

Strengthening global citizenship education in Sub-Saharan Africa: Lessons from curriculum reforms in Kenya

Benard O. Nyatuka¹

John K. Nyangaresi²

¹bnyatuka@kisiiuniversity.ac.ke

²johnnyangaresi1992@gmail.com

¹ Kisii University, ² Masinde Muliro University of Science & Technology, Kenya

<https://doi.org/10.51867/ajernet.7.3.67>

ABSTRACT

Global Citizenship Education (GCE) is increasingly used to promote responsible participation in a more sustainable, equitable, and peaceful world. This article examines how curriculum reform in Kenya can strengthen GCE in Sub-Saharan Africa. The study was anchored in Critical Global Citizenship Education Theory. It applies a conceptual analysis of a purposively delimited and selected contemporary scholarship literature on GCE, competency-based education, values education, and curriculum implementation. Sixty-four records were screened, and eight articles for analysis were selected through a systematic source-identification process. Inclusion was limited to accessible peer-reviewed journal articles directly related to GCE, competency-based curriculum, values education, social studies, curriculum resources, or curriculum implementation. Non-peer-reviewed works, policy reports, books, theses, newspapers, inaccessible texts, duplicates, and unrelated records were excluded. The synthesis shows that Kenyan competency-based curriculum reform offers a strong ground base for GCE by emphasising competencies, values, learner agency, and local problem solving. GCE implementation is, however, undermined when aspirations for the curriculum are not grounded in teacher development, assessment formats, learning resources, and locally appropriate teaching and learning methods. The article proposes that GCE should be applied as a cross-curricular competence comprising civic knowledge, moral thinking, critical enquiry, working together across other disciplines in collaborative learning, cultural identity, and community action. It calls for explicit mapping of GCE competencies, teacher professional development, performance-based assessment, use of locally and globally relevant resources, and a school citizenship portfolio.

Keywords: Competency-Based Curriculum; Curriculum Reform; Global Citizenship Education; Kenya; Values Education; Pedagogy

I. INTRODUCTION

Global Citizenship Education (GCE) is a key curriculum response to social disintegration, ecological strain, digital manipulation, migration, inequality, conflict, and unequal globalisation. Abudu et al. (2024) show that GCE can be integrated into African competency-based curricula; Gonzalez-Valencia et al. (2022) discuss GCE as critical relating to social realities; and Ngwacho (2024) sees GCE as a form of value-centered education and global citizenship. For basic education, GCE should enable learners to grasp the connection between decisions at the local level and broader human and ecological systems. In Sub-Saharan Africa, the challenge is not to imagine GCE as a foreign or abstract curriculum label, but as meaningful in their own histories, identities, and materialities.

The first key variable studied in this study is GCE. GCE is the learning required for learners to grasp concepts including interdependence, rights and responsibilities, diversity, sustainability, peace, and participation. Gonzalez-Valencia et al. (2022) highlight the importance of exposure to social realities in the pedagogy of critical GCE, as opposed to mere factual recall. A learner demonstrating GCE competence should therefore be able to interpret evidence, listen to varying perspectives, reason ethically, work together with others, and take responsible actions in local and global settings.

Conceptually, GCE is not a single neutral construct. Oxley and Morris (2013) distinguished political, moral, economic, cultural, social, critical, environmental, spiritual, and other orientations, while Pashby et al. (2020) showed that typologies often move between neoliberal, liberal, and critical assumptions. Goren and Yemini (2017) similarly found considerable variation in how empirical studies define outcomes. This diversity means Kenyan curriculum design should state whether it seeks awareness, intercultural competence, ethical judgement, social critique, collective action, or a sequenced combination of these.

The second factor is the curriculum reform, especially the competency-based curriculum (CBC) in Kenya. When implementation conditions are coherent, competency-based reforms can be useful for problem solving, support lifelong learning, self-efficacy, and learner autonomy (Muchira et al., 2023). Cheruiyot (2024) identifies teacher readiness,

resources, and implementation support as continuing concerns in Kenya's CBC. Ruto et al. (2023) show that social studies content can foster knowledge, skills, and values for cohesion. CBC is therefore applicable to GCE in regards to global citizenship as it is a proven competence instead of a subject area. To learn to be responsible citizens, it is essential that the curriculum provides opportunities for inquiry, discussion, interaction, reflection, and tackling community issues.

The third most important factor is values education. Ngwacho (2024) relates value-based education to inclusive education and improved global citizenship. Ruto et al. (2023) demonstrate how social studies can contribute to integration and cohesion in Kenya. Gonzalez-Valencia et al. (2022) further reinforce the necessity of critical citizenship that calls into question the social realities. Values under education can link the local and the global responsibilities to the Kenyan context. Thus, learners who do not have to leave Kenya (or Africa) to be global citizens are given the space to explore the relationship between becoming good citizens of their own local communities and humankind's global ecological and human interdependence.

The fourth key variable is curriculum implementation. Curriculum intentions are not necessarily classroom practices. Preparation, resources, examples, assessment rubrics, and time are necessary for teachers to lead discussions and projects. Studies conducted in Kenya indicate that practical factors such as teacher readiness, resources, and assessment still pose challenges for implementing CBC (Cheruiyot, 2024; Muchira et al., 2023). These restrictions are directly applicable in and around GCE, as citizenship learning demands participation, the use of evidence, respectful disagreement, and feedback. GCE can be a superficially appealing statement in documents, if there is no support for implementation, while classroom practice remains examination-focused and/or teacher-centred.

Implementation also depends on teacher learning. Yemini et al. (2019) identified teacher preparation as a recurrent weakness in GCE, and Estellés and Fischman (2021) found that teacher-education literature often assumes consensus about global citizenship while giving insufficient attention to whose knowledge and interests are privileged. Studies of teacher preparation further show that sustained reflection, modelling, and curriculum-design practice help educators translate global competence into classroom routines (Kerkhoff & Cloud, 2020; Lourenço, 2021). Therefore, one-off orientation is unlikely to support the discussion, perspective-taking, source evaluation, and action learning expected under CBC.

GCE is also timely, as learners are daily exposed to digital environments where the dissemination of information, misinformation, stereotypes, and global occurrences happens quickly. Phillips et al. (2024) demonstrate how curriculum resources influence the potential for enacting GCE. Santamaria-Cardaba et al. (2024) highlight curriculum resources as a priority issue regarding GCE in formal education. Gonzalez-Valencia et al. (2022) advocate for a critical approach in the social realities of life, which is directly useful in source checking and responsible communication. Learners should therefore be taught to verify source information, identify bias, express respect, and know what can happen if they give out wrong information. Meanwhile, learners should be connected with the defined African evils of climate change, migration, public health, peaceful coexistence, food security, unemployment, and local governance.

In Kenya, curriculum reform is a good example of what sub-Saharan African nations can learn from, as many are looking to incorporate more competency, values, and citizenship into basic education. Abudu et al. (2024) offer a regional example of integrating GCE in Ghana; Cheruiyot (2024). Muchira et al. (2023) illustrate how implementation conditions affect the competency-based reform in Kenya. Phillips et al. (2024) illustrate how resources mediate classroom enactment of GCE. The takeaway from the lesson is not that other countries should follow Kenya's curriculum, but that aspirations about citizenship must be coordinated and integrated with pedagogy, resources, teacher preparation, and evaluation. A curriculum may reference citizenship, but without repeated opportunities to ask questions, reflect on issues, engage in deliberation, collaborate with others, and act, learners will not be able to demonstrate citizenship competencies.

Assessment requires equal caution. Sälzer and Roczen (2018) noted the difficulty of capturing a complex construct through standardised measures, while Engel et al. (2019) questioned whether international frameworks adequately represent diverse social and political contexts. These concerns are especially relevant in Sub-Saharan Africa, where competence should not be reduced to decontextualised knowledge of international issues. An aligned Kenyan approach should combine common performance criteria with locally grounded evidence, dialogue, ethical reasoning, and community action.

1.1 Statement of the Problem

In Kenya, the curriculum changes accentuate competencies and values, but the relationship between CBC and GCE is not clearly articulated. Research has shown that challenges to implementation involve teacher readiness, resource inadequacy, pedagogy, and assessment uncertainty (Cheruiyot, 2024; Muchira et al., 2023). Meanwhile, the research on GCE underscores the importance of critical citizenship, classroom resources, and formal-school integration (Phillips et al., 2024; Santamaria-Cardaba et al., 2024). The challenge thus lies in converting curriculum reform into a pedagogically feasible, culturally relevant, and quantifiable GCE approach.

The evidence problem is also significant. Many curriculum discussions are based primarily on the policy documents or broad advocacy statements. This manuscript improves academic traceability based on modern-day scholarly literature as evidence for conceptual analysis. This criterion restricts the quantity of sources, but creates an auditable and clear basis for the argument.

1.2 Research Objectives

- i. To explore the conceptual connections of competency-based curriculum reform, values education, and Global Citizenship Education in Kenya.
- ii. For the purpose of synthesis of contemporary scholarly evidence pertaining to opportunities and constraints for the implementation of Global Citizenship Education in Kenyan and similar Sub-Saharan African contexts.
- iii. To suggest a Curriculum-Alignment Model for enhancing basic education Global Citizenship Education in Sub-Saharan Africa.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Theoretical Review

2.1.1 Critical Global Citizenship Education Theory

The theoretical framework for this study is Critical Global Citizenship Education Theory, which distinguishes between critical engagement with global inequalities and superficial awareness of global issues (Andreotti, 2006; Gonzalez-Valencia et al., 2022). According to Santamaria-Cardaba et al. (2024), formal education and resource development are still major issues in GCE research. The theory sees global citizenship as not just an awareness of issues to which the globe is a party, but one that evokes in learners the need to question something when it seems unfair, the urge to look at evidence to weigh facts and perspectives, and the desire to take action to make their local neighborhood and the world a better place. This article is timely because curriculum change means not just teaching about the global in traditional subject areas, but establishing learning experiences that foster critical judgement, ethical thinking, interdependence, and citizenship.

This theoretical stance is consistent with the findings of Gonzalez-Valencia et al. (2022) because they found that engagement with social realities is necessary, and not a simple recall of factuality. Continued needs for GCE research and formal education also emerge, as pointed out by Santamaria-Cardaba et al. (2024), indicating the need for GCE to be made operation in schools. The theory is used to inform the analysis, and attempts are made to match CBC reform, values, resources, pedagogy and assessment with competencies that learners demonstrate in citizenship.

2.2 Empirical Review

2.2.1 CBC Reform, Values Education, and GCE in Kenya

Kenya's CBC offers an exciting structural foundation for GCE, with its focus on competencies, endogenously generated learner activity, and knowledge use. Muchira et al (2023) demonstrate that when conditions are coherent, competency-based reforms can contribute to problem-solving, lifelong learning, self-efficacy, and autonomy. These outcomes have strong links to GCE in terms of developing global citizens who are required to reason, work collaboratively, and act responsibly. At the same time, the above evidence revealed the potential for implementation gaps to erode curriculum intentions.

Values education is a second entry point. Ngwacho (2024) correlates value-based education with inclusive education and improved global citizenship, and Ruto et al. (2023) demonstrated that content organisation of social studies can create values, knowledge, and skills for cohesion and integration in Kenya. This evidence suggests that GCE should be carried through local citizenship values, social cohesion, diversity, peace, responsibility, and sustainability. In this way, GCE does not stand separate from national identity, but extends it to a sense of greater responsibility for what they own.

The Kenyan reform context reinforces both the possibility and the risk. Akala (2021) described CBC as an effort to shift from content accumulation to demonstrated competence, but also highlighted implementation tensions associated with capacity, resources, and public understanding. Read alongside Goren and Yemini (2017) and Pashby et al. (2020), this indicates that naming competencies is only an initial step; curriculum documents must define the kind of citizenship being advanced and the progression by which learners move from knowledge to judgement and participation. CBC can therefore carry GCE only when its values and competencies are translated into subject-level tasks and school practices.

2.2.2 Opportunities and Constraints for GCE Implementation

Literature identifies opportunities and constraints. Opportunities include the competency orientation of CBC, existing values education, social studies content, and the growing focus on learner autonomy. Some of the limitations

include teacher readiness, resource availability, aligned assessment, and that GCE can be a wide, general goal without tools in the classroom. Cheruiyot (2024) and Muchira et al. (2023) reveal that the enactment of CBC is influenced by the practical conditions in schools. In the context of GCE, teachers must therefore have access to materials and facilitator's tools and guidelines for debate, enquiry, community project, and reflection learning.

This is supported by regional and international scholarship. Abudu et al. (2024) demonstrate how GCE can be utilised as Ghana's common core curriculum to enable 21st-century learners. Phillips et al. (2024) demonstrate that curriculum resources mediate the classroom possibilities for GCE, while Santamaria-Cardaba et al. (2024) show that formal education remains an important area for GCE research and resource development. Such studies suggest that if curriculum ambition is to be achieved, there must be curriculum resources and practices that teachers can access.

Teacher-education literature clarifies what such translation demands. Yemini et al. (2019) found uneven conceptual clarity and limited pedagogical depth in teacher preparation for GCE, whereas Kerkhoff and Cloud (2020) showed the value of integrating global competence into authentic planning and teaching practice. Lourenço (2021) also demonstrated that reflective engagement can reshape pre-service teachers' professional knowledge and identities. For Kenyan schools, professional development should therefore include lesson modelling, facilitated controversy, source evaluation, locally relevant case design, safeguarding of respectful dialogue, and moderation of performance evidence.

2.2.3 Curriculum Alignment for Strengthening GCE

Literature suggests that strengthening GCE primarily rests on the condition of alignment. Cheruiyot (2024) and Muchira et al. (2023) explain the importance of implementation capacity in CBC in Kenya, Phillips et al. (2024) explain the importance of curriculum resources in the enactment of GCE, while Santamaria-Cardaba et al. (2024) discuss the ongoing importance of strengthening formal school GCE. Alignment is when competencies, values, pedagogy, resources, and assessment contribute to each other. For instance, if a curriculum requires students to show an appreciation for diversity, lessons should include a structured space for dialogue and taking the point of view of others, resources should include the presentation of diversity, and an assessment should be based on listening, reasoning, and action in collaboration with others. If the curriculum does expect students to learn about sustainability, it should relate local environmental matters to matters in the rest of the world, and evaluate evidence use and responsible action.

A model of curriculum alignment is particularly applicable in Sub-Saharan Africa, where GCE must be contextually understood. Abudu et al. (2024) outline a regional approach to embedding GCE within an African curriculum, Gonzalez-Valencia et al. (2022) highlight critical engagement with social realities, Ngwacho (2024) associates values in education with global citizenship, and Phillips et al. (2024) use didactically accessible curriculum materials as an example. Select using local examples such as migration, climate change, public health, community conflict resolution, food security, and digital media to teach global interdependence, while not only using external examples. This approach strengthens relevance while maintaining academic rigour through source checking, comparison, explanation, and reflection.

The assessment literature also cautions against a single score. Sälzer and Roczen (2018) explained that global competence combines knowledge, attitudes, and dispositions that are difficult to measure consistently, and Engel et al. (2019) warned that large-scale frameworks can universalise culturally specific assumptions. The proposed alignment model should consequently use multiple artefacts, such as structured dialogue, inquiry notes, reflective writing, collaborative products, and community-action records. This approach protects comparability through shared rubrics while allowing Kenyan and African contexts to determine the substance of the problems learners investigate.

III. METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Design

The study adopted conceptual analysis. This design was fit since the focus of the article was on the relationships among curriculum reform, values education, GCE, resources, pedagogy, and assessment without being a test of a statistical hypothesis. The use of conceptual analysis helped the article to structure the recent literature into a pragmatic model for enhancing GCE in Kenya and Sub-Saharan Africa.

3.2 Data Sources and Search Procedure

No primary data were gathered. Because the study did not recruit human participants, selection referred to the article documents rather than individuals. The final evidence corpus comprised eight eligible journal articles retained after database searching, duplicate removal, title-and-abstract screening, and full-text eligibility assessment. A purposively defined text set was identified for the secondary evidence base, consisting of contemporary scholarly literature directly related to GCE, competency-based curriculum, values education, social studies, curriculum resources, and curriculum implementation. Foundational literature was included only to underpin interpretation and was not a part of the retrieved set of evidence. The search of literature was carried out using Scopus, Web of Science, ERIC

(Information, Not Found, and New Generation Platform), Google Scholar, ScienceDirect, SpringerLink, Taylor & Francis Online, Wiley Online Library, and DOAJ. The search terms used were "global citizenship education", "competency-based curriculum", "Kenya", "Sub-Saharan Africa", "curriculum reform", "values education", "social studies", "citizenship education", and combinations of these using Boolean operators.

Articles were included if they were accessible, peer-reviewed journal articles, current within the study's delimited search period, and directly relevant to GCE, competency-based curriculum, values education, social studies, curriculum resources, citizenship education, or curriculum implementation. Each retained article was treated as a unit of analysis, and relevant information was extracted on study focus, curriculum issue, evidence contribution, implementation implication, and alignment with the three study objectives. Records were excluded if they were duplicates, non-peer-reviewed publications, government reports, policy briefs, books, theses, newspapers, inaccessible full texts, outside the delimited search period, or unrelated to the study objectives. Figure 2 presents the systematic source-identification flow chart.

The eight retained articles formed the coded evidence corpus presented in Figure 1 and Appendix A. A wider set of peer-reviewed studies was used as a comparative literature base to interpret the coded themes, test the consistency of the emerging argument, and situate the Kenyan analysis within wider GCE, teacher-education, and assessment scholarship. These additional studies were not counted as separately coded documents in the source-identification flow chart.

Systematic Source-Identification Flow Chart

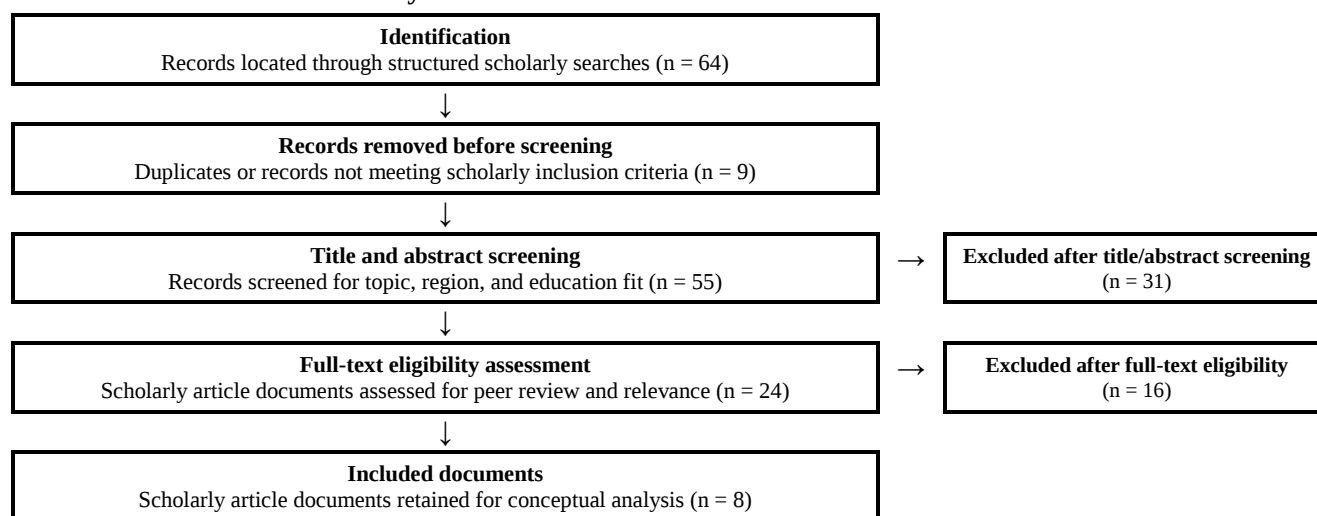


Figure 1
Systematic source identification flow charts

3.3 Data Collection and Analysis Process

The systematic source-identification process located 64 records. Nine records were eliminated due to being duplicate records or failing to meet the inclusion criteria for scholarly records. Fifty-five records were shortlisted on the basis of topic, relevance to country/region, and education fit through title and abstract analysis. Twenty-four articles were selected for detailed eligibility assessment after screening 31 records. Sixteen articles were not eligible for inclusion, resulting in eight peer-reviewed journal articles used for the conceptual analysis.

Data analysis occurred in three phases. Conceptual coding was done as the first step to identify the references related to citizenship, competencies, values, pedagogy, assessment, resources, and implementation. Secondly, a document analysis approach was used to understand how curriculum reform and learner outcomes were described in each source. Third, findings were arranged around the three study aims and discussed for an interpretation in terms of a curriculum-alignment model. The data analysis is outlined in Appendix A.

3.4 Ethical Considerations and Conflict of Interest

No human subject or institutional repository information was involved in the study, and only scholarly published literature was used. No conflict of interest is declared by the author that concerns this manuscript.

IV. FINDINGS & DISCUSSION

4.1 Findings

4.1.1 Conceptual Links among CBC Reform, Values Education, and GCE

The first goal was to analyse the conceptual relationship between CBC reform, values education, and GCE in Kenya. The synthesis reveals that CBC is a very good structure foundation since it highlights what learners can do with knowledge. GCE is similarly needed and will have the same characteristics: competent evidence-based judgment, ethical thinking, co-operation, and prudent action. Muchira et al. (2023) corroborate this connection by demonstrating that a coherent implementation of competency reforms can lead to higher levels of problem solving, lifelong learning, self-efficacy, and autonomy.

Education has values that serve as an ethical orientation to citizenship competence. Ngwacho (2024) links values education to character development, teamwork, inclusion, and global citizenship, while Ruto et al. (2023) show that social studies content can foster cohesion and integration in Kenya. These findings indicate that the import of GCE as a standalone subject should not be done, and at the same time, they highlight that it should be integrated into values education, social studies, languages, science, religious education, and creative learning. Local belongingness and global responsibility can be contrasted: they should be used as complementary.

The broader GCE literature supports the connection but also qualifies it. Oxley and Morris (2013) and Pashby et al. (2020) showed that global citizenship can be framed through markedly different ideological and moral orientations, so a competency label does not automatically guarantee critical or equitable learning. The Kenyan alignment should therefore specify that evidence-based judgement includes examining power, inequality, and competing interests, not merely demonstrating polite cooperation. This interpretation is consistent with Jooste and Heleta's (2017) argument that globally competent graduates in the Global South must remain critically rooted in local histories and unequal global relations.

4.1.2 Opportunities and Constraints for GCE Implementation

The second aim was to compile evidence with regard to opportunities and constraints of GCE implementation. The opportunity is that the language of competencies, values, learner agency, and local problem solving are already part of the curriculum reform of Kenya. These create a foothold to provide contexts for learning about peace, diversity, climate responsibility, digital citizenship, migration, public health, and sustainable development with local-global stories.

The delimiters are teacher preparedness, adequate resources, clear assessments, and classroom implementation. Cheruiyot (2024) highlights the preparedness of teachers and resource limitations in the implementation of CBC in junior schools. Muchira et al. (2023) reveal the impact of implementation gaps on training, resources, and assessment. These findings are important because GCE cannot be achieved through curriculum statements alone. Teachers must have practical strategies for facilitating respectful disagreement, evidence checking, taking others' perspectives, community inquiry, and reflection.

The role of curriculum resources is also mentioned in the reviewed GCE literature. Phillips et al. (2024) illustrate the impact of resources on teacher possibilities and Santamaria-Cardaba et al. (2024) list resource development as an ongoing priority within GCE. Abudu et al. (2024) also prove that GCE can be adopted into a competency-based curriculum in Ghana. This research indicated that the schools of Sub-Saharan Africa should adopt Africanized cases and evidence and still remain relevant to their schools with respect to issues at the global level.

Comparative literature identifies teacher preparation as the hinge between curriculum ambition and classroom enactment. Reviews by Yemini et al. (2019) and Estellés and Fischman (2021) found persistent conceptual and pedagogical gaps in teacher education, while practice-oriented studies showed that teachers benefit from repeated opportunities to plan, teach, reflect, and revise globally focused lessons (Kerkhoff & Cloud, 2020; Lourenço, 2021). This suggests that Kenyan professional development should be continuous and school-based rather than limited to dissemination of curriculum documents. It should also support teachers to manage controversial questions without silencing learner voice or turning discussion into unsupported opinion.

4.1.3 Curriculum-Alignment Model for Strengthening GCE

The third task was to suggest a curriculum-alignment model. The synthesis is based on a model of five components, namely, explicit competencies, ethical values, participatory pedagogy, contextual resources, and assessment of performance. Explicit competencies refer to what the learner will demonstrate, like ethical reasoning, source checking, respectful dialogue, community action, and collaboration. Ethical values provide the direction of citizenship learning. Participatory pedagogy provides a learning space for learners to experience citizenship. Learning in a meaningful and local context occurs through the support of contextual resources. Performance assessment determines whether citizenship competency is seen in the individual's behavior.

With this model, GCE is also safeguarded against two extremes. There is narrow nationalism, which sees global issues as other than Kenyan. The other is abstract globalisation, with content provided to learners that has no relation to lived experience. The suggested local-global model starts with familiar contexts before moving towards an increasing responsibility of the learner for the environment and fellow human beings. This aligns with both Gonzalez-Valencia et al. (2022), who point to the importance of critical engagement and Phillips et al. (2024), who support the notion of how resources influence the enactment of the classroom. Learner portfolios, discussions, reflective journals, group projects, community inquiry notes, and presentations based on evidence and problem-solving tasks in the local area should be included in the assessment. These products allow for making GCE visible and accessible. They also promote learning over time as citizens get better at listening, communicating, cooperating, and taking action.

The literature further supports using multiple forms of evidence rather than a single written test. Sälzer and Roczen (2018) demonstrated the complexity of assessing knowledge, perspectives, dispositions, and engagement together, and Engel et al. (2019) cautioned that internationally standardised definitions may not travel neutrally across contexts. The proposed portfolio is therefore not an additional activity but the mechanism through which progression can be seen across inquiry, dialogue, collaboration, and action. Shared rubrics can preserve reliability, while local case selection protects cultural relevance and prevents the model from reproducing an abstract, externally defined version of citizenship.

V. CONCLUSION & RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Conclusion

Kenya's curriculum reforms provide a promising basis for strengthening Global Citizenship Education in Sub-Saharan Africa. The most effective lesson is the lesson where GCE is planned as a way of working as a competence across the curriculum and not as a stand-alone topic. The articles reviewed reveal that curriculum restructuring is good but will not be effective without aligning with four dimensions: teacher development, resources, pedagogy, and assessment with citizenship outcomes. GCE is most practically applied through tasks that involve evidence-based practices, moral deliberation, respectful discussion, cooperation, reflection, and responsible action at both the local and global levels.

5.2 Recommendations

Curriculum developers are reminded that learners need to develop the concept of citizenship multiple times and progressively, which can be achieved if each component area of the curriculum has specific competencies clustered around the concept of citizenship. Teacher professional development should equip teachers with the means to engage students in inquiry, discussion, debate, community projects, checking digital sources, and assessing civic competencies. Assessment should be more than simple written recall, and should include evidence-based presentations, reflective journals, local problem-solving tasks, groups, and projects. In all aspects of the curriculum, learners should be able to identify, through the use of Kenyan and African examples, a sense of personal identity and global responsibility, and a sense of global interdependence, more broadly. Schools should experiment with the idea of keeping citizens' portfolios to record inquiry, collaboration, reflection, respectful communication, and community action over time. Future classroom studies should engage teachers as co-developers of the GCE tasks to help the model remain realistic, culturally responsive, and assessable in different classroom contexts.

Declaration of Interest

The authors declare that they do not have any known competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this paper.

Funding Declaration

This research did not receive any specific grant from funding agencies in the public, commercial, or not-for-profit sectors.

REFERENCES

- Abudu, A. M., Bariham, I., & Quansah, J. Y. D. (2024). Integrating global citizenship education into Ghana's common core programme: Pathways to empowering 21st century learners. *African Journal of Empirical Research*, 5(4), 1997–2013. <https://doi.org/10.51867/ajernet.5.4.167>
- Akala, B. M. (2021). Revisiting education reform in Kenya: A case of competency-based curriculum (CBC). *Social Sciences & Humanities Open*, 3(1), Article 100107. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ssaho.2021.100107>



- Andreotti, V. (2006). Soft versus critical global citizenship education. *Policy & Practice: A Development Education Review*, 3, 40–51.
- Cheruiyot, B. (2024). Challenges faced in the implementation of competency-based curriculum (CBC) in junior schools in Kenya. *East African Journal of Education Studies*, 7(3), 260–266. <https://doi.org/10.37284/eajes.7.3.2098>
- Engel, L. C., Rutkowski, D., & Thompson, G. (2019). Toward an international measure of global competence? A critical look at the PISA 2018 framework. *Globalisation, Societies and Education*, 17(2), 117–131. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14767724.2019.1642183>
- Estellés, M., & Fischman, G. E. (2021). Who needs global citizenship education? A review of the literature on teacher education. *Journal of Teacher Education*, 72(2), 223–236. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0022487120920254>
- Gonzalez-Valencia, G., Massip Sabater, M., & Santisteban Fernandez, A. (2022). Critical global citizenship education: A study on secondary school students. *Frontiers in Education*, 7, Article 867113. <https://doi.org/10.3389/feduc.2022.867113>
- Goren, H., & Yemini, M. (2017). Global citizenship education redefined: A systematic review of empirical studies on global citizenship education. *International Journal of Educational Research*, 82, 170–183. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijer.2017.02.004>
- Jooste, N., & Heleta, S. (2017). Global citizenship versus globally competent graduates: A critical view from the South. *Journal of Studies in International Education*, 21(1), 39–51. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1028315316637341>
- Kerkhoff, S. N., & Cloud, M. E. (2020). Equipping teachers with globally competent practices: A mixed methods study on integrating global competence and teacher education. *International Journal of Educational Research*, 103, Article 101629. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijer.2020.101629>
- Lourenço, M. (2021). From caterpillars to butterflies: Exploring pre-service teachers' transformations while navigating global citizenship education. *Frontiers in Education*, 6, Article 651250. <https://doi.org/10.3389/feduc.2021.651250>
- Muchira, J. M., Morris, R. J., Wawire, B. A., & Oh, C. (2023). Implementing competency-based curriculum (CBC) in Kenya: Challenges and lessons from South Korea and USA. *Journal of Education and Learning*, 12(3), 62–77. <https://doi.org/10.5539/jel.v12n3p62>
- Ngwacho, G. A. (2024). Value-based education incorporation in competency-based curriculum: Recipe for all-inclusive education for enhanced global citizenship. *Journal of the Kenya National Commission for UNESCO*, 4(1), 45–58. <https://doi.org/10.62049/jkncu.v4i1.56>
- Oxley, L., & Morris, P. (2013). Global citizenship: A typology for distinguishing its multiple conceptions. *British Journal of Educational Studies*, 61(3), 301–325. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00071005.2013.798393>
- Pashby, K., da Costa, M., Stein, S., & Andreotti, V. (2020). A meta-review of typologies of global citizenship education. *Comparative Education*, 56(2), 144–164. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03050068.2020.1723352>
- Phillips, L. G., de Rivera, L., & Harris, P. (2024). Platforms and possibilities: A scoping study of curriculum resources for global citizenship education. *The Australian Educational Researcher*, 51, 1503–1523. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s13384-023-00651-7>
- Ruto, Z. J., Shiundu, J. O., & Simiyu, A. M. (2023). The significance of primary social studies content organisation in fostering knowledge, skills, and values for cohesion and integration in Kenya. *African Journal of Empirical Research*, 4(2), 909–915. <https://doi.org/10.51867/ajernet.4.2.92>
- Sälzer, C., & Roczen, N. (2018). Assessing global competence in PISA 2018: Challenges and approaches to capturing a complex construct. *International Journal of Development Education and Global Learning*, 10(1), 5–20. <https://doi.org/10.18546/IJDEGL.10.1.02>
- Santamaria-Cardaba, N., Gajardo-Espinoza, K., & Caceres-Iglesias, J. (2024). Global citizenship education: A systematic review of educational research. *Educational Process: International Journal*, 13(4), 115–131. <https://doi.org/10.22521/edupij.2024.134.7>
- Yemini, M., Tibbitts, F., & Goren, H. (2019). Trends and caveats: Review of literature on global citizenship education in teacher training. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 77, 77–89. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2018.09.014>

Appendix A: Data Analysis

Table 1A

Source Extraction and Analytical Coding Matrix

Data source and evidence focus	Extracted analytical evidence	Analytical code/theme	Interpretation for Kenya and Sub-Saharan Africa	Objective(s) addressed
Muchira, Morris, Wawire & Oh (2023) CBC implementation and comparator lessons	Competency reforms can support problem solving, lifelong learning, autonomy, and self-efficacy when implementation conditions are coherent.	Competency alignment; learner agency; implementation coherence	GCE should be expressed as observable competencies, including evidence-based judgement, perspective-taking, collaboration, and civic problem solving.	Obj. 1; Obj. 2; Obj. 3
Cheruiyot (2024) Junior-school CBC implementation challenges	Teacher readiness, resource sufficiency, and school-level implementation capacity shape CBC enactment.	Teacher preparation; resource capacity; implementation gap	GCE cannot be strengthened by curriculum statements alone; teachers require methods, materials, and assessment tools for citizenship learning.	Obj. 2; Obj. 3
Ngwacho (2024) Values education and inclusive global citizenship	Value-based education supports character development, teamwork, unity, inclusion, and citizenship dispositions.	Values education; ethical citizenship; cohesion	GCE should grow from locally recognisable values such as responsibility, respect, unity, fairness, and social cohesion before extending to wider global responsibility.	Obj. 1; Obj. 3
Ruto, Shiundu & Simiyu (2023) Social studies, cohesion, and integration in Kenya	Social studies content can foster knowledge, skills, and values that support cohesion and integration.	Social studies integration; national cohesion; citizenship knowledge	Social studies can serve as a curriculum carrier for GCE by linking identity, diversity, peace, rights, responsibility, and shared futures.	Obj. 1; Obj. 2; Obj. 3
Abudu, Bariham & Quansah (2024) GCE in Ghana's common core curriculum	Regional evidence shows pathways for embedding GCE in competency-oriented curriculum reform.	Regional curriculum pathway; 21st-century learning; cross-curricular integration	Sub-Saharan African systems can strengthen GCE by embedding it within existing competency reforms rather than treating it as an imported or stand-alone topic.	Obj. 2; Obj. 3
Gonzalez-Valencia, Massip Sabater & Santisteban Fernandez (2022) Critical GCE	Critical GCE requires learners to examine social realities and injustices rather than merely recalling global facts.	Critical inquiry; ethical dialogue; social analysis	Kenyan classrooms should adapt criticality through age-appropriate debates, case analysis, source checking, reflective writing, and respectful disagreement.	Obj. 1; Obj. 2; Obj. 3
Phillips, de Rivera & Harris (2024) Curriculum resources for GCE	Curriculum resources mediate the opportunities teachers have to enact GCE in classrooms.	Resource mediation; pedagogical materials; classroom enactment	Teacher guides, textbooks, local case materials, and school-based resources should contain African examples of interdependence, rights, climate responsibility, migration, peace, health, and digital citizenship.	Obj. 2; Obj. 3
Santamaria-Cardaba, Gajardo-Espinoza & Caceres-Iglesias (2024) Systematic review of GCE research	Formal education contexts continue to show research and implementation gaps in GCE.	Formal-school integration; research gap; implementation need	GCE needs explicit learning progressions, teacher support, curriculum resources, and performance evidence if it is to become visible in basic education.	Obj. 2; Obj. 3

Note. Obj. 1 = analyse conceptual links among CBC reform, values education, and GCE; Obj. 2 = synthesise evidence on opportunities and constraints for implementation; Obj. 3 = recommend a model for strengthening GCE within Sub-Saharan African basic education.

Table 1B*Thematic Data Analysis and Conceptual Synthesis Matrix*

Analytical theme	Supporting source pattern	Cross-source evidence pattern	Interpretive finding	Suggested indicator or output
CBC as a structural entry point for GCE	Muchira et al.; Abudu et al.; Santamaria-Cardaba et al.	Competency reform creates space for learners to demonstrate civic knowledge, ethical reasoning, collaboration, and community action.	Kenya can strengthen GCE by translating broad curriculum intentions into demonstrable competencies and classroom tasks.	Learner can analyse a local-global issue, compare evidence, work with others, and propose a responsible response.
Values, cohesion, and local-global identity	Ngwacho; Ruto et al.; Gonzalez-Valencia et al.	Values education and social studies provide familiar local entry points for diversity, rights, peace, responsibility, and shared futures.	GCE should extend local citizenship rather than replacing it; local identity and global responsibility should be treated as complementary.	Learner reflections show respect, fairness, perspective-taking, unity, and ethical judgement in relation to local and global issues.
Implementation conditions	Cheruiyot; Muchira et al.; Phillips et al.	Teacher readiness, resources, assessment clarity, and school support determine whether curriculum aspirations become classroom practice.	Weak implementation conditions reduce GCE to rhetoric even when curriculum documents mention competencies and values.	Teacher guides, rubrics, resources, professional development, and school-level GCE planning are available and used.
Critical inquiry and evidence-based dialogue	Gonzalez-Valencia et al.; Santamaria-Cardaba et al.; Phillips et al.	GCE requires disciplined inquiry into social realities, evidence, misinformation, inequality, and interdependence.	Criticality should be age-appropriate, respectful, evidence-based, and linked to problem solving rather than political sloganising.	Learners compare sources, analyse dilemmas, debate respectfully, and explain how evidence shapes their judgement.
Contextual curriculum resources	Phillips et al.; Abudu et al.; Ruto et al.	Resources mediate enactment and should connect global themes to African and Kenyan examples.	Locally meaningful resources prevent GCE from appearing foreign or abstract while preserving global scope.	Materials include Kenyan/African cases on migration, climate, peacebuilding, public health, media use, rights, and sustainability.
Performance assessment and citizenship portfolios	Muchira et al.; Cheruiyot; Ngwacho; Phillips et al.	Competency-based GCE needs observable performance evidence rather than written recall only.	Assessment should document growth in participation, inquiry, reflection, collaboration, and responsible action over time.	Learner portfolios include debates, inquiry notes, group project evidence, reflections, teacher feedback, and community-action records.

Note. This table shows how the conceptual synthesis moves from source evidence to a practical GCE strengthening model.