be seen that the lecturers' perceptions align well with UNESCO's conceptualisation of GCED, which emphasizes the cognitive, socio-emotional, and behavioral domains. This alignment suggests that the lecturers have equipped themselves with sufficient knowledge as a foundation for developing curricula that incorporate GC elements. Additionally, this alignment demonstrates the widespread influence and universality of UNESCO's GCED definition, given that all lecturers addressed at least one of its dimensions.

Despite this generally positive understanding, lecturers also expressed several concerns regarding GCED. L3 raised issues concerning identity: "Because if globalization becomes too strong, perhaps there will come a time when the unique identities of each nation, each ethnicity, and each individual will no longer exist" (L3). Similarly, L4 expressed concern about the conflict between Eastern and Western values when discussing GC values, noting that "Asia might view it as Western, while the West views it as global" (L4). Meanwhile, L5 expressed concern that GC in reality is sometimes not as ideal as its definitions suggest:

> *I questioned the concept of global citizenship. While it is very useful if students are prepared and work in a multicultural environment, if they find themselves in a setting where people do not operate with that same mindset, I think it can be damaging to their sense of self.* (L5)

These concerns regarding GCED raised by the lecturers will be further discussed in the Discussion section of this paper.

4.1.2 Perceptions of the importance of GCED

All lecturers participating in the interviews perceived GCED as playing a significant role, viewing it as an inevitable trend in higher education in general and a core element in teaching students of the International Studies major in particular.

In the current context of higher education, the lecturers believe that GCED is no longer an option but has become a necessary requirement. For example, L2 stated, "After students graduate, it is inevitable that they will have to come into contact with many different cultures or work in a multicultural environment"; therefore, equipping them with global perspectives and skills is "a mandatory thing in university education today" (L1). Furthermore, GCED contributes to enhancing the quality and competitiveness of the workforce, "helping students position themselves not just as citizens of one nation but as part of a global network" (L9). This educational orientation also promotes personal development and social responsibility, so that "students will become more flexible, and be better prepared, more thoroughly prepared" (L5) and "participate actively and creatively in social issues" (L9). Therefore, GCED is considered necessary for all students, regardless of their major (L7), although its implementation still needs to be strengthened "and receive more attention to achieve deeper effectiveness" (L8).

For students of the International Studies major, the importance of GCED is emphasized even more because equipping students with the knowledge and skills of a global citizen is viewed as a prerequisite that should be integrated from the very beginning of the curriculum. For L2, the International Studies major incorporates elements of diplomacy and International Relations, so students "cannot be limited to just one field but must expand into many different areas" (L2). This view was also supported by L5, who stated:

Even just with the name of the major itself, you can already see the importance of GCED here. International Studies is synonymous with us orienting towards a program with an outcome where students are capable of operating well in a multicultural, multi-ethnic environment, so of course, that GCED can be seen as something that needs to be integrated right from the beginning into the teaching process. (L5)

GCED is also perceived as a direct means for enhancing professional and career competencies, helping students develop a global mindset, a multi-faceted perspective, and the ability to handle interdisciplinary issues (L6, L8, L9). Finally, this educational orientation helps shape the vision and responsibilities of those working in international affairs, "supporting students to understand and be able to apply it into the subjects in their major" (L8) and "form a multi-dimensional view of current issues and recognize their own role in the context of globalization" (L6).

4.2 The influence of personal experiences on the formation of lecturers' perceptions

In this study, one important element of personal experience mentioned by many lecturers when discussing GC was the experience of studying and engaging in cultural exchange abroad. All lecturers from the ISD who participated in the interviews had previously studied abroad in degree-awarding educational programs (Master's, PhD) or short-term training programs.

Eight out of nine lecturers indicated that their personal experiences while studying abroad influenced their perceptions of GCED either directly or indirectly, with seven affirming a direct influence on their perceptions. A comparison with Table 1 reveals that the two lecturers who perceived no direct link between their study abroad experience and their GCED awareness (L3 and L4) both completed their MA studies by 2012.

Table 1

Years of Lecturers' Study Abroad

Lecturer	Year
L1	2012-2017; 2018
L2	2012
L3	1999-2001
L4	2010-2011; 2018
L5	2007-2013
L6	2022-2024
L7	2019-2020; 2024-now
L8	2018-2020
L9	2014-2015; 2022-2025

L4, who studied abroad during the 2011–2012 period, believed that those experiences did not impact her perceptions of GC at that very moment, but might have indirectly influenced her perceptions or actions later on. She shared that although she had studied for a Master's degree in a foreign country, she did not pay any attention to or think much about GC during those times. However, those experiences gave her a great deal of knowledge and understanding of certain aspects and certain cultures of the world. Later, when teaching students, she sometimes did not intentionally aim for GCED, but upon reflection and reconsideration, the knowledge she imparted could also guide students toward the values of a global citizen, especially if they pursue work related to those subjects. Although L4 participated in another overseas exchange program in 2018,

this was a short-term duration of only one month; her primary overseas experience remained her Master's studies. L3 was the only lecturer who affirmed that his time studying for a Master's degree abroad had almost no significant influence on his perceptions of GCED. He explained that he studied abroad a long time ago, a time when globalization was less prominent and the concept of global citizenship was rarely discussed.

In contrast, lecturers whose international studies extended into or began after 2012 affirmed that this timeframe directly shaped their understanding of GCED. For example, L1 emphasized that studying abroad helped them reinforce their belief in GC values and further hone related skills. Meanwhile, L2 shared that living and sharing daily life with friends from different cultures helped develop empathy as well as multicultural competence; trying to understand and coexist with other cultures helped her learn about tolerance.

In the context of participating in education abroad, the field of study was also perceived as a significant influencing factor. Lecturers who studied fields related to International Studies or International Relations also directly expressed that the content they learned in class contributed greatly to forming their perceptions of GCED. L6 pursued a Master's in International Relations and noted that the curriculum was closely linked to GC, which he acknowledged as having a direct impact on his perception:

> *Exposure to subjects related to international politics, sustainable development, human rights, and theories of globalization formed for me the foundational perception of the relationship between the individual and the world. At the same time, participating in research on issues like migration, conflict, or the environment also helped me better understand that global challenges cannot be solved solely within national borders.* (L6)

Thus, studying abroad was perceived as having a significant influence on lecturers' perceptions of GCED, although this influence varied depending on the timing of their studies as well as their academic discipline. Accordingly, those who studied abroad more recently were more strongly influenced than lecturers who had studied many years prior (especially before 2012, when UNESCO began to widely promote GC). Furthermore, the impact on GCED perception was notably stronger for lecturers majoring in International Relations compared to those in other fields

Besides the experience of studying abroad, some other academic activities such as attending conferences or the process of self-study were also mentioned by the lecturers. For instance, L2 also emphasized the role of conferences at the university. L4 formed her perceptions and understanding of GCED by reading scientific articles as well as seeking out information on the UN's website. Additionally, L9 also mentioned international conferences and self-study as important factors that helped her realize the urgency of GCED for students.

Another influential factor consistently identified by all lecturers was media exposure. All lecturers referred to the experience of consuming media products as a key factor in building their perceptions of GC. L1 stated "Basically, I heard about it from the media, and from global trends in socio-economic development."; while L7 similarly noted: "I primarily encountered this concept through the daily news". The lecturers argued that because GCED is an inevitable trend in society, the media frequently covers this topic, and they absorbed this content very naturally, even passively. This was especially emphasized by L3, who had affirmed that his studies abroad did

not significantly influence his perceptions of GCED. For him, media exposure played a central role. He shared: "Of course, at first, I also heard about it from various sources, documents, the internet, things I read, and the concept came to me very naturally, driven by the demands of society" (L3). Much of the understanding he had of GCED came from the content he had read and watched on media channels. He became more interested in GCED when content about it began appearing more and more on the internet and social media.

The experiences influencing lecturers' perceptions of GCED are closely aligned with their articulated understandings of GCED, and together they provide a foundation for understanding how these perceptions are formed and developed.

4.3 The integration of global citizenship values into the teaching process

The lecturers participating in this study did not directly compile the program curriculum of the International Studies major, but they were responsible for developing the syllabi for the courses they teach based on the program learning outcomes. They also made revisions over the years, mainly by adjusting some small topics in the lectures to keep the content updated and more engaging for students while still ensuring the program learning outcomes. Table 2 shows the program learning outcomes directly related to GCED. In addition, the remaining learning outcomes related to general knowledge and professional skills are not listed in this table, as they do not directly align with UNESCO's GCED standards. However, they still contribute to supporting students in becoming global citizens, as acquiring knowledge and excelling in one's profession create conditions for individuals to improve themselves and demonstrate greater social responsibility.

Table 2

Correlation Between International Studies Learning Outcomes and GCED Knowledge and Skills

Aspect	Learning Outcomes
Knowledge	1.2.2 (Possessing foundational knowledge of specialized theories in international studies and area studies) 1.2.3 (Possessing foundational knowledge of international political, social, economic, cultural, and legal issues) 1.2.4 (Being able to use a foreign language to research and practice international issues
Skills	2.1.1 (Possessing critical thinking skills) 2.1.2 (Possessing problem-solving skills) 2.2.1 (Possessing skills to identify and recognize international issues) 2.2.2 (Possessing skills to analyze, synthesize, and evaluate international issues) 3 (Mastering principles of professional ethics, being autonomous, and having responsibility for oneself, society, and the environment).

4.3.1 Teaching content integrating GCED elements

By analyzing lecturers' reflections on specific courses together with relevant teaching materials, this section examines how GCED values are integrated into their pedagogical practices. The lecturers selected topics and learning materials related to global, cultural, and humanistic issues. However, because the courses taught by the lecturers had varying degrees of relevance to GCED, the content also had a diverse range of knowledge related to GC, differentiated from high to low, as evidenced in both their reflections and teaching materials. Based on the lecturers' own assessments, the courses taught by the lecturers are classified into three groups: high relevance,

medium relevance, and low relevance. Table 3 presents the courses selected by lecturers for reflection, along with their level of relevance to GCED.

Table 3

Courses Selected for Reflection and Their Relevance to GCED

Level of Relevance	Course	Lecturer
High Relevance	War, Conflict, and Their Consequences	L6
	Global Issues	L4, L8
Medium Relevance	Intercultural Communication	L1
	Introduction to American Studies	L5
	International Mass Media	L9
Low Relevance	American Literature	L2
	Translation Practice	L7

For some courses with a high degree of relevance to GCED content, the lecturers recognized that these courses had strong potential for integrating GCED values and content. Their lectures were directly related to the knowledge that a global citizen needs to be equipped with. This knowledge included historical and current affairs topics as reflected in the lecturer's syllabi such as war, conflict, ethnic tensions, and terrorism (L6), as well as specific issues like poverty, population explosion, and especially the environment (L4, L8). In lecture design, for instance, for lessons on population explosion, poverty, and climate change, L8's lecture slides showed that she introduced these issues to students at an in-depth level of analysis, moving from concepts to causes, consequences (with specific data), and problem-solving approaches that have been and are being implemented worldwide. She focused on the topic of the environment, which is also emphasized by UNESCO as a key global issue:

> *The environment is the most practical topic and integrates a significant amount of GCED content. Students participated in the lecture and analyzed diagrams within the lesson material, such as the greenhouse effect.* (L8, Reflection)

These lectures particularly support the cognitive dimention of UNESCO's GCED guidance. Furthermore, as the topics in these courses also aligned with the themes proposed by UNESCO in its GCED program, the lecturers could also move from knowledge transmission to encouraging understanding and cultivating students' socio-emotional development, corresponding to the socio-emotional dimension of UNESCO's GCED guidance. According to L6, issues such as war and its consequences can evoke emotions and empathy in students:

> *A specific example is when teaching about the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, I not only present the historical event but also organize a group discussion on the topic: 'Ethics in war: can the use of weapons of mass destruction be justified?' This activity allowed students to put themselves in the victims' shoes and understand war not just through dry statistics. As a result, they learn to approach the issue from multiple dimensions such as history, ethics, law, and human rights.* (L6, Reflection)

For courses with a medium level of relevance, since the main focus is not directly on GCED, lecturers often prioritized delivering the core content to meet the course requirements, while GC content was integrated in a selective and context-appropriate manner that did not significantly alter the course's knowledge requirements. In this group, the lecturers mainly aimed to teach students about cultural intersection and universal values. This content is alignes with the

socio-emotional dimension of UNESCO's GCED, enhancing understanding and respect for differences to strive for common values. For example, L1 helped students recognize the differences and similarities between cultures, as well as understand the history, culture, and lifestyles of other nations. According to L1, *"the goal is to help the students understand, so that they can then adopt appropriate behaviors to help solve, maybe not completely solve, the issues. But even small actions can help bring change and improvement"* (L1, Reflection). Meanwhile, according to L5 in her reflection, she used real-life situations like racial conflicts in the United States during the COVID-19 pandemic or the labor exploitation by multinational corporations to enhance students' empathy for vulnerable groups. In her reflection, L9 shared that she does not delve deeply into global issues, but rather integrates specific concepts into her lectures. The syllabus for her International Mass Media course reveals topics addressing essential global citizenship knowledge and civic responsibility in social change, such as "Mass-mediated political communication effects" and "Social media and citizen journalism".

For courses with low relevance to GCED, including American Literature (L2) and Translation Practice (L7), the lecturers still introduced GC content indirectly, based on the foundation of the course. For example, in American Literature, L2 guided students to see universal human values such as positive thinking, love for one's homeland, romantic love, sacrifice for love, or the choice of opportunity (L2, Reflection). One illustration is her set of slides for the lesson on the poem "The Road Not Taken". The content emphasizes themes of self-belief and opportunities in life. Meanwhile, in the Translation Practice course, L7 emphasized the role of culture, values, and customs in translation and interpretation, helping students recognize universal human experiences by seeking equivalence in language (L7, Reflection).

4.3.2 Educating GC skills

Although they teach courses with varying levels of content relevance to GC topics, the lecturers placed special emphasis on developing the foundational skills of a global citizen through active teaching methods. Data from interviews, reflections, and teaching materials of the lecturers from the ISD showed that they had targeted all three skill groups mentioned by UNESCO:

(1) Critical thinking skills: This is a skill group prioritized by many lecturers, including analysis, evaluation, and critique (L1, L5, L6). While aiming for the same skill, the lecturers used different approaches and ways of organizing classroom activities. As described in their reflections, L1 and L6 asked questions for students to analyze and required them to write self-reflection essays, thereby encouraging critique of the issue at hand. L5 organized discussions on cultural conflict situations and ethical issues to get students to approach problems from multiple perspectives.

(2) Empathy, communication, and collaboration skills: All lecturers designed activities to develop students' ability to empathize, be self-aware, and respect differences. Additionally, skills in teamwork, collaboration, and public presentation were emphasized by many lecturers in their reflections.

To cultivate students' empathy, L2 and L6 used drama and role-playing activities to have students put themselves in others' positions. L6 also required students to write personal reflection essays on sensitive topics like the Holocaust or Hiroshima to connect their personal emotions and thoughts with global issues. Regarding the communication-collaboration aspect, L1 emphasized

that the fact that courses in the ISD are taught in English was also a way to enhance international communication competence. Common activities conducted by the lecturers included pair/group discussions, group presentations, and teamwork as reflected in L1, L2, L5, and L9's reflections. Notably, L2 placed great importance on teamwork; she integrated this activity into the course assessment, where group work accounts for 15-20% of the formative assessment score to encourage active and responsible student participation.

(3) Problem-solving skills to address common community issues: For this skill group, classroom activities are mainly at the level of real-world simulation, helping students practice solving a problem in their own lives. For instance, during the Global Issues course, L4 always guided students towards conducting research to find solutions. According to L4, once students understand the nature of the problem and can propose suitable directions, the solutions will later contribute to solving local and global issues when they graduate and work in related fields (L4, Reflection). Sharing this thought, L1 also required students to conduct small research projects to analyze an issue from their own perspective and propose solutions to cultural conflicts (L1, Reflection). Due to its highly practical nature, this is also the skill group that the lecturers find challenging to help students develop in class and difficult to ensure whether students can apply effectively in real-life contexts.

In summary, the lecturers targeted all three groups of GCED skills defined by UNESCO. The first group was approached individually via Q&A and reflection; the second was developed through group-based tasks like discussions, presentations, and role-plays. Finally, for the third group (problem-solving), lecturers relied on practical applications such as conducting research or implementing mini-projects.

5. Discussion and implications

A noteworthy point is the lecturers' source of information regarding GCED. Although UNESCO has issued a guidance program (UNESCO, 2015) and Vietnam's Ministry of Education has implemented numerous related research projects based on the Plan for Implementing Sustainable Development Goals in Education and Training until 2025 with an orientation to 2030 (MOET, 2017), the interviewed lecturers have almost rarely accessed GCED through these official sources. Instead, their primary information channel was the media, especially social media. Interestingly, despite accessing information through informal channels, the lecturers' perceptions of GC and GCED still aligned quite closely with UNESCO's framework. This suggests that the media in Vietnam has played an important role in disseminating the concepts and values of GCED. This is in line with findings from some previous studies (e.g Pathak-Shelat, 2018; Ekici, 2023) which show that GC and GCED awareness can be acquired through media, especially social media. Therefore, focusing on strengthening media communication on this topic, such as through the official social media pages of the Government, the Ministry of Education, or news agencies, would be an effective strategy to enhance perceptions not only for lecturers but for the entire Vietnamese population.

A challenge pointed out by the lecturers is the existence of perceptual conflicts between Eastern and Western values in the widely disseminated views on GC. To resolve these differences, an approach that harmoniously combines GC values with national values and local identity is needed. This issue was also indicated as a point to consider when developing GCED programs

(Gaudelli, 2016; Le & Duong, 2023). Instead of viewing GC as values imported from the outside, it needs to become an intrinsic part of the local people's own values. Accordingly, the education process should begin from the roots: each student must first be nurtured to become a good citizen who knows how to respect the values and cultural identity of their own community. Only from there can they have a solid foundation to strive towards global values.

Furthermore, it is crucial to clearly recognize the gap between the ideal and reality in GCED. The Global Citizen model and its related values proposed by UNESCO represent an ideal model. However, in reality, these values can manifest in many different variations depending on the specific cultural and social environments (Pais & Costa, 2020). If, during the teaching process, lecturers do not draw students' attention to these differences, they may experience culture shock or be unable to integrate when their actual work environment after graduation does not align with what they were taught. Therefore, preparing students cognitively and emotionally for the difference between the ideal and reality is an important task for the educator.

6. Conclusion

The study has shown that the perceptions of lecturers in the ISD regarding GC and GCED share many similarities with the GCED framework proposed by UNESCO. These perceptions were affected by multiple factors, with the main ones mentioned being time spent studying or working abroad, the media (especially social media), and various exchange programs and conferences that the lecturers have participated in. In the process of teaching students in the ISD, the lecturers have integrated the education of GC knowledge and skills at different levels. This study enriches the literature on GCED in higher education, which is currently limited within the Vietnamese context. Additionally, based on the findings, it is recommended to focus on developing GCED communication, as well as international exchange and academic activities, to raise lecturers' awareness. Concurrently, addressing cultural identity and the disparity between theory and practice in the teaching process may help students better integrate GC values into their learning and lives.

This study has several limitations, the most significant of which is the small research sample, focusing only on lecturers from one department at a specific university. Future research could aim for a larger sample, including lecturers from similar majors at other universities in Vietnam. Additionally, further investigation of student feedback to examine the outcomes of the GCED process would also contribute to a more comprehensive perspective on the issue of GCED at the university level.

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