Global Citizenship Education in Africa: Perspectives of Expatriates in the United States

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Abstract

Despite rapid population growth in African countries, education systems face challenges, including insufficient resources, a shortage of qualified teachers, and the enduring effects of colonization on school policies and curricula. This study examined how young Africans perceive Global Citizenship Education (GCE), positing that it equips them with the essential knowledge and values needed to develop effective solutions. The research involved interviews with 11 African expatriates studying or teaching at a Southern California college, with a focus on GCE. The findings revealed that participants value GCE as a comprehensive approach that encourages contributions to society. They appreciate how it fosters open-mindedness, compassion, and critical thinking, which unite people beyond national boundaries. While GCE is rarely implemented in public schools across Africa, this study emphasizes its alignment with traditional African philosophies, such as Ubuntu. This suggests the potential to integrate GCE into current curricula, thereby enhancing education systems and addressing colonial legacies.

Keywords: global citizenship education (GCE), Africa, Ubuntu, colonialism, expatriates

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Introduction

Africa is a continent characterized by rapid growth and diversity, with rich cultures and an intriguing history. The birth rate in Africa is surging, with a median age of approximately 19 years (Green, 2023). It is expected that by 2100, more than half of all infants worldwide will be born in Sub-Saharan Africa (The Economist, 2024). As birth rates rise, providing high-quality education becomes increasingly important to equip the younger generation with the knowledge and values needed to promote a peaceful and equitable society and address complex global challenges.

Today, many African countries face low enrollment in upper secondary education, with over 50 percent of eligible students not attending (UNESCO, 2023; World Bank, 2020). At the same time, Africa grapples with the legacies of colonization. Despite progress and reforms, school curricula in Africa still reflect Eurocentrism and often overlook indigenous African knowledge (Esiobu, 2019). This trend reinforces Western privilege and superiority while promoting narratives that depict African people, cultures, and traditions as backward (Mamdani, 2016; Nyoni, 2019).

In this context, Global Citizenship Education (GCE) emerges as a valuable approach for enhancing educational quality and empowering people throughout Africa. To explore this idea, the study examined young Africans' opinions on GCE, assuming that GCE equips them with the vital knowledge and skills needed to develop solutions. Specifically, it focused on the viewpoints of expatriates involved with GCE in the United States (U.S.)—particularly students and faculty at a liberal arts college in Southern California that emphasizes GCE principles in its educational program.

Literature Review

Africa and Its Colonial Legacy

Africa is a vast continent with diverse cultures and ethnicities. It is the second-largest continent in the world, comprising many countries with rich and varied traditions, histories, and cultures (Smedley et al., 2025). The continent includes 54 countries and 1.4 billion people, with over 2,000 languages and several thousand ethnic groups practicing a variety of religions (Baker & Priadko, 2022; Smedley et al., 2025). In Northern Africa, Islam is predominantly practiced, whereas in Southern Africa, Christianity is more commonly followed, although the distribution is not clearly defined (Smedley et al., 2025).

African nations share cultural and historical ties rooted in colonization. In the 15th century, Portugal began exploring and establishing trade routes, including the slave trade, aided by advances in shipbuilding. From the late 16th century onward, Portugal, Spain, and the Dutch vied for control in Africa, while other European countries entered the competition to manage trade routes. This period saw a significant increase in the slave trade. In the 19th century, Europe shifted its focus to controlling land for agricultural production aimed at European markets, intensifying competition among European states (Geo History, 2018). In 1884, the Berlin Conference was convened to determine which European countries would annex which African colonies, thereby preventing conflict (River, 2019).

Colonization restricted access to resources, including water, sanitation, economic opportunities, and education in Africa. European powers exploited African colonies to

manufacture goods, restricting them to producing only raw materials for export, such as cacao, while prohibiting the cultivation of food for local consumption. This restriction created dependence on imports from European countries for sustenance and weakened the local economy. Furthermore, raw materials were traded at low prices, while Africans were forced to purchase foreign commodities at excessively high prices, worsening the effects of starvation (Ocheni & Nwankwo, 2012). In the 1960s, with the rise of the anti-colonial movement, African colonies began to gain independence (Geo History, 2018). However, the prohibition on manufacturing local necessities forced African countries to continue importing food, preventing them from taking control of their economies even after independence (Azevedo, 2017).

Moreover, colonization used education to negatively affect the mindset of African people through assimilation methods aimed at controlling the colonies and preventing riots, all while maximizing the colonizers' benefits. The decree of May 10, 1924, that France created articulated,

> The essential goal of elementary education is to bring the greatest possible number of Indigenous people closer to us, to familiarise them with our language, our institutions, and our methods, and to lead them gradually towards economic and social progress by the careful evolution of their own civilization. (Moumouni, 1968, p. 45)

This highlights the purpose of education—to assimilate indigenous culture into that of the French and other colonizers. Colonizers used language and curricula to colonize minds. Those colonized were forced to use only the colonizer's language, and if they failed to master it, they were barred from post-secondary education (Esiobu, 2019). Speaking their mother tongue led to punishment and shame (Davids, 2018). Esiobu emphasizes, "Language is important in shaping the consciousness of society" (2019, p. 33). Restricting local languages erodes identities and cultures, especially when the official language is colonial. Beyond language, dress codes, hairstyles, and other identity-shaping behaviors were also restricted (Davids, 2018).

Notably, the curriculum was Eurocentric, focusing, for example, on the geography and history of Europe. The curriculum and pedagogical approach did not incorporate indigenous knowledge and failed to challenge colonial ideology (Tsegay & Bekoe, 2020). The content was also set at a low level, limiting opportunities for low-level jobs after graduation, such as clerical and administrative positions (Esiobu, 2019). This colonial education instilled a sense of inferiority and shame toward indigenous knowledge and culture, eroding pride (Utsey et al., 2015). Teachers taught that Western culture is superior and more progressive than African culture, which was considered backward (Tsegay & Bekoe, 2020). This sense of inferiority compelled the colonies to rely on the colonizers. The impact has persisted after "the political, economic, and structural control of Africa," still devaluing their culture and tradition (Esiobu, 2019, p. 39). Esiobu asserts, "Several decades after the end of colonialism, sub-Saharan Africa has not made much progress in liberating the education process from the clutches of imperialism and dependency" (p. 40).

Many African education systems continue to foster a sense of inferiority toward Western culture. Balogun and Woldegiorgis (2023) state that in higher education, a colonial mentality entails rejecting elements with African cultural origins and embracing those from Western countries, thereby marginalizing African epistemology. Utsey et al. (2015) conducted a quantitative study on the correlation between internalized colonialism and Ghanaian mental

health. The study revealed that individuals with high levels of internalized colonialism, cultural inferiority, and colonial debt had lower self-esteem and higher levels of anxiety and depression. This finding indicates that people in Ghana still endure psychological distress due to colonial legacies. Colonizers created economic and mental dependency by controlling production and education, and those legacies persist in today's world.

Global Citizenship

The concept of Global Citizenship (GC) traces back to the ancient Greek Stoics, who identified themselves as world citizens and emphasized ethical responsibility, shaping the modern concept of GC. Although they did not use the term "global citizens," these philosophers highlighted qualities associated with it. Socrates considered himself a citizen of the world, aligning with the idea of GC, which expands awareness and concerns beyond one's nationality (Schattle, 2009). Similarly, Marcus Aurelius believed that humans need to "think and act as though we are members of the universal city of mankind" (Schattle, 2009, p. 6). Cicero regarded GC as self-identification combined with ethical responsibility, stating that one must "avoid inflicting harm on other human beings" and "allow others to benefit where this can be done at no cost to oneself" (Schattle, 2009, p. 6). This underscores the importance of contributing to others' happiness rather than their misfortune.

The contemporary concept of GC has various interpretations based on one's ideology. Neoliberalism views global citizens as travelers who engage in the global economy, politics, and society by applying their knowledge and skills. Radicalism defines global citizens as individuals who recognize how global systems create economic divisions and challenge entrenched structures of inequality. Transformationalism perceives global citizens as those who understand the dynamic and complex nature of globalization, rather than merely viewing it as a form of imperialism or the global economy (Shultz, 2007). Oxley and Morris (2013) categorized global citizens into two main types: the cosmopolitan type (political, moral, economic, and cultural global citizenship) and the advocacy type (social, critical, environmental, and spiritual global citizenship).

Unlike approaches that reduce GC to increased participation in the global economy and politics or to a perspective on global structure that leads to inequality, Ikeda (1996) focuses his philosophy of GC on humanistic perspectives. He emphasizes that global citizens think of and act toward others' well-being and world peace, regardless of how many languages and countries one has visited: "[global citizens] are eternal activists whose goal is to rid the world of human misery and enable all people to enjoy their right to happiness" (Harding & Ikeda, 2013, p. 227). This study thus defines GCE as education that fosters students who wish to contribute to alleviating human misery and to impart happiness, as they reflect on their behavior and nurture wisdom, courage, and compassion within themselves.

GCE in Africa

Although GCE should be a crucial topic for improving education in Africa, only a small number of studies on this subject have been conducted to date. According to a systematic review of GCE articles from 2005 to 2015 by Goren and Yemini (2017), only 2 of 90 articles focused on GCE in African primary and secondary education. The remaining 88 articles came from other continents, such as Europe and North America. Furthermore, there is a lack of research on expatriates' views and opinions on GCE. The scarcity of articles on GCE in Africa suggests that the concept is not widely adopted in African countries. In fact, Waghid's (2023)

qualitative study found that only four of nine professors interviewed were familiar with the concept of GCE. Among those four interviewees, three held understandings shaped by Western-centric perspectives that recognize poverty as a problem but overlook social injustice and equity.

While GCE remains relatively uncommon across Africa, South Africa's democratic education resonates with GCE values, including interconnectedness, compassion, respect, openness, and humanity. The democratic constitutional changes in 1994 aligned education with six values: "the cultivation of equity, tolerance, multilingualism, openness, accountability, and honour" (Waghid, 2018, p. 99). Furthermore, the "Manifesto on Values, Education, and Democracy," announced in the context of post-apartheid educational reform, introduced ten additional values. These include "the nurturing of democracy, social justice and equity, equality, non-racism, and non-sexism, Ubuntu (human dignity and humaneness), an open society, accountability, the rule of law, respect and reconciliation" (Waghid, 2018, p. 99).

In his 2023 study, Waghid examines how two teachers in South Africa implemented GCE by allowing students to research and discuss local and global issues. Waghid (2023) highlights that this approach helps students understand the relationship between their identity and their surroundings. Although understanding of GCE in South Africa is limited, some teachers recognize the concept and are working to develop students' critical thinking and responsibility toward global affairs. However, the term GCE appears more common in South Africa than in other parts of the continent, as most articles focus on the South African education system.

Tsegay and Bekoe (2020) highlight that violence in Africa stems from a lack of GCE and indigenous knowledge. They suggest that GCE fosters peace by encouraging teachers to develop global citizens committed to peace. Waghid (2018) argues that GCE's mutual learning promotes dissonance, prompting deep, critical reflection and new perspectives. He states, "if only a disruptive dissonance would be cultivated in pedagogical encounters through such approaches to citizenship education, already a renewed hope in openness, transparency, and deliberative engagement would have been awakened" (p. 107). Similarly, Waghid (2023) emphasizes the importance of critical, self-reflective, and imaginative engagement by educators to resist or transform a colonized curriculum (p. 14). These points indicate that GCE can foster critical thinking, self-reflection, and the courage to embrace differences, contributing to decolonized curricula and peaceful societies. Davids (2018) also suggests that GCE, if genuinely engaged with differences and perspectives, can help decolonize states.

On the other hand, some critics argue that the concept of GCE hinders the development of patriotism and the teaching of their history and culture to students (Tsegay & Bekoe, 2020). They assert that colonization complicated ideas of identity and patriotism. They emphasize the critical role of teaching local perspectives for identity formation and the development of patriotism, rather than focusing solely on global education. However, Davies and Pike (2010) argue that this criticism stems from a superficial understanding and that GCE enables students to cultivate various identities while acknowledging that individual identity is tied to nationhood.

Three key points must be considered when implementing GCE in African countries. The initial step is to integrate global and local perspectives on human interactions into education, a process Waghid (2018) identifies as the first step toward its implementation in South Africa. Likewise, Tsegay and Bekoe (2020) emphasize integrating modern Western knowledge and approaches with indigenous African knowledge in the teaching context. This fosters students'

understanding of human rights, respect for others, and democratic engagement (Waghid, 2018). This inclusion of local perspectives could help shape or reshape their identities while expanding their knowledge of the world beyond national boundaries.

The second point is to create "disruptive pedagogical encounters" (Waghid, 2018, p. 105). It is crucial to recognize students as capable and active members of the class, fostering mutual interaction (Tsegay & Bekoe, 2020). This student-centered class, which fosters dissonance, enables students to question and critically reflect on commonly held assumptions, ultimately leading to societal change. GCE also needs to provide opportunities for students to learn skills and knowledge on how to apply them in society (Tsegay & Bekoe, 2020).

The third point is to employ country-based GCE that incorporates indigenous knowledge, as well as African values and norms that resonate with GCE (Tsegay & Bekoe, 2020). In other words, GCE should adapt its form to each country's context and use what African countries already possess to incorporate GCE into the curriculum. For instance, Waghid (2018) states that, for implementation in South Africa, it is necessary to use the value-based approaches to education that the current education system already employs.

One specific way to implement GCE, given the three considerations above, is to strengthen the teacher education program. As Tsegay and Bekoe (2020) argue from a teacher education perspective, transforming teacher education programs, where many future educators gather and learn, is an effective approach. Interviewees in Waghid's (2023) research emphasized the importance of building a network for educators to share their experiences and implementations. Teacher education programs must foster teachers who can decolonize students' colonial mentality and teach them to love all human beings while integrating African culture and indigenous knowledge into their instruction (Tsegay & Bekoe, 2020). GCE incorporates both global and local perspectives, fostering student-teacher engagement tailored to each country's context. This approach is believed to promote student development, decolonize the colonial mindset, and contribute to a more peaceful society.

Present Study

Study Site

The present study examined the views and perceptions of GCE through the lens of expatriates from African countries currently experiencing GCE in the U.S.—those studying or teaching at a Southern California college and graduate school that actively integrates GCE into various aspects of the institution, hereafter referred to by the pseudonym "SCC."

SCC aims to foster global citizens equipped with the skills to unite with others, navigate a turbulent world toward peace, and contribute to others' happiness. Furthermore, SCC's diverse student body enhances GCE. Over 50 percent of the total student body comprises international students, with a recent increase in students from Africa, particularly Ghana. Approximately 14% of first-year students at SCC in Fall 2024 come from Sub-Saharan countries, while 2.5% of fourth-year students are from the same regions. SCC also boasts professors from various backgrounds, including Africa, Asia, and South America. The diverse and dynamic student body and faculty enrich students' social and learning experiences by incorporating multiple perspectives into discussions. SCC's curriculum emphasizes interdisciplinary learning and broadening perspectives on the world.

Research Questions

This study examined how GCE could help empower and decolonize the mind in Africa. In this context, the study expected that African students and faculty who completed their high school education in their home countries and experienced GCE at SCC would offer valuable insights into the following research questions:

(1) Are the study participants aware of and familiar with GCE? If so, how do they perceive its value?
(2) Did they experience GCE in high school in their home country? If they did, how did the GCE influence them? If they did not, do they believe that implementing GCE is essential in their countries?
(3) Do they believe that people in Africa still grapple with a colonial mindset? If so, how might GCE help facilitate the decolonization of the mind?

Methodology

Participants

The participants were (1) eight first- and second-year students at SCC who attended high school in an African nation, and (2) three professors from an African nation teaching at SCC. Their demographic data are presented in Tables 1 and 2.

Table 1
Participants—Students

	Age	Sex	Country of birth	Years in the U.S.	College year	High school type	School size (# of students)
Student A	20	F	Tanzania	1.5	2nd	International Baccalaureate (IB)/Urban	15
Student B	26	M	Ghana	1.5	2nd	Boarding/ Suburban	2,000
Student C	25	M	Ghana	1.5	2nd	Public/ Urban	2,000
Student D	22	F	Ghana	0.5	1st	Public/ Suburban	6,000
Student E	20	F	Somaliland	2	1st	American/ Private/Rural	300
Student F	22	F	Nigeria	0.5	1st	Private/ Urban	300
Student G	25	F	Kenya	0.5	1st	Private/ Urban	500
Student H	22	M	Ghana	0.5	1st	Public/ Boarding	1,500+

Table 2
Participants—Professors

	Age	Sex	Country of birth	Years in the U.S.	High school type	School size (# of students)
Professor A	35	M	South Africa	1.5	Urban	1,600
Professor B	38	M	Ghana	14	Boarding/ Rural	4,000
Professor C	n/a	F	Nigeria	18	Urban	600

Data Collection Procedure and Analysis

The data collection procedure involved semi-structured one-on-one in-person interviews conducted in English. Each interview took approximately 40 to 60 minutes. The interviews explored the participants' diverse views and opinions on GCE in Africa based on their experiences in high school in Africa and at SCC in the U.S. A thematic analysis of the interview data was conducted, which involved reading through the transcripts, coding, and identifying key themes, followed by a detailed description of the findings.

Findings

African Expatriates' Perceptions of GCE

All participants were familiar with GCE and expressed positive attitudes toward it. Their general understanding was that GCE fosters students' ability to lead a contributive life for the betterment of the world and society. For them, it is an education that teaches students to apply their knowledge to benefit society while nurturing their compassion to work for the betterment of people and the world.

Some participants highlighted the importance of a contributive mindset and understanding interconnectedness, fostering awareness of others, society, and the environment. Others linked GCE to open-mindedness and acceptance of diverse opinions. Professor B described three GCE dimensions: 1) becoming truly human, 2) interacting with others, including strangers, and 3) reflective thinking. He emphasized acting with wisdom, courage, and compassion. For example, courage without wisdom and compassion can cause harm; thus, the core lies in how we use these attributes. GCE teaches interconnectedness, helping students relate their lives to others and act accordingly.

Although most student participants emphasized that GCE means leading a contributive life, Students G and H perceived GCE as more about acquiring skills, such as proficiency in different languages and global mobility, including cultural awareness. While Student H mentioned only skills, Student G also highlighted the importance of social responsibility, specifically using knowledge and skills to improve the world, a notion emphasized by the majority of interviewees.

Impact of GCE on Expatriates' Lives

All participants agreed that GCE has significantly impacted their lives in many ways. Overall, they view GCE as a comprehensive educational approach that extends beyond basic skill development and material gains. It motivates them to become better individuals, deepens their understanding of life's interconnectedness, enhances critical thinking, promotes open-mindedness, inspires societal change, and fosters a strong sense of purpose in their education. Student E explained that the GCE curriculum at SCC expanded her knowledge and broadened her perspectives by critically examining global affairs, providing a space for open discussion where students can collaborate with professors, and learning from the viewpoints of people from different countries. According to Student E, this approach helps her feel more connected to other parts of the world.

Students D and F reported that GCE had a positive impact on their personal growth, helping them become better individuals who can contribute to society. Student A said, "[GCE] helps me nurture what's inside me that still needs to make a difference. It encourages my growth and provides guidance on what to do." Student D noted that GCE enables her to believe in herself and strive to maximize her potential. These examples suggest that GCE empowers students to develop into better individuals and contribute to society. Professor C noted that GCE has the potential to shift the perception of the purpose of education from materialistic pursuits, such as obtaining good jobs, money, and status, to a commitment to world peace, including an understanding of life and a valuing of human life.

GCE Curricula in Africa

Regarding GCE in their home countries, three of the eight students reported experiencing GCE while attending an urban International Baccalaureate (IB) school or a private institution that offers similar educational opportunities. Student A emphasized that the high school education she received was a valuable opportunity that many could not afford due to high tuition costs. Student F, who attended a private high school, stated that it fostered a culture of care and compassion, instilling a sense of social responsibility that allowed students to believe in themselves and contribute to others' happiness.

Faculty participants argued that Africa already has an educational philosophy similar to GCE, such as *Ubuntu* and traditional culture. For instance, Professor B stated that African countries possess a culture of care, an understanding of interconnectedness, compassion, and an openness to learning about the world and others. He explained that these components originate from the Ubuntu spirit, i.e., "I am because we are," and represent the qualities of global citizens. Likewise, Professor C stated, "African countries, Nigeria not being an exception, have always had that idea of global citizenship and philosophy valuing community-based life, social responsibility, the interconnectedness of lives."

In contrast, most participants reported not having experienced GCE in their home countries. However, they agreed that GCE could empower students in Africa to adopt positive values and perspectives, ultimately contributing to a better society. For example, two students from Ghana described how implementing GCE might change people's mindsets about the purpose of education, shifting from nurturing students who focus solely on their own success to educating themselves and others in Ghana. They said that GCE could increase people's awareness of their surroundings, broaden their perspectives and knowledge, and help them see how their knowledge can be useful in society. Similarly, Students E and G expressed a desire to apply

the knowledge gained through GCE to benefit their countries by exploring both national and global perspectives. They view GCE, which incorporates both local and global views, as a way for African students to analyze their countries and the world, then combine that knowledge to improve Africa and the planet.

Colonial Mindset and the Role of GCE

Most participants said the colonial mindset is more common among older generations but is fading, though some noted it still lingers. Student E from Somaliland, however, said they do not have a colonial mindset, taking pride in their identity and not feeling inferior to Whites, while acknowledging Western development.

Many noted that a positive shift is underway, driven by social media. Professor C mentioned increased use of Pan-African aesthetics, replacing Western dominance, alongside improvements in education and policy. Student C highlighted the benefit of all SCC students studying abroad to gain diverse perspectives. Overall, participants agreed that GCE would help overcome colonial mindsets, promote cross-border opportunities, and encourage critical thinking. Student A added that GCE could decolonize minds by teaching about global issues, highlighting exploitation by Western systems, and encouraging self-trust and critical questioning for personal growth and happiness.

Discussion

GCE as a Tool for Peace and Empowerment

This study found that expatriate participants from African countries view and value GCE as shaped by SCC's mission and values. Regardless of their age, country of origin, or type of high school education, participants were aware of and valued GCE, although most had not encountered it before arriving in the U.S. They viewed GCE as a tool to foster compassion in students and encourage them to contribute to the betterment of the world. While each participant mentioned more specific elements of GCE, everyone's understanding was grounded in the "contributive" aspect of GCE, as reflected in SCC's mission. This understanding aligns with ancient Greek Stoic philosophy, as exemplified by Cicero, who emphasized the importance of promoting others' happiness rather than sacrificing it (Schattle, 2009).

Participants recognized GCE as a holistic educational approach that goes beyond merely acquiring skills and material things. It encourages compassion, critical thinking, an understanding of interconnectedness, and openness to diversity. Based on their experiences, they expressed appreciation for GCE at SCC, noting that SCC's curriculum and diverse student body embody GCE and its principles. Despite demographic differences, most participants shared a similar understanding of GCE and viewed it positively, suggesting that this perspective is shaped by SCC's GCE curriculum.

Participants agreed that GCE helps broaden perspectives, unite people, and transform education, despite concerns about the loss of patriotism raised by Davies and Pike (2010). Students want to use GCE to benefit their countries, emphasizing critical thinking as a key outcome. This aligns with Waghid's (2018) view that GCE incites deep reflection, debate, and challenges to dominant narratives. Echoing Tsegay and Bekoe's (2020) assertion that GCE fosters peace and stability, one student argued that GCE can unite people across nations and races in the quest for peace amid violence and instability. Participants explained how GCE can

support Africans more specifically. Some said it will help shift education from a materialistic focus to using knowledge for societal well-being. This means GCE encourages students to learn and act for others' benefit, promoting peace in African countries.

Participants agreed that GCE can help decolonize mindsets through collaboration, belief in potential, and student-centered pedagogy, which encourage the expression of opinions and critical questioning. Student H said GCE allows African students to learn from each other's cultures and work collaboratively, promoting cultural appreciation and helping overcome Western-African mental barriers. Another student noted that GCE helps children believe in themselves and overcome colonial mindsets. Jo and Cho (2018) found that GCE improved self-efficacy and self-esteem among Korean high school students.

Ubuntu for GCE Implementation

This study revealed the strong alignment between GCE and the African philosophy of Ubuntu. Signified as "I am, because we are," Ubuntu embodies moral values such as kindness, empathy, benevolence, respect, togetherness, openness, community responsibility, humility, and courage (Eze, 2018, para. 8; Mukwedeya, 2022). These values align with the core tenets of GCE, including collaboration, compassion, unity, a contributive life, interconnectedness, and open-mindedness, which the study participants identified as key characteristics of GCE. In addition, the decision-making process based on Ubuntu incorporates minority views to avoid exclusion (Mukwedeya, 2022), a theme also explored in GCE.

Participants noted that African countries already have the Ubuntu philosophy, and that GCE doesn't have to be the only tool for fostering a better society. An openness to learning about the world, other people, and strangers stems from the Ubuntu spirit. However, a few participants insisted that people in their countries are not interested in the broader world and are focused only on their own nations and communities. This indicates a decline in openness to the world, a quality inherent to Ubuntu. These examples show that traditional philosophies in education are being lost in the current education system, which is primarily influenced by Westernization and colonization. Mukwedeya (2022) argues:

> It is the state's role in most educational systems to map holistic curriculum, but indigenous way of knowing are marginalized. ... the parochialism is a result of the universalized western ways imposed on other societies through past colonization or current neo-colonialism at the expense of utilizing transformative indigenous knowledge. (p. 225)

This argument illustrates the marginalization of indigenous knowledge systems due to colonization, resulting in a narrow perspective, despite the importance of a holistic educational approach. In this context, where there is a significant threat of losing Ubuntu and traditional philosophies, its revitalization in an education system is essential, rather than implementing an entirely new curriculum, because similar values have existed.

Conclusion

This study primarily explored how GCE can promote empowerment in Africa and be implemented effectively. It showed that GCE in Africa can shift perceptions of education's purpose, inspire a desire to serve society, enhance students' critical thinking, encourage open-mindedness, broaden perspectives, and build unity beyond borders. The study recognized that

revitalizing the Ubuntu spirit, which shares qualities with GCE, and incorporating elements currently missing from the African education system are effective approaches to implementing GCE.

This research has limitations, notably the small sample of eight students and three professors from six countries. Given Africa's diversity and size, future studies should include a broader, more diverse sample from across the continent. Moreover, further research should examine Ubuntu and its role in GCE. Exploring how the Ubuntu spirit manifests in today's education system and how to reinvigorate it in educational contexts could provide valuable insights.

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

The authors acknowledge that Grammarly, an AI-assisted writing software, was used to proofread and refine the language of the manuscript. The usage was limited to correcting grammatical and spelling errors and rephrasing statements for accuracy and clarity. The authors further declare that, apart from Grammarly, no other AI or AI-assisted technologies have been used to generate content in writing the manuscript. The ideas, design, procedures, findings, analyses, and discussion are original and derived from the appropriate and systematic conduct of the research.

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