Fostering Global Citizenship Through Intercultural Dialogue and Collaborative Learning: Evidence From Ghanaian Higher Education

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Abstract

Global citizenship education remains under-researched in African settings, despite growing importance in higher education worldwide. This study examines how intercultural communication and collaborative learning shape global citizenship among students in Ghanaian higher education. Using a mixed-methods approach, 400 students across academic fields, study levels, and geographical backgrounds completed a structured questionnaire combining Likert-scale items and open-ended questions. Quantitative findings show intercultural dialogue is a regular feature of student life, marked by frequent cross-cultural interaction and openness to diverse perspectives, though uneven participation and language barriers persist. Collaborative learning emerged as a key site of intercultural contact, requiring students to navigate difference, share responsibility, and resolve conflict. Qualitative findings indicate that students develop global citizenship primarily through lived experience rather than formal instruction, emphasizing respect for others, accountability, and awareness of the broader consequences of everyday actions. Notably, routine academic interactions embedded in local, Ghanaian contexts appear to foster global citizenship more effectively than formal curricula or international exposure. These findings challenge dominant global citizenship models centred on Global North experiences, offering context-sensitive evidence from an underrepresented setting. The study offers practical guidance for institutions, educators, and policymakers seeking to strengthen intercultural communication and collaborative learning within African higher education.

Keywords: global citizenship, intercultural dialogue, collaborative learning, higher education, Ghana

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Introduction

Walk into a lecture hall on an ordinary morning at a Ghanaian public university, and nothing looks extraordinary. Chairs scrape, phones buzz then go silent, someone adjusts a microphone. But look closer and something more intricate is happening: a student from the Upper East explains a concept to a coastal-raised peer; another group slides between English and local languages, each switch signaling inclusion, authority, or restraint; someone pauses before disagreeing, aware that tone matters as much as content. No one calls this intercultural education, it's simply how things work (O'Brien & Eriksson, 2010; Zalli, 2024).

These encounters are routine, almost invisible, yet they take real effort. In Ghanaian higher education, difference shows up in accents, religious practice, unwritten rules of respect and seniority, and home experiences that shape how students speak and listen. Balancing deadlines, grades, and belonging, students negotiate these differences daily, largely through trial and error, learning to cooperate without erasing one another. Formal academic discourse largely ignores this knowledge (Bosio & Waghid, 2023). Meanwhile, global citizenship has become a polished, confident concept internationally. Universities promote it as a core graduate trait, framed through mobility, cultural competence, and global awareness in mission statements and curricula (Hunduma & Mekuria, 2024). It's often presented as something requiring deliberate cultivation through structured programs or exposure abroad, as though it originates elsewhere and travel simply delivers it.

African higher education is frequently an afterthought in this literature (Levine & Van Pelt, 2021). Empirical research remains scarce and is often filtered through outside perspectives, producing a quiet hierarchy of knowledge: some contexts generate theory, others merely supply examples. This imbalance matters practically as well as symbolically, shaping what gets recognized and valued (Boughey & McKenna, 2021). Students carry multiple identities shaped by geography, language, religion, and background (Anderson, 2021). Collaborative learning here is rooted in community practices, not imported pedagogy, and dialogue rarely takes the direct, outspoken form Western systems celebrate, it's often cautious, relational, and attentive to social cues. This doesn't signal weak global engagement; it reveals a different form of it.

The gap between scholarly recognition and lived experience raises key questions: What does global citizenship look like when built through daily contact rather than formal programming? How do intercultural communication and group work interact where diversity is already woven into academic life? And what gets lost when these realities are ignored or forced into ill-fitting frameworks (LeCompte et al., 2020)? This study sits in that gap. It treats Ghanaian higher education as a source of insight rather than a minor case study, examining how global citizenship develops in practice, as a lived process shaped by context and negotiation, not a slogan (Hartman & Kiely, 2023). In doing so, it aims to contribute evidence to a global conversation that has long spoken about Africa more than it has listened to it (Serwornoo, 2021).

Though global citizenship features prominently in higher education discourse (Massaro, 2022), little empirical evidence captures how it's actually experienced in Ghanaian universities. Much existing research relies on frameworks built for different institutional contexts, overlooking how Ghanaian students navigate ethnic, linguistic, regional, and religious difference daily (Eten, 2023). Intercultural communication and collaborative learning are also often treated as formal teaching strategies rather than everyday practices embedded in student life (De Hei et al., 2020). In Ghana, these interactions are shaped informally by norms of respect, hierarchy,

and collective responsibility, yet their educational value remains underexplored, a gap that risks reinforcing frameworks marginalizing African experience (Baldwin et al., 2023). This study responds by examining how intercultural communication and collaborative learning foster global citizenship among Ghanaian students, centering lived experience to generate context-sensitive insight (Agbevivi et al., 2025). Specifically, it explores how students experience intercultural communication in daily academic and social life and how this shapes their understanding of global citizenship; how group-based work promotes or constrains intercultural interaction across diverse backgrounds; how students understand global citizenship as lived experience rather than an imported concept; and how these elements relate within the Ghanaian context.

This study matters because, by centering Ghanaian students' lived experience, it offers underrepresented empirical evidence that challenges dominant assumptions and informs teaching, curriculum, and global citizenship debates alike.

Literature Analysis

This review reads the literature on global citizenship, intercultural dialogue, and collaborative learning as a contested conversation rather than settled ground, tracing where these ideas falter as they move into African, and specifically Ghanaian, higher education.

Important Ideas and Issues in Global Citizenship Education

Global citizenship education is commonly framed as preparing students to engage ethically with global problems, tolerance, and responsibility beyond national borders (Leite, 2022), often reduced in practice to a marketable set of skills or dispositions (Massaro, 2022) that flattens something socially situated and context-dependent into a fixed competency (Estellés & Fischman, 2021). Scholars dispute whether the values underpinning this vision are genuinely universal: proponents point to shared concerns such as sustainability and human rights (Bosteels, 2023), while critics argue the approach quietly universalises Global North perspectives and sidelines other histories (Pais & Costa, 2020), a critique with particular force in African contexts shaped by colonialism and unequal global power relations (Parashar & Schulz, 2021). These debates connect to concerns about voice and representation: global citizenship education tends to presuppose mobility, linguistic confidence, and access to global networks that are unevenly distributed (Yemini, 2017), and models favouring assertive, individual expression risk misreading quieter, relationship-based participation as passive rather than as culturally grounded (Elsayed, 2024).

Intercultural Dialogue in Higher Education

Intercultural dialogue in higher education is typically framed as a route to mutual respect and empathy across cultural boundaries, pursued through group work, classroom discussion, and internationalisation (Arasaratnam-Smith & Deardorff, 2022), though in practice it unfolds within institutional and interpersonal constraints that shape who speaks and whose knowledge counts (Westerlund et al., 2022). Much of this literature assumes that meaningful engagement requires direct communication and verbal confidence (Ting-Toomey & Dorjee, 2018), an assumption that travels poorly into settings such as Ghana, where dialogue is often indirect and governed by courtesy, age hierarchy, and social harmony (Jackson, 2019); what looks like reticence may in fact be careful negotiation, and judging it by narrower standards misses this complexity (Pope et al., 2019). Participation within these spaces is also uneven, shaped by

gender, confidence, and perceived academic standing, which has led scholars to caution against treating dialogue as inherently equal and to call for closer attention to how inclusion is enabled or blocked in everyday encounters (Fassett & Rudick, 2018).

Collective Learning and Social Interaction

Collaborative learning is widely promoted as a way to build active participation, shared accountability, and deeper understanding by treating knowledge as something built socially through conversation and joint problem-solving rather than individually (Burini & De Lillo, 2019; Haas, 2019). In practice, however, group dynamics rarely stay neutral: participation is shaped by confidence, language ability, gender, and perceived competence, so that some students lead while others remain at the margins, not necessarily from lack of ability but from social expectation (Döös & Wilhelmson, 2011; Isohätälä et al., 2017; Kilgore, 1999). Individual assessment can further push cooperation toward transactional task-splitting rather than genuine joint inquiry (Binns, 2020; Zheng & Wang, 2022) which limits opportunities for cross-cultural exchange and means collaborative learning must be understood through how interaction is actually shaped and negotiated, not only through its intended outcomes.

Education in Global Citizenship in African Contexts

Research on global citizenship education in African higher education remains limited (Bosio & Waghid, 2023), concentrated more on policy and curriculum than on students' lived experience of learning across difference (Lauwerier, 2020). Ghana-focused work is beginning to show how cultural diversity and community values shape student attitudes (Angyagre, 2020), but this is rarely folded into wider theoretical debate; African settings continue to be treated as sites for implementing ideas developed elsewhere, obscuring how local historical and cultural conditions complicate models built around individual agency and mobility (Addae et al., 2025).

Conceptual Framework

This study frames global citizenship as something that grows through sustained social interaction rather than mere exposure (Edwards et al., 2020; Hartman & Kiely, 2023): a process shaped by how students engage with difference and collaborate within academic settings, rather than a fixed outcome. Intercultural dialogue is treated as the space where students encounter different perspectives and ways of knowing (Holliday, 2021), often informally, through everyday interactions shaped by respect, language, and hierarchy (Ibrahim et al., 2024), with its quality depending on how heard and included students feel (Muilerman-Rodrigo, 2024).

Collaborative learning supplies the structure within which this dialogue happens, making engagement across difference a required rather than optional part of shared academic work, as students negotiate roles and expectations while solving problems together (Dyson et al., 2021; Kvellestad et al., 2021). Global citizenship, in this framework, emerges at the intersection of the two: dialogue builds awareness and empathy, while collaboration turns these into practice through shared responsibility, with institutional culture and teaching approach shaping how strongly the two reinforce each other (Holliday, 2021).

Methodology

Research Approach and Setting

The study adopts a convergent mixed-methods design, combining Likert-scale items with open-ended questions in a single questionnaire administered to undergraduate students in Ghanaian tertiary institutions (Dawadi et al., 2021; Stern et al., 2020) The scaled items identify patterns across students, while the open-ended responses explain what those patterns mean in daily practice, particularly given how norms of respect, communication style, and group interaction shape behaviour in ways raw numbers alone would not capture. Both strands were collected simultaneously from the same participants, analysed separately, and integrated at interpretation. Ghana's higher education context suits this focus: intercultural interaction through language diversity, regional identity, and socioeconomic background is a routine part of student life, and undergraduate students across disciplines and year levels are regularly exposed to organised collaborative learning such as group projects and peer coursework.

Sample Size and Sampling Strategy

Sample size was determined using Yamane's (1967) formula for finite populations (Das et al., 2016), applied to an estimated population of 60,000 students across the selected institutions: $n = N / (1 + N(e^2)) = 60{,}000 / (1 + 60{,}000(0.05^2)) \approx 397.35$, where n is the sample size, N the estimated population, and e the margin of error (5%, corresponding to 95% confidence). This yielded a minimum of about 398 respondents; the target was raised to 400–420 to allow for incomplete or non-responses, a size regarded as sufficient for statistically reliable quantitative findings while still generating rich qualitative material (Memon et al., 2020).

Data Collection, Reliability and Validity

Data were gathered through the two-part questionnaire described above: Likert-scale items measuring intercultural communication, group learning, and global citizenship orientations, and open-ended questions inviting students to describe specific experiences of inclusion, exclusion, or language barriers in group work, and what global citizenship means to them (Khoa et al., 2023). Content validity was addressed by aligning items with the study's objectives and conceptual framework, and the instrument was reviewed by colleagues in higher education research and piloted with students outside the final sample; feedback from both stages improved item clarity and relevance to the Ghanaian context (Sember et al., 2020). Reliability coefficients confirmed that the quantitative scales were internally consistent (Aspers & Corte, 2019).

Data Analysis and Ethical Considerations

Quantitative data were analysed descriptively (frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations), with inferential methods used where relevant to examine relationships between intercultural communication, collaborative learning, and global citizenship measures (Kiger & Varpio, 2020). Open-ended responses were analysed thematically, with recurring patterns used to deepen and contextualise the statistical findings rather than treated as independent results, and integrated with the quantitative trends at the discussion stage (Vaismoradi & Snelgrove, 2019). All participants gave informed consent after being briefed on the study's purpose and their right to withdraw without consequence; responses were anonymised, securely stored, and used only for scholarly purposes, and the study received ethical clearance from the relevant

institutional review board in line with accepted standards for research with human participants (Pietilä et al., 2019).

Results and Discussion

Demographic Profile of Respondents

Understanding the trends seen in intercultural conversation, cooperative learning, and global citizenship development requires crucial context provided by the demographic profiles of responders. Reflecting the pluralistic character of Ghanaian tertiary education, the 400 students chosen from several academic, geographic, and social backgrounds comprised the sample. The demographic diversity reflected in this sample is similar to the pluralistic composition of Ghanaian higher education institutions, where students from different regions across the country, linguistic backgrounds, and academic traditions routinely interact; this was also noted by Angyagre (2020) and Boughey and McKenna (2021) in their analyses of Ghanaian and African higher education contexts.

Table 1 offers respondent age distribution. Most students (40.5%) were between 21 and 23 years, then came those 18–20 years (24.0%) and those 24–26 years (23.0%). This focus implies that most participants were in an active phase of their undergraduate study, when group work, peer interaction, and exposure to different perspectives are normal components of academic life.

Table 1
Age Distribution of Respondents

Age Range	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Below 18	18	4.5
18–20	96	24.0
21–23	162	40.5
24–26	92	23.0
27 and above	32	8.0
Total	400	100

Shown in Table 2, gender distribution was rather even: males comprised 53.5%; females, 44.5%; and a little fraction (2.0%) preferred not to reveal their gender. This equilibrium lowers the chance that gendered participation patterns significantly influence results.

Table 2
Gender Distribution of Respondents

Gender	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Male	214	53.5
Female	178	44.5
Prefer not to say	8	2.0
Total	400	100

With Level 300 pupils accounting for the most (33.0%), followed by Level 200 pupils (26.0%), students from all undergraduate levels were shown in Table 3. This distribution indicates that participants' programmes included enough exposure to collaborative work and ongoing peer interaction.

Table 3
Level of Study

Level	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Level 100	78	19.5
Level 200	104	26.0
Level 300	132	33.0
Level 400	70	17.5
Postgraduate	16	4.0
Total	400	100

Academic variety was also seen. According to Table 4, responders came from a variety of departments: Humanities and Social Sciences made up 34.5%; sciences 21.5%; and Engineering or Technology-related fields 16.0%. The generalisability of the results throughout several academic civilizations is improved by this disciplinary spread.

Table 4
Faculty / School

Faculty	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Humanities / Social Sciences	138	34.5
Sciences	86	21.5
Engineering / Technology	64	16.0
Education	52	13.0
Business	44	11.0
Other	16	4.0
Total	400	100

Presented in Table 5, regional origin emphasizes even more the intercultural character of the sample. At 37.0% the biggest group of Middle Belt students were followed by Southern Ghana at 33.0% and Northern Ghana at 24.0%. Non-Ghanaian pupils made up 6.0%. These patterns represent the usual demographic blend seen in several Ghanaian colleges.

Table 5
Region of Origin

Region	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Northern Ghana	96	24.0
Middle Belt	148	37.0
Southern Ghana	132	33.0
Non-Ghanaian	24	6.0
Total	400	100

Intercultural Dialogue and Student Experiences

Results on intercultural communication show that daily aspect of students' academic lives is interaction across cultural difference. With a mean rating of 4.21, respondents reported a high degree of frequent contact with culturally diverse peers as Table 6 indicates, hence implying general consensus that such contacts are frequent within Ghanaian higher education environments.

Furthermore showing that classrooms serve as places of intercultural interaction rather than homogeneous environments, exposure to various perspectives during discussions scored a relatively high mean (4.09). Students equally strongly believed cultural diversity enhanced conversations (mean = 4.25), therefore showing that variation is mostly seen as an asset rather than a barrier. These findings align with broader intercultural research which argues that everyday educational spaces function as key sites for intercultural learning through routine interactions, rather than formal intervention, as discussed by Baldwin et al. (2023) and Holliday (2021).

Table 6
Intercultural Dialogue Items (Mean and SD)

Item Code	Item Summary	Mean	SD
ID1	Regular interaction with culturally different students	4.21	0.78
ID2	Exposure to diverse perspectives in class	4.09	0.83
ID3	Comfort expressing views across cultures	3.88	0.91
ID4	Willingness to listen to differing views	4.32	0.72
ID5	Cultural diversity enriches discussions	4.25	0.76
ID6	Language differences hinder dialogue	3.41	1.02
ID7	Adjust communication to engage respectfully	4.11	0.80

Remarkably, openness in listening scored the highest mean (4.32), implying that in some cultures, it may be more encouraged than aggressive self-expression. Although still quite high, comfort in expressing opinions throughout civilizations had a lower mean (3.88), which suggests some level of uncertainty among students negotiating cross-cultural communication. This hesitation most likely points to cultural standards about respect, age, and avoidance of blatant conflict that affect how discussions in Ghanaian intellectual circles progress. The tendencies toward careful listening, rather than assertive self-expression reflects culturally grounded communication norms that focuses more on respect and social harmony, a pattern widely documented in intercultural communication scholarship, including Ting-Toomey and Dorjee (2018) and Jackson (2019).

Differences in language became a more controversial subject, as shown by a modest mean of 3.41 and the greatest standard deviation (1.02) among the dialogue points. This variance implies that some pupils see language as a barrier to communication whereas others view it as rather unimportant limitation. Qualitative comments help to explain this split. One student observed that as group members adjusted and worked together, first challenges stemming from linguistic differences were progressively solved. This emphasizes conversation as a developmental process instead of a set result. According to Agbevivi et al. (2025) and Ibrahim et al. (2024), language-related difficulties in intercultural communication have also been noted in Ghanaian and African educational settings, where multilingualism shapes participation unevenly but also encourages adaptive communication strategies over time.

This interpretation is further supported by the fairly high mean for adapting communication styles to interact politely (4.11). To keep conversation going across differences, many students seem to consciously change their speech and listening patterns. Taken together, these results point to regular and typically positive intercultural communication in Ghanaian universities, but influenced by underlying linguistic, confidence, and culturally grounded communication expectations. Such discourse develops naturally during regular academic contacts, where students learn, sometimes imperfectly, how to live, work together, and interact across difference, rather than through organised or officially directed activities.

Cooperative learning proved to be a consistent part of students' educational experience. As Table 7 shows, respondents agreed most strongly that group projects often include students from different backgrounds (mean = 4.28), reflecting frequent convergence of diverse regional, linguistic, and cultural identities in collaborative settings, consistent with established theories that treat shared tasks as catalysts for social engagement (Burini & De Lillo, 2019; Döös & Wilhelmson, 2011). Participation within these groups was less even: a moderate mean (3.62) and higher standard deviation on the item about some students dominating group work suggests varied experiences, and while many students felt included (mean = 3.97), this was not universal, pointing to subtle hierarchies that echo the uneven participation documented elsewhere, where social positioning, confidence, and perceived competence shape who speaks and who stays quiet even in apparently inclusive settings (Isohätälä et al., 2017; Kvellestad et al., 2021).

Table 7
Collaborative Learning Items (Mean and SD)

Item Code	Item Summary	Mean	SD
CL1	Group work involves diverse students	4.28	0.74
CL2	Collaboration encourages multiple perspectives	4.14	0.79
CL3	Some students dominate group work	3.62	0.96
CL4	Feeling included during group work	3.97	0.88
CL5	Group work builds intercultural skills	4.06	0.81
CL6	Cultural differences affect participation	3.55	0.94
CL7	Group work improves conflict resolution	3.92	0.86

Qualitative responses reinforced this picture. Students described personality, language ability, and confidence, more than formal group structure, as what shaped engagement, with one noting, "Sometimes one person talks more because of confidence, but we still contribute in our own ways." Language was a recurring theme too: one student said, "Language first influenced participation but respect helped the group work better," reflecting the adjustment and accommodation mechanisms students described alongside the initial barrier. These accounts echo research showing that dominance in collaborative learning is often acknowledged but pragmatically managed rather than resolved (Dyson et al., 2021; Haas, 2019), suggesting that teamwork does not eliminate cross-cultural tension so much as give students practice negotiating it. Group learning therefore appears to work as both a facilitating and a limiting space: it draws students into intercultural interaction, but also surfaces disparities in voice shaped by broader social and cultural dynamics.

Development of World Citizenship Among Students

Students' Views of Global Citizenship

Research on the growth of global citizenship reveal that most students have a good grasp of the idea and that their understanding is relevant to their surroundings. Table 8 shows that respondents had a strong sense of belonging to a larger worldwide community (mean = 3.98) and were very aware of global social and cultural events (mean = 4.05). Interestingly, the item implying that interaction with varied peers affects perceptions of others had a quite high average (4.22), so implying that actual cross-cultural experience rather than hypothetical knowledge is closely related to global citizenship.

According to Hartman and Kiely (2023) and Massaro (2022), critical perspectives that frame citizenship as an ethical practice rather than an abstract status align with such relational and responsibility-oriented understandings of global citizenship.

Table 8
Global Citizenship Items (Mean and SD)

Item Code	Item Summary	Mean	SD
GC1	Sense of belonging to global community	3.98	0.89
GC2	Awareness of global issues	4.05	0.84
GC3	Interaction shapes views of others	4.22	0.77
GC4	Responsibility beyond national context	3.91	0.92
GC5	Group work prepares for global engagement	4.10	0.80
GC6	Global citizenship relevant in Ghana	4.18	0.78

Open-ended answers from students help to clarify these results. One participant underlined awareness of impact, saying that it entails *"respecting others and thinking beyond yourself, even while studying in Ghana,"* whereas another defined world citizenship as *"respecting others and thinking beyond yourself, even while studying in Ghana."* These thoughts point to students viewing global citizenship as ethical and relational, rooted in daily encounters rather than far-off abstract ideas. The idea put forth by Bosio and Waghid (2023) and Lauwerier (2020) that global citizenship education can develop through locally situated social interaction rather than relying on international mobility is supported by the perceived relevance of global citizenship in the Ghanaian context.

Locating Ghanaian Views Inside the Books

These results challenge well-known ideas about worldwide citizenship that emphasize foreign experiences or foreign travel. For many students in this study, local interactions with difference help to promote worldwide citizenship, therefore supporting claims that citizenship development is very dependent on social context and embedded. In this regard, Ghanaian higher education becomes a place where daily social interaction helps to grow global awareness rather than just a sideline for learning about world citizenship. According to Pais and Costa (2020), Assiter (2016) and Parashar and Schulz (2021), these findings challenge dominant Global North-centric models of global citizenship education by emphasizing students' lived experiences. They also support calls for more context-sensitive and decolonial approaches.

Interaction Among Global Citizenship, Collaborative Learning, and Intercultural Dialogue

Reinforcement Dynamics

Table 9's integrative elements show how closely linked intercultural communication, group projects, and growth of world citizenship are. Students heartily agreed that intercultural discourse shapes their grasp of global citizenship (mean = 4.07) and that group projects help to build intercultural respect (mean = 4.15). These results point to the fact that conversation and cooperation support each other in molding kids' attitudes and views; they do not work alone.

Table 9
Intercultural Dialogue, Collaboration and Global Citizenship (Mean and SD)

Item Code	Item Summary	Mean	SD
INT1	Dialogue influences global citizenship	4.07	0.82
INT2	Collaboration strengthens intercultural respect	4.15	0.79
INT3	Working with diverse peers reshaped thinking	4.01	0.85

Qualitative results back up this trend. Many students related how continuous engagement in group projects encouraged introspection and adjustment. One interviewee said that interacting with kids from many areas helped them see why people handled issues differently, therefore teamwork offered a practical setting for intercultural learning. The reinforcing relationship between dialogue, collaboration, and citizenship development reflects integrative models of global citizenship education that emphasise interaction, reflection, and shared responsibility, as outlined by Edwards et al. (2020).

Tensions and Constraints

Notwithstanding these confirming patterns, the data likewise expose limits. The depth of intercultural contact can be limited by linguistic hurdles, uneven participation, and reliance on unstructured facilitation instead of organized facilitation. Students usually adjust to these difficulties, but some voices stay less visible than others in the lack of purposeful instructional support.

Taken together, the findings imply that among Ghanaian students, global citizenship is promoted via a complicated interaction of discussion and cooperation molded by cultural mores and daily academic activities. Although they rely on implicit social skills rather than explicit instructional direction, these methods are usually successful in fostering respect, responsibility, and knowledge. Understanding and improving these relationships might help Ghanaian higher education produce graduates who are both rooted in local social reality and globally aware. This might also improve its part in generating internationally conscious graduates (Estellés & Fischman, 2021; Westerlund et al., 2022).

Conclusion and Recommendations

Conclusion

The goal of this research was to find out how intercultural communication and group work help Ghanaian college students become global citizens. Using both quantitative and qualitative data, the results reveal that for Ghanaian students intercultural interaction is a regular component of academic life influenced by linguistic, geographic, cultural, and social background diversity rather than a sporadic or marginal event. Students regularly engage over differences, pay attention to different points of view, and change their communication styles to help coexist and mutual understanding.

Furthermore, the research shows that working together is very important for turning interactions between people from different cultures into significant learning. Group-based learning activities offer organized chances for cross-difference interaction, therefore motivating students to negotiate roles, settle arguments, and interact with many points of view.

Simultaneously, cooperative learning settings expose ongoing issues including unequal participation, language-related obstacles, and informal hierarchies that, if not handled, might limit the degree of involvement.

Importantly, the study's results indicate that students' knowledge of worldwide citizenship stems from personal experience rather than from theoretical lessons. People see global citizenship as respect for others, responsibility outside of one's own, and awareness of how daily activities influence individuals in more general circumstances. Local encounters rather than official foreign exposure challenge accepted models that view world citizenship as something attained mostly via mobility or outside activities by means of these understandings. By emphasising Ghanaian data, the research advances worldwide citizenship scholarship by showing that, rather than passive receivers of international concepts, African higher education environments are energetic venues where global citizenship is always created and negotiated. These findings reinforce already existing arguments that, African higher education institutions should be understood as active sites of global citizenship formation, rather than peripheral spaces of implementation, a position increasingly emphasised by scholars including Yemini (2017) and Bosio and Waghid (2023).

Recommendations

Universities should deliberately design learning spaces that encourage cross-cultural interaction, particularly through diverse group formation in projects and co-curricular activities, framing cultural and linguistic diversity as an asset.

Professors should structure group assignments with clear participation expectations, including role rotation and reflection, linking everyday group work to broader ideas of social responsibility and citizenship.

Policymakers should ground global citizenship programs in local realities rather than imported models, supporting staff training in inclusive pedagogy and assessment methods that value teamwork alongside academic performance.

Limitations and Directions for Future Research

Although this research offers insightful information, some restrictions ought to be noted. Relying on self-reported data could be affected by social desirability, and using a questionnaire limits the depth of personal stories that can be gathered. The study also concentrates on particular Ghanaian universities, which might restrict the applicability of results across all institutional forms and areas.

Future studies might expand on this by including thorough interviews or classroom observations to more closely examine cross-cultural interaction. Studies contrasting several African nations or between African and non-African settings would also help to clarify even more how many different types of educational surroundings influence global citizenship. Such studies will help to build the empirical foundation of world citizenship education and keep changing the role of African higher education as a key contributor to international intellectual discourse.

Declaration of Generative AI and AI-Assisted Technologies in the Writing Process

The author declares that no AI or AI-assisted technologies have been used to generate, refine, or correct the content in the manuscript. The ideas, design, procedures, findings, analyses, and discussion are originally written and derived from careful and systematic conduct of the research.

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