JGPG (2022) 11(2): 53-69
DOI 10.14666/2194-7759-11-2-003

PAPER

Conduct Global Citizenship Education with Chinese Characteristics: A Case Study of Finland

Qin Su[*] • Hongjia Li[**]

Abstract Globalization not only brings economic interdependence to the international community but also brings exchanges and integration, or confrontation and conflict among diverse values. Especially when developed countries brought significant cultural impact to developing countries, China experienced cultural loss and value dislocation. Misunderstandings in international politics have seriously hindered smooth and fair communication between China and the world. Removing obstacles and promoting communication have become urgent tasks for China in the new era. Reshaping the values system in the global vision of a new era through the development of the educational system is a necessary approach to realize the rejuvenation of the Chinese nation, and a framework of Global Citizenship Education (GCE) with Chinese characteristics accordingly becomes an integral approach to achieve the objective. This article will take the Finnish international education system as an example to learn from experience and discuss how to construct a GCE system with Chinese characteristics from three aspects: institutional support for the government, school operation management, and cooperation for social assistance.

Keywords: Global citizenship education; institutional support; school operational management; social assistance

Jel Classification: I2, I20.

Introduction

The wave of globalization not only brings economic interdependence to the world but also increases exchanges and integration from multiple values, even cultural conflicts, especially when developed countries bring cultural shocks to developing countries with the advantages of their superior political, economic and military system. The Chinese society used to experience profound cultural disorientation and

Qin Su[*](✉), Hongjia Li[**]
[*] Renmin University of China, Beijing, P.R. China
E-mail: susuqin0414@163.com
[**] Beijing Information Science and Technology University, Beijing, China;
E-mail:hongjiauibe@163.com

value dislocation. Misunderstandings in international politics have seriously hindered smooth and fair communication between China and the world. Eliminating obstacles and promoting communication is an urgent task for the Chinese government in the new era. Therefore, transforming the value system into a global vision through the development of the educational system is considered a vital path to realizing the rejuvenation of the Chinese nation. A GCE system with Chinese characteristics will play a crucial role in achieving this goal. This paper aims to analyze the necessity of developing the international dimension of education in China and investigate the advantages and features of Finnish international citizenship education, exploring the possibility of setting up a feasible GCE system in China. Research questions guided the author mainly towards the methodology of case study and discourse analysis: Why is it essential to conduct a GCE in China? What does Finland do as one of the most pioneering countries in GCE? What should we learn from Finland, and how can we build a GCE system with Chinese characteristics?

1. Recent research on global education

According to the Asia-Pacific Center of Education for International Understanding (APCEIU), Education for International Understanding (EIU) is defined as a holistic and multidimensional educational initiative to promote learning to live together for a Culture of Peace. EIU advocates participatory democracy, human rights and dignity, social and economic equity, ecological sustainability, and peaceful reconciliation of conflicts. EIU pedagogy emphasizes transformative and inclusive education, knowledge relevance, learners' empowerment, and holistic approaches. EIU is interchangeably called Global Citizenship Education (GCE). Thus, GCE and EIU are the same in this article.

Concerning the conceptualization of global education, as a continuum that evolves from the traditional teaching of global issues, world affairs, and world cultures, gradually transforms to be an ever-deepening GCE system that focuses not only on knowledge teaching but on the attitudes, values, and behaviors cultivation, with an ultimate commitment to global social justice, universal rights, and ecological sustainability (UNESCO, 2015). Research on or related to global education worldwide has been enriched in recent decades. It involves conceptualization, approaches, and pedagogical strategies of GCE. In the past, GCE teachers have made great efforts to explore the development of an idealized vision and curricular innovation, and now they spend more time on the implementation of global education strategies (Ahola & Hoffman, 2012).

Generally speaking, it should be acknowledged that there is no commonly accepted definition or model of globalization, and some theorists still question whether globalization is a myth or reality, a prescription or a description (Clark, 1999; Held et al., 1999; Taylor et al., 1996). Concerning the attitude toward globalization, a middle

attitude maintains a more accommodative or inclusive framework between the two opposing arguments of convergent and divergent effects (Friedman, 1999; Robertson, 1995). It would recognize the mutual interactions between global and local forces and the coexistence of homogeneity and heterogeneity arising from such interactions in economic, political, and cultural arenas. Unlike local or national citizenship, global citizenship is not a political-legal entity with which people can directly affiliate and within which they can exercise their rights and face sanctions for failing to meet their responsibilities (Jarvis, 2002; Schweisfurth, et al., 2002). Therefore, we must admit that nationhood and statehood continue to be significant concerns in citizenship education in the globalizing world (Giddens, 1999).

Regarding GCE research, first, in terms of teaching objectives, some researchers focus on the value of political socialization of the young generation from the perspectives of political sociology and child psychology (Sapiro, 2004). Considering that children's conceptualization of social relationships such as allegiances and identities is nurtured at a very young age and their criticism of politics begins in their teenage years, there is sufficient evidence to support the strengthening of GCE in school education, especially from early elementary education.

Second, in terms of the current GCE situation around the world, some research is focused on young people's attitudes and beliefs about global issues, and considerable cross-national variation in knowledge and attitudes has been found. In Britain, for example, GCE is a centralized education system with an elaborately designed curriculum with support from active government funding and coordinated NGO commitment. A national survey of children has shown that 80 percent believe it is essential to learn about global issues (MORI, 1998). At the same time, there seem to have other stories in different countries. For example, high school students from Canada and Japan are less aware of the importance of global citizenship and prioritization of environmental issues and less optimistic about their future and their role in it (Richardson, 1976). Thus, more research is still necessary to explore the variations, especially cross-cultural analysis over time.

Third, from the perspective of teaching content in GCE curricula, research in the past decades found a general transformation from stressing national citizenship and national politics to emphasizing membership in a global community, universal rights, and interdependence (Rauner, 1998). Moreover, what should be noted as a universal challenge to GCE over the world is that GCE is still a marginal subject in most national curricula, and the focus of most social studies education is still strongly national in orientation (Davies & Issitt, 2005).

Finally, in terms of teaching resources and school education, research has found that teachers continue to favor didactic instruction and are pretty selective about the international issues they bring into their classrooms (Griffith, 1998). Educators still identify many challenges: chances of sharing teaching contents and teaching

experience at school or in a district are still insufficient; teaching resources and time for strategy implementation are still lacking in GCE; people are anxious about teaching controversial issues (Yamashita, 2006); very few whole-school efforts are made to integrate extracurricular and classroom activities, and link school management, teachers, parents and children in a sustained global citizenship curriculum.

Therefore, based on research on GCE in recent years, this article aims to discuss GCE situations in a particular case in Finland and so forth and explore the potential of constructing a GCE framework with Chinese characteristics from the perspectives analyzed above: starting the education of GCE from early education, adapting to specific national conditions, designing appropriate curricula and teaching content, reforming teacher training and improving the quality of teachers for GCE.

2. The development of GCE or EIU in the world

Under the impetus of UNESCO, many countries have been deeply aware of the importance of GCE over the past 70 years and successfully put forward educational reform strategies to strengthen international understanding and safeguard world peace. All types of international schools and international projects have been conducted, in which many cultural curriculum systems have been penetrated with GCE themes in depth. International issues such as international peace, environmental protection, multiculturalism, population education, education, and development have become the consensus for education in many countries. Because the destiny of all countries in the era of globalization is closely related, and peaceful coexistence and cooperation have become the common objective, GCE, which promotes mutual understanding, received widespread attention from all nations (Toukan, 2018). Therefore, course reforms started taking place in various countries. Although methods are diversified, they have some commonalities. First, subjects such as foreign language and history that can effectively facilitate people's understanding of other cultures have naturally become the focus of reform. In addition, eco-environmental education is valued in the contents of geography courses. One of the goals of international geography education in the 1990s was to cultivate students' awareness of sustainable living, sustainable development, and global awareness. Furthermore, while emphasizing friendly cooperation with and understanding other cultures, all countries regard their own traditional culture as an essential element in education to understand and be understood by the world. It can be reflected in the guidelines of many curriculum reforms (UNESCO, 2015).

On the one hand, GCE advocates cultural communication, dialogue, understanding, and consultation with other countries in a tolerant and respectful manner, so that everyone can understand themselves and others through further understanding of the world and allow existing interdependence to become voluntary solidarity and mutual assistance (Štrajn, 2000). On the other hand, GCE encourages that all countries still adhere to their own individuality, respect each other's individuality, stand for the

whole human being and global perspective, take peace and life for all humanity as an objective, and serve as a member of the global village (international community) in all fields to contribute to each other and fulfill their national responsibilities (Featherstone, 1990). This objective requires GCE to strive to become a "multicultural community" to cope with globalization on the premise of inheriting its own cultural traditions.

Therefore, the quality education of contemporary students should include both traditional and national knowledge and modern and international information. Building a GCE curriculum in the national education system is of extraordinary significance: it not only contributes to improving people's international literacy and thinking mode but also helps people acknowledge their own culture and accept cultural diversity (Jarvis, 2002).

3. Highlights and challenges of the Finnish GCE system

As one of the best education examples in the world, Finland has made some visible achievements in GEC operations. First, consecutive and sustainable policies and initiatives. Finland's commitment to global education was inspired by a series of collaborative international initiatives by the United Nations, UNESCO or other international organizations, for example, the *Declaration of Human Rights of the United Nations* in 1974, which had a fundamental influence on international education in Finland with its 'Recommendation concerning education for international understanding, cooperation and peace and education related to human rights and fundamental freedoms" (UNESCO, 1974); the Millennium Declaration of the *United Nations of 2000*, which cited freedom, equality, solidarity, tolerance, respect for nature, and shared responsibility as six fundamental values of international relations for the twenty-first century (2001); *Maastrich Global Education Declaration of 2002,* which defined global education as education that opens people's eyes and minds to the realities of the world, and awakens them to bring about a world of greater justice, equity and human rights for all, and so forth. Moreover, Finland's subscription and promotion of tenets of the United Nations and UNESCO have been one of the driving forces of the discourse on Global Education in Finland (Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland, 2015).

While GCE in Finland is characterized by several innovative, quality initiatives in different sectors, e.g., the Global Citizenship Maturity Test administered by the Finnish UN Association; the high-profile Public Lecture series of Finn Church Aid; the portal website (www.global.finland.fi) supported by Ministry for Foreign Affairs. Besides, the 2004 NCCBE (National Core Curriculum for Basic Education) emphasized and promoted the competency of multiple levels of identity, social skills, deep knowledge of global issues and universal values, critical and creative thinking skills, social and communication skills, and capacity to work collaboratively and responsibly (National Core Curriculum of Basic Education, 2004); in 2007, the Finnish Ministry of Education published *Global Education 2010*, which established global education as a national

priority inclusive of all sectors including education, business, culture, media, and civic engagement, and offers a conceptualization of global education that promotes a way of looking at and interacting with the world through an interconnectedness between the individual and collective responsibility; the development of knowledge, skills, and values and attitudes through which to critically understand and to take action on issues of the environment, media, and the global economy (Ministry of Education, 2007); in 2010 The National Board of Education launched the "As a Global Citizen in Finland" project which aimed to identify global education competencies, articulate a vision for global citizenship, engage students in developmentally appropriate experiences that promote justice and sustainability, and to highlight good teaching practice (Jaaskelainen & Repo, 2011); in 2011 October, The Finnish National Board of Education, the Finnish Ministry for Foreign Affairs, the Global Education Network Europe (GENE) and the Hanasaari Swedish-Finnish Cultural Centre organized the international symposium, *Becoming a Global Citizen;* in 2014, The Finnish National Board of Education, the Finnish Ministry for Foreign Affairs, the Global Education Network Europe (GENE) hosted the international symposium on the education of global citizens: *Discovering the potential of partnerships*. Amid curriculum reform, this symposium was a continuation of the work to articulate global citizenship competencies to inform the following national core curriculum to be introduced in 2016. All these initiatives show a targeted focus, a strong impact on small resource input, and a concern for quality.

Second, well-built national structures and coordination between governmental and non-governmental sectors. GCE in Finland has been well developed in many sectors, where governmental institutions and civil society play prominent roles as main sources. From the government perspective, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs has taken the lead in pursuing the agenda of global education and development awareness and ensuring public ownership of a foreign policy committed to ethical engagement with the world. From the perspective of civil society, development NGOs have taken a committed advocacy stance about global education and public information. As in other European countries, global education and development information in Finland is initiated, funded, supported, and sustained by NGOs of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Development, but the agendas must be owned, adapted, and integrated into the formal and informal education system and sectors of civil society.

Third, close national coordination between formal and informal education systems. In Finland, the Peer Review notes the emergence, consolidation, and growth of GCE in various sectors. The Ministry for Foreign Affairs and development NGOs take the initiative and are owned and implemented by other partners in the coordination sectors, including formal and informal education.

In the formal education system, from pre-school, primary, and upper secondary education, to university and adult education, global education in Finland is growing steadily and effectively. With a greater emphasis on multicultural understanding,

global citizenship, and knowledge of sustainability, changes in the curriculum seem to provide significant potential for integrating global education into the formal system. Fulfilling this potential has to date, been regarded as the most crucial factor in moving the GCE provisions in Finland towards accessing quality global education for all Finns. Meanwhile, in GCE of higher education and adult education, there are also some well-operated initial steps towards more efficient coordination, for example, programs of North-South university students exchange, and so forth. In non-formal and informal education sectors, development NGOs are not only pioneering but are moving in the direction of greater coordination, networking, and partnership, both between NGDOs (Non-Governmental Development Organizations) and with other civil society sectors.

Fourth, effective curricular integration in formal and non-formal education. As global educators throughout Europe work to ensure the upgraded provision, special moves towards curricular integration in formal global education are taking place. Ministries of Education, curriculum centers, NGOs, and local education structures are working in a strengthened partnership and dialogue to build strategies to integrate development, justice, and global perspectives into the school curriculum. Examples include the work of InWEnt (Capacity Building International, Germany), BMZ (German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development) and Lander education ministries in Germany, the Civics Social and Political Education program (Ireland), the NCDOs work on ”Masterclasses” with education policymakers(Netherland), the work of SIDA (Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency)and the Ministry of Education in Sweden; the Global Dimensions of Citizenship work (DEA –Development Education Association and OXFAM in the United Kingdom) and others. These initiatives and their advocacies share a common strategy to ensure that global education is not an “add-on” or a luxury but is an essential and integrated part of the school system. This strategy assumes that global education should be a public good, not a privilege, but a right, and that being educated means being globally educated (Lehtomäki & Rajala, 2020).

Fifth, challenges and problems. The following are a few major challenges facing not only Finland but a broader context. It should be evident that the GCE concept is most comprehensive in scope and demanding to implement.

First, in terms of conceptualization development, advocates and values of GCE in broader communities may sometimes conflict with contexts in which teachers work. In teaching implementation, teachers can transfer what they take for granted as authoritative or valuable, while all do not acknowledge their opinions. Some of them may even arouse objections from teaching targets. Considering the ambiguity of GCE conceptions, there is still a problem in transposing the GCE notion of citizenship to a global scale precisely because there is not a fixed political system or enforceable set of rights and responsibilities on this scale (Kymlicka, 2003). Therefore, tucking all these theoretical divisions into the overarching notion of “global citizenship” glosses

over the complexity facing teachers when they try to implement global citizenship education in their classrooms (Glaser, 2021).

Second, in terms of the strategic system, as in other European countries, the achievement of GCE in Finland still relies too much on the personal commitment of individual teachers, teacher-trainers, and policymakers. Fundamental conceptions of GCE, such as freedom of speech, freedom of individuals, and freedom of autonomy, among others, are inscribed by the United Nations initiatives and declarations, which are typical western-originating values. In contrast, GCE teachers may easily overlook its possible irreconcilability or incompatibility with other value systems and fail to properly extract the universal values from the competing allegiances or integrate all levels of identities into a core belief. Therefore, effective implementation of GCE themes and values requires closely related and coordinated efforts from all stakeholders in strategy making, teacher training, local or school-based curriculum development, teaching material designing, et cetera.

Third, in terms of practical implementation, Finnish compulsory primary education GCE practices are not systematic and sometimes even considered a burden (Pudas, 2015). GCE faces a lack of resources and understanding of what GCE is and how it can be implemented (Pudas, 2015). Without sufficient professional training, teachers are required not only to advocate the incorporation of a large number of global themes and issues but also to use integrated approaches and innovative pedagogies to implement teaching practices. Because there are competing views on how the global system works and how its various parts affect each other, many teachers are still unprepared to deal with these extensive and complex challenges. Meanwhile, the development of global education in higher education is not yet coordinated. Therefore, increasing understanding of GCE and making GCE a more substantive part of national and local curriculums would help its implementation in the Finnish education system.

Finally, in terms of funding support, although initiatives focused on different levels, sectors and actors display signs of impact, support, and potential, they are also under-resourced in many ways. More considerable investment in coordination, capacity building, professional training, and institutional development is required in the field of global education if it is to fulfill its potential.

4. Constructing a GCE (or EIU) system with Chinese characteristics

In recent years, China has influenced international affairs to a considerable extent. Faced with the rise of China, will the international system offer a fair platform for the new economic power? It depends to a certain extent on how nations promote mutual understanding and inclusiveness with each other in rapidly growing exchanges and how nations strengthen mutual cooperation to deal with everyday challenges facing people of different cultures, races, beliefs, and countries and regions. Princeton University professor John Ikenberry believes that the existing international system is

easy to integrate while challenging to change (Ikenberry, 2014). Therefore, accepting and integrating into the current international system led by the West and creating a favorable international environment for China becomes an unprecedented and imminent task.

Considering the general development and specific situations of GCE in these experienced countries or regions, Chinese GCE is expected to, on the one hand, conform to the tide of globalization and, on the other hand, keep the historical mission in mind adequately protect its own identity. Confronting the complex and diverse requirements of GCE brought by globalization in modern times, China's higher education, primary and secondary education have accepted the concept of GCE, conducted a series of related research and teaching practices, and gradually incorporated it as a guiding ideology of domestic education reform into policy directives and guidance documents of education. This is of great significance for enhancing students' international understanding literacy, optimizing educational resources, stimulating diversified development of cultural education, and realizing broader cooperation and exchanges with foreign schools. However, China's international understanding of education is still in its preliminary period and is in an immature state. In the practice of GCE, a series of insurmountable obstacles under the current educational framework still exist in China. For example, schools' international understanding of education is still underdeveloped, and talent training goals are ambiguous. Students' international understanding literacy is weak, and they lack international awareness and global vision; the curriculum lacks systematic and normative arrangement, and the content of the courses is unreasonable; the teachers lack international understanding and international experience; distribution of educational resources is uneven, and use of superior resources is insufficient. All these issues need further improvement through a GCE or EIU system with Chinese characteristics, which is supposed to be guided by the government as a policymaker, practiced by schools as chief implementation organs, and coordinated with other social institutions as supporting coordinators. Therefore, it is essential to combine the characteristics of China's current educational structure, explore some specific role models of GCE in the present world, formulate and implement a series of effective policies and initiatives, research and practice the international understanding of education concepts, and construct a distinctive Chinese GCE system (Law, 2006).

To construct a GCE system with Chinese characteristics, we should adopt critical thinking to deal with issues of multiculturalism, ideological differences, and interdisciplinary issues and cultivate international understanding literacy. We should try our best to solve the contradictions between native culture and heterogeneous culture, contradictions between political goals and artistic goals, and contradictions between curriculum and institutional guarantees. We should ensure the balance between tradition and modernity, the balance between nationality and internationality, and the balance between compatibility and interchangeability.

Only by the above means, the formation of our GCE system's institutional structure, governance, and physical operating structure can be realized. We must explore the following issues to deal with the above contradictions and problems properly.

First, how do we integrate international understanding education into a system of education for all?

Second, how can school education reform be improved by including the concept of international understanding education?

Third, in addition to school education, how can we promote the development of international understanding education outside school? Finally, how can GCE further promote the organic combination of school education and social practice?

To be precise, the GCE system should involve the following activities: specific institution building and systematic guarantee from the perspective of the government: In order to promote the development of a GCE system, the government should first attach great importance to it and issue relevant policies and regulations to protect it; second, teaching implementation and cultural cultivation from formal education: the goals and values of school education should thereby begin to change, and the organizational form of teaching should become more open and diverse; third, institutional cooperation and educational extension from a social perspective. This essay will try to discuss this in detail below.

4.1 Governmental decision

To understand the sustainable development of international education, China should gradually establish a set of normative mechanisms to improve institutional construction and institutional guarantee system. Specifically, it should involve interactions and coordination between decision-making, execution, and supporting assistance from the government, schools, and social institutions. Based on a systematic framework, this structure aims to promote international understanding in which all parts are independent of each other, coordinate with each other, and support each other.

4.1.1 Policy and law

The government must first improve the relevant legislation to support and develop international education policies as a decision-making organ. In July 2010, China's National Medium- and Long-Term Education Reform and Development Plan (2010-2020) stated: "Strengthen international understanding of education, promote cross-cultural exchanges, and enhance students' understanding of different countries and cultures." Only when the government clarifies its leading role in understanding the development of education in the international arena can we effectively construct a macro-educational strategic plan that is compatible with the development of modern society in China, formulate a phased development strategy for GCE from the policy, and legal level, determine the goal of talent training, establish the content of international understanding education, coordinate relevant management systems, the complete

establishment of relevant institutions, and scientifically allocate educational resources.

4.1.2 Value construction

To cultivate people's rational understanding of GCE and to develop an educational concept that respects heterogeneous cultures, we must form a corresponding value system to encourage different cultures to recognize and become familiar with each other. It is not only of guiding significance for developing a GCE in China but can also effectively regulate various activities. The establishment of values needs to be considered at least in several aspects: First, the premise for developing education in international understanding in China is to build a clear value orientation. GCE is essential education for all countries to adhere to their own individuality, respect each other's individuality, take the stance of all humankind, aim at peace for all humankind and global life, support each other in all fields as a member of the global village, and educate native people to undertake international obligations (Bindé, 2002). Therefore, to construct a GCE system with Chinese characteristics, we must treat the national culture with an open vision and a rational attitude and build awareness and recognition of the national culture and our core values based on cultural consciousness and cultural self-confidence. Second, another way for China to develop a GCE system is by conducting an effective cultural dialogue. The international understanding is that everyone can understand themselves and others through further understanding the world, turning de facto interdependence into conscious solidarity and mutual assistance. This requires dialogue with heterogeneous cultures in an equal and open manner and seeks to achieve standard action. Today, with increasingly close economic and social links, countries worldwide are more dependent on each other. Frequent exchanges require us to strengthen our understanding and use of heterogeneous cultures through dialogue and communication. Third, China's GCE system aims to resolve differences and build consensus. The current international situation is still complex and changing. Ethnic and religious contradictions and political and economic problems are still intricate. GCE can establish cultural bridges between different countries, nationalities, races, religions, and regions and improve understanding and eliminate hostility through mutual cultural cognition. From the above analysis, the responsibility of the government is unshirkable.

4.1.3 Guarantee of resources

The GCE curriculum is conducted in various forms, but its efficient and orderly development requires the corresponding resource guarantees to pave the way. This is inseparable from the government's open mind and global vision. Only when GCE becomes a universal educational and cultural orientation can such resource guarantees be genuinely implemented. The government can carry out several tasks through policy support and policy orientation in this aspect. First, in terms of teacher training,

advanced school conditions and excellent teaching and research equipment can be deployed to provide a solid and practical material foundation and facilitate teachers systematically absorb foreign frontier experience and obtain outside information; second, in terms of cross-cultural practice, we should vigorously promote diversified international exchanges, help broaden global vision of teachers and students, and provide a platform for teachers and students worldwide to enjoy equal exchanges in the form of institutionalized and regular lectures, conferences, seminars, short-term or long-term visits, etc.; third, in terms of course setting, government should strengthen the sharing of information materials, teaching and research instruments and equipment, and educational concepts in the curriculum, and promote the development of courses and teaching in an international direction; fourth, in terms of overall educational conception, we should enhance international cooperation through building distance courses and encouraging cooperation projects, in order to integrate China's GCE system into cross-national and inter-regional exchanges and collisions, and enhance the attitude and ability of international cooperation; fifth is to reflect the essence of GCE in evaluation system and highlight its humanistic characteristics. From government departments to educational institutions, we should establish a multi-evaluation method that combines qualitative evaluation with quantitative evaluation, formative evaluation with final evaluation, flexible evaluation with multiple evaluations, university self-evaluation and social evaluation. It should accurately reflect the status quo and the level of education of international understanding and promote GCE in an orderly and effective manner (Banya, 2005).

4.2 Implementation of education

Constant adjustment of a modern governance environment compatible with the GCE development status of the present world is the fundamental guarantee for the Chinese GCE. In addition to complete institutions and well-established policies, scientific planning and governance are also a source of motivation to achieve the GCE objectives. Smooth implementation of GCE depends to a certain extent on a mature educational operation mechanism. The GCE strategy is a complete school execution plan based on a correct and rational analysis of China's social development environment and the possibilities of education development, combined with its school conditions, development characteristics, and cultural traditions. It specifies the vision of international understanding education in the short, medium, and long term ensures each step's integrity and coordination, and provides a theoretical and practical basis for international understanding education.

4.2.1 Course setting (knowledge)

As the practical operational organization of international understanding education, schools should have enlightened ideas and broad visions and formulate the

corresponding policies to promote their sustainable development. The curriculum is the leading carrier for international understanding of education. The form of the course can be varied, and the whole program must be designed in the context of globalization, developing the useful and discarding the useless from the national curriculum and engaging in significant dialogue with the curriculum of other cultures of the world. Schools should integrate not only traditional and national characteristics into the quality education of students but combine modern consciousness and global vision. The purpose is to "train students for a broader international vision and a comprehensive knowledge structure and capacity structure, focus on improving students' ability to compete in an internationalized environment, and enable students to survive in an international and diverse social environment." In China, foreign language education is the chief executor of international understanding education. However, in specific operations, it lacks effective planning in terms of teaching objectives, implementation approaches, curriculum setting, and teaching content arrangement is relatively random. Therefore, China's international understanding education curriculum should establish the educational goal of cross-cultural understanding, build an index system centered on knowledge, ability, and value, and establish a continuous training path from primary and secondary education to higher education.

4.2.2 Cultural cultivation (attitude)

An inclusive cultural environment is crucial soil for education. It can deepen understanding among different cultures, cultivate understanding and tolerance of heterogeneous cultures, and enhance people's recognition and pride in national culture. Therefore, the extensive and effective development of international understanding education is inseparable from cultivating a multicultural atmosphere. From the small campus environment to the enormous social environment, by cultivating multicultural awareness and multicultural character, individual citizens can be cultivated as the main body of cross-cultural communication so that they can undertake the mission of carrying forward the national culture and indeed construct a multicultural environment with mutual tolerance and respect. Nurturing a multicultural environment and internalizing the values of harmonious coexistence require attention to the reconciliation of several contradictions: the coordination between nationality and heterogeneity, the coordination between advocacy and participation, the coordination between pluralism and aggregation, and the coordination between coexistence and integration.

4.2.3 International practice (ability)

In addition to the cognition and attitude towards multiculturalism, students' intercultural communication and international understanding skills are also essential aspects of education in China. Respecting and accepting multiculturalism in practice

play the primary role in strengthening international understanding. Therefore, governments and schools must encourage and promote various international experiences and activities beyond the regular curriculum. From students' perspective, we should let them learn theory and put it into practice in the context of intercultural communication, effectively broadening their horizons and tempering their abilities. From the perspective of schools, we should let them enhance the internationalization of education in international practice, and push schools to update and broaden their running-school ideas, make full use of resources to establish international cooperation. In addition, we should formulate relevant support policies, encourage teachers and students to go abroad, enrich personal experience, promote students' self-construction and self-internalization of international understanding values, and promote true understanding, respect, and communication with people of other countries.

4.2.4 Teacher training

The teaching staff is crucial for high-level international understanding education. Thus, training for high-quality teachers with global vision and cross-cultural literacy is critical to developing education based on international understanding in China. Foreign language teaching in China is the main form of international understanding education. Teacher training should focus on opening up international horizons and generating global awareness. Teachers' international awareness and cultural literacy determine the quality of international understanding. Therefore, China's international understanding of education should pay more attention to the quality of teachers. To be precise, we should first increase teachers' understanding, respect, and acceptance of different cultures through seminars, dialogues, exchanges, and further studies, and increase the knowledge of history and culture; secondly, we should increase the cultivation of global awareness. Let teachers at a deeper level recognize the integrity of global destiny and the interdependence of human existence; and further develop the concept of international understanding education so that teachers can further understand, respect, and accept heterogeneous cultures through multicultural education, eliminate inherent biases, and grasp the essence and ways of international understanding of students.

4.3 Social assistance

In terms of institutional cooperation, schools and relevant social institutions should incorporate the concept of international understanding at all stages and in all areas of education for all. To promote philosophical research on basic concepts, target directions, cultural exchanges, science and technology of GCE, China should take the school as the main subject to formulate and launch various actions and plans with diverse scopes. For example, organize the publishing industry to write a variety of textbooks of international understanding and related reading materials to supplement the insufficient content of the GCE teaching content; organize relevant institutions to

cooperate and conduct research and investigation activities to support international understanding education; emphasize language teaching; promote students' mindset and awareness through language culture and humanities knowledge, and through mutual understanding and dialogue between different cultures; organize experts in different languages to translate classic works of multiculturalism to promote national understanding and peaceful and friendly cooperation in different ethnic groups; carry out multilevel educational programs, distribute strategies and guidelines for values education through bulletins, publications, official and non-official documents, and foster value education related to culture, peace, tolerance and democracy; and grant funding to establish specific research institutes, to conduct GCE related activities such as training, researching, communication, development, guidance, evaluation, etc.

Conclusions

Although GCE (or EIU) has been in development for more than 70 years since the 1940s, it remains in its preliminary period in China. Complying with the trend of globalization and meeting the requirements of GCE, the Chinese government should explore the construction of a GCE model that conforms to its own development characteristics according to national conditions based on absorbing elites from the best GCE systems in the West: cultivate high-quality faculty resources, teaching resources, and academic resources; integrate curriculum, lectures, and cross-cultural practice into an interdisciplinary, cross-stage, and cross-regional GCE system; and through diverse forms of teaching, research and international experience conduct international understanding education in the physical and virtual space of campus and society. In summary, at the individual level, the construction of China's GCE system should not only consider improving students' understanding of the globalized world and intercultural communication ability but also shape their values of peace, justice, tolerance, and equal respect. From the macro level, we should analyze the scientific, humanistic, professional, practical, social, and international natures of our GCE system and explore the development path of students' international compassion and empathy. Only by these means can we further deepen the conception and influence of international understanding education, promote the continuous development of China's GCE system, cultivate high-quality and efficient international citizens, and then develop excellent international leaders to meet the cooperation and exchange challenges of the global society.

References

Ahola, S., & Hoffman, D.M. (2012). *Higher education research in Finland: emerging structures and contemporary issues*. Jyväskylä University Press Jyväskylä.

Banya, K. (2005). Globalisation and Higher Education Policy Changes. In J. Zajda, K. Freeman, M. Geo-Jaja, S. Majhanovic, V. Rust, J, Zajda & R. Zajda (Eds.), *International Handbook on Globalisation, Education and Policy Research* (pp. 147-164). Springer, Dordrecht. https://doi.org/10.1007/1-4020-2960-8_10

Bindé, J. (2002). What Education for the Twenty-first Century? *Prospects, 32*, 0.

Clark, I.D. (1999). Globalization and International Relations Theory. Oxford University Press.

Davies, I., & Issitt, J. (2005). Reflections on citizenship education in Australia, Canada and England. *Comparative Education, 41*, 389 - 410.

Evans, M. (2006, mimeo). *Educating for Global Citizenship in Schools: Contrasting Perspectives and Practices*. Toronto: OISE/UT.

Featherstone, M. (1990). Global Culture: An Introduction. *Theory, Culture & Society, 7*, 1-3014.

Friedman, T.L. (1999). *The Lexus and the Olive Tree: Understanding Globalization* (1st ed.) Anchor Books.

Giddens, A. (1999). *Runaway World: How Globalization is Reshaping Our Lives*. Routledge.

Griffith, R. (1998). *Educational citizenship and independent learning*. Jessica Kingsley.

Held, D.J., Mcgrew, A., Goldblatt, D., & Perraton, J. (1999). *Global Transformations: Politics, Economics, and Culture* (1st ed.) Stanford University Press.

Ikenberry, G.J. (2014). *Power, Order, and Change in World Politics*. Cambridge University Press

Jaaskelainen, L.& Repo, T. (2011). *Schools Reaching out to a Global World. What competences do global citizens need?* Finnish National Board of Education. https://cdn.accentuate.io/4372462370867/11692919193651/KV-030292-EN-v1582270243984.pdf

Jarvis, P. (2002). Globalisation, Citizenship and the Education of Adults in Contemporary European Society. *Compare: A Journal of Comparative and International Education, 32*, 19 - 5.

Kymlicka, W. (2003). Multicultural States and Intercultural Citizens. *Theory and Research in Education, 1*, 147 - 169.

Law, W. (2006). Citizenship, citizenship education, and the state in China in a global age. *Cambridge Journal of Education, 36*, 597 - 628.

Lehtomäki, E., & Rajala, A. (2020). Global Education Research in Finland. In D. Bourn (Eds,), *The Bloomsbury Handbook of Global Education and Learning*. Bloomsbury academic

The Ministry of Education and Culture of Finland. (2007). *Global Education 2010*. https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5f6decace4ff425352eddb4a/t/5fc3b979e6d49a06bb0413fb/1606662527988/Gene_NationalStrategy-FinnishGE2010EN.pdf

Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland. (2015). *Priorities in the operation of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs*. http://formin.finland.fi/public default.aspx?

Finnish National Board of Education. (2004). *National Core Curriculum of Basic Education*. http://www.oph.fi/english/curricula_and_qualifications/basic_education

MORI Social Research. (1998). *Children's Knowledge of Global Issues: a research study*

among 11-16 year olds. MORI.

Pudas, A-K. (2015). A moral responsibility or an extra burden? A study on global education as part of Finnish basic education. [Doctoral thesis, The University of Oulu]. University Of Oulu Graduate School.

Rauner, M. (1998). *The worldwide globalization of civics education topics from 1955 to 1995*. Stanford University, Stanford.

Richardson, R.J. (1976). *Learning for change in world society: reflections, activities, and resources*. World Studies Project.

Robertson, R. (1995). Glocalization: time-space and homogeneity-heterogeneity. In M. FeatherstoneS. Lash, & R. Robertson (Eds.), *Global modernities* (pp. 25-44). SAGE Publications Ltd, https://dx.doi.org/10.4135/9781446250563.n2

Sapiro, V. (2004). Not Your Parents' Political Socialization: Introduction for a New Generation. *Annual Review of Political Science, 7*, 1-23.

Schweisfurth, M., Davies, L., & Harber, C. (Eds.) (2002). *Learning democracy and citizenship: international experiences*. Symposium: Oxford, UK.

Štrajn, D. (2000). Globalization and education: Integration and contestation across cultures. *International Review of Education, 61*, 121-124.

Taylor, P.J., Hirst, P.H., & Thompson, G.F. (1996). Globalization in Question. The International Economy and the Possibilities of Governance. *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers, 21*, 716.

Toukan, E.V. (2018). Educating citizens of 'the global': Mapping textual constructs of UNESCO's global citizenship education 2012–2015:. *Education, Citizenship and Social Justice, 13*, 51-64.

Yamashita, H. (2006). Global citizenship education and war: the needs of teachers and learners. *Educational Review, 58*, 27 - 39.

UNESCO (1974). *Records of the General Conference, 18th session, Paris*. http:// unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0011/001140/114040e.pdf#page=144.

UNESCO (2013). *Global Citizenship Education: An Emerging Perspective. Outcome Document of the Technical Consultation on Global Citizenship Education*. https://www.gcedclearinghouse.org/sites/default/files/resources/%5BENG%5D%20Outcome%20document%20of%20the%20technical%20consultation%20on%20global%20citizenship%20education.pdf

UNESCO. (2015). *Global citizenship education: topics and learning objectives*. https://en.unesco.org/sites/default/files/gcedtopicsandlearningobjectives_01.pdf

UN (2001). United Nations Millennium Declaration. *Reforming the United Nations*. http://www.un.org/millennium/declaration/ares552e.pdf.