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Comparative Study of Common Core Curriculum Implementation in Urban and Rural Basic Schools in Ghana: Unveiling the Integration of Global Citizenship Education

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Abstract

This study examined stakeholders' perspectives on the integration of Global Citizenship Education (GCE) into the Common Core Curriculum (CCC) in urban and rural basic schools in Ghana. A quantitative research approach was adopted and data was collected from 460 participants through a structured questionnaire. The analysis employed t-tests, ANOVA and

Fisher's F-tests to interpret the findings. The t-tests revealed significant differences in collaborative learning (t (458) = 3.008, p = 0.003), competency-based assessment opportunities (t (458) = -2.461, p = 0.014), and stakeholder engagement (t (458) = -2.087, p = 0.037), all favouring urban contexts. To test for variance differences, Fisher's F-tests indicated significant disparities, such as in critical thinking and problem-solving skills (F (212, 246) = 2.215, p < 0.0001) and interpersonal skills (F (212, 246) = 0.029, p < 0.0001), reflecting urban schools' advantage due to greater resource availability and support systems. The study concludes that, although the CCC aims to standardize educational quality, rural settings face significant limitations in its effective implementation. It was recommended that adequate resources, enhanced teacher training, and context-sensitive policies should be provided to rural schools to promote equitable educational outcomes and ensure that the curriculum meets diverse educational needs across Ghana.

Keywords: Urban-rural schools; curriculum integration; common core curriculum; basic education; implementation, global citizenship education

1. Introduction

Education is broadly recognised as the foundation of national development, shaping the future pathways of a country (Ahmed and Mohammed (2022); Ahmed and Mohammed (2022)). A well-designed curriculum is central to an effective education system, shaping learning processes, knowledge acquisition, and skill development across educational levels (Moustafa et al., 2022; Spiel et al., 2018; Darling-Hammond et al., 2018). In alignment with Ghana's commitment to educational progress, the government introduced the Common Core Curriculum (CCC) as a major reform to align the system with global standards and equip students with essential 21st-century skills. (Kim et al., 2019 ; Spiel et al., 2018 ; Bosio et al., 2023 ; Bolat & Deneme-Gençoğlu, 2024). However, the implementation of the CCC has been uneven, revealing stark disparities across Ghana's varied socioeconomic and geographic regions (Buabeng, et al. 2020; Agyeman Amoako & Nyamekye Otchere, 2024; Adam-Yawson et al., 2021). These disparities raise serious concerns about educational equity and the overall quality of education in the country (Esseh et al., 2024; Mncube et al., 2023; Gore et al., 2017). The success of any educational reform, including the CCC, depends largely on its effective implementation and the support of key stakeholders such as teachers, students, parents, and school administrators (Cheng, 2020; Adu-Gyamfi et al., 2016; Alonzo et al., 2021; Rai & Beresford-Dey, 2023). In urban areas, stakeholders generally view new curriculum as a positive development that aligns with their expectations of a modern education system designed to prepare students for global competition (Alam & Mohanty, 2023; Asante et al., 2024). Conversely, stakeholders in rural areas, where resources are scarcer, may question the curriculum's relevance to their local contexts and its ability to meet their specific educational needs (Esseh et al., 2024; Mncube et al., 2023).

Integrating Global Citizenship Education (GCE) and 21st-century skills into the CCC adds an additional layer of complexity (Addae, et al., 2024; Bolat & Deneme-Gençoğlu, 2024; Estellés & Fischman, 2020; Golden, 2016). These skills are crucial for preparing students for success in a globalised environment; however, effective implementation demands that teachers receive specialised training and have access to adequate resources requirements that are often unmet in rural schools. Consequently, the effective delivery of the CCC relies not only on its curricular design but also on teachers' ability to embed these competencies into their instructional methods (Bolat & Deneme-Gençoğlu, 2024). Without sufficient support, teachers in rural areas may face difficulties in fully implementing the CCC, potentially widening the educational gap between urban and rural students (Ewulley et al., 2023; Asante et al., 2024). This uneven implementation of the CCC in urban and rural schools underscores a critical issue: rather than bridging the gap, the CCC may inadvertently widen existing educational disparities. The curriculum was designed to offer a standardized educational framework across the country, with the goal of reducing regional inequalities and providing all students with the skills necessary to thrive in a globalized economy (Adam-Yawson et al., 2021; Esseh et al., 2024; Asante et al., 2024). However, evidence suggests that its implementation has been far from uniform, with urban schools benefiting from better infrastructure, more qualified teachers, and greater access to educational materials, while

rural schools struggle with resource shortages, poorly trained teachers, and logistical barriers that impede effective curriculum delivery (Fredriksen, 2023; Li, 2022; Kerkhoff & Cloud, 2020). The challenge of integrating GCE and 21st-century skills into the CCC is particularly pronounced in rural schools, where the lack of resources and teacher training is most acute (De Vries, 2023; Kim et al., 2019; Golden, 2016; Spiel et al., 2018). As a result, the intended benefits of the CCC, particularly in fostering global citizenship and preparing students for the demands of the 21st century, may not be fully realised in rural areas, potentially deepening the educational divide between urban and rural students (Opoku-Asare & Siaw, 2015; Olugbenga & Olaniyan, 2022).

Compounding this issue is the limited empirical research examining the differential implementation of the CCC in urban and rural contexts within Ghana. While existing studies have identified general challenges related to educational reforms, such as teacher preparedness, resource allocation, and curriculum content (Aboagye & Yawson, 2020; Adu-Gyamfi et al., 2016; Esseh et al., 2024; Ntumi et al., 2023; Opoku-Asare & Siaw, 2015), few studies have directly compared the experiences of urban and rural schools in implementing the CCC. This gap in research makes it difficult to fully understand the specific challenges faced by rural schools and the unique needs of teachers and students in those environments. Furthermore, there is little exploration of how stakeholders' perceptions particularly those of parents, teachers, and community members in rural areas shape the success or failure of curriculum reforms.

Addressing these issues is critical for several reasons. First, understanding the differential implementation of the CCC in urban and rural settings is essential for ensuring equitable access to high-quality education across the country (Opoku-Asare & Siaw, 2015). Second, identifying the specific barriers to integrating GCE and 21st-century skills in rural schools is vital for refining the curriculum and designing targeted interventions that support teachers and students in those contexts (Spiel et al., 2018; Drake et al., 2020; Kim et al., 2019; Estellés & Fischman, 2020; De Vries, 2023). Finally, exploring stakeholders' expectations and perceptions can offer valuable insights into the curriculum's relevance in different contexts, thereby informing future policy decisions and curriculum reforms (Haile & Mekonnen, 2024; Aboagye & Yawson, 2020). By addressing these gaps, this study aims to contribute to a more nuanced understanding of the factors influencing the implementation of the CCC, providing critical insights that can guide future policy decisions and educational reforms. Ultimately, such an understanding is essential to ensuring equitable educational outcomes for all students in Ghana, regardless of their geographic location. The purpose of the study was to investigate and understand the differential implementation of the Common Core Curriculum (CCC) across urban and rural settings in Ghana. This study was guided by the following hypotheses:

Ho_1: There is no statistically significant difference in terms of perception of the implementation of the integration of GCE into CCC between urban and rural settings.

Ho_2: There is no statistically significant difference in terms of benefits in the integration of GCE into CCC between urban and rural settings.

Ho_3: There is no statistically significant difference in terms of challenges in the implementation of the integration of GCE into CCC between urban and rural settings.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Integration of GCE into the CCC

The integration of GCE into Ghana's CCC is a transformative initiative designed to align education with the demands of an increasingly interconnected and complex world (Addae et al., 2024; Estellés & Fischman, 2020; Golden, 2016). GCE seeks to equip students with the knowledge, skills, and values necessary to thrive in such an environment by fostering critical awareness of global issues, respect for cultural diversity, and a sense of shared responsibility for addressing global challenges (Ahmed & Mohammed, 2022; Drake & Reid, 2020). According to Addae et al (2024) and Estellés and Fischman (2020), GCE inclusion in the CCC positions Ghana's education system to align with global trends while cultivating globally competent citizens who remain deeply connected to their local contexts. This dual focus ensures that students can navigate and contribute meaningfully to both local and international spheres.

The CCC emphasizes critical thinking, problem-solving, and 21st-century skills, providing a robust framework for embedding GCE themes such as human rights, sustainable development, and global justice (Drake &Reid, 2020; Kim et al., 2019). These themes empower students to critically analyse and address pressing global challenges, including climate change, social inequality, and poverty, fostering their potential as proactive agents of change within their communities and beyond (De Vries, 2023; Aboagye & Yawson, 2020). By highlighting the interconnectedness of global and local issues, GCE nurtures a generation of learners who understand the impact of their actions on the world and how global phenomena influence their lives.

The integration of GCE into the CCC is guided by several key principles, including fostering global awareness, promoting cultural diversity and empathy, and developing 21st-century competencies such as digital literacy, ethical decision-making, and collaborative problem-solving (Waghid, 2024; Bosio et al., 2023; Wang, 2023; Franch, 2020). These principles not only prepare students for success in the workforce but also cultivate values essential for peaceful coexistence and global collaboration (Bolat & Deneme-Gençoğlu, 2024; Estellés & Fischman, 2020). Researchers (Waghid, 2024; Wang ,2023; Ahmed & Mohammed, 2022) argue that incorporating GCE into the CCC presents significant opportunities that enhance students' outcomes, as the curriculum fosters critical thinking, adaptability, and ethical leadership, attributes highly valued in the global economy. Additionally, GCE promotes social cohesion by teaching students the importance of cultural diversity, global responsibility, and collaboration in addressing shared challenges (Waghid, 2024; Wang, 2023; Bosio et al., 2023). Furthermore, aligning the CCC with global standards enhances Ghana's educational competitiveness internationally, equipping students with the skills needed to seize opportunities in a globalized job market (Gore, 2017; Fredriksen, 2023; Addae et al., 2024).

2.2 Perceptions of stakeholders towards the integration of GCE into CCC

Stakeholder perceptions are a decisive factor in determining the success or failure of integrating Global Citizenship Education (GCE) into Ghana's Common Core Curriculum (CCC). These perceptions shaped by the experiences, expectations, and priorities of teachers, parents, students, and administrators significantly influence stakeholder engagement and collaboration during the implementation process (Haile & Mekonnen, 2024; Aboagye & Yawson, 2020). Positive perceptions among stakeholders often result in enhanced support for the curriculum, encouraging active participation and fostering its success. Conversely, negative perceptions can lead to resistance, disengagement, and even opposition, which undermine the curriculum's effectiveness and broader acceptance (Estellés & Fischman, 2020; Hardman & Sandi, 2024).

Urban stakeholders, including parents and educators, generally hold favourable perceptions of the CCC. They appreciate its emphasis on critical thinking, problem-solving, and global competencies, which align with contemporary educational trends and the global demand for competitive graduates (Hu & Guo, 2021; Drake et al., 2020). This positive outlook is further supported by the relatively better resources, infrastructure, and professional development opportunities available in urban schools (Fredriksen, 2023). For example, urban stakeholders often recognize the CCC's potential to prepare students for the global job market and an interconnected world (Opoku-Asare & Siaw, 2015). Such alignment with global educational standards has fostered higher levels of engagement and support among urban communities.

In contrast, rural stakeholders frequently express concerns regarding the practicality and relevance of the CCC in their context. Teachers and parents in rural areas often cite challenges such as inadequate resources, insufficient teacher training, and logistical barriers, which hinder the effective implementation of the curriculum (Aboagye & Yawson, 2020; Zweeris et al., 2023; Wang et al., 2024). These limitations contribute to a perception that the CCC, including its GCE components, is disconnected from the immediate realities and priorities of rural communities. For instance, rural parents may prioritize vocational skills and economic opportunities over abstract global competencies emphasized in the CCC (Haile & Mekonnen, 2024; Le et al., 2017). Furthermore, the lack of infrastructure, such as ICT tools, electricity, and learning materials, exacerbates the challenges of delivering GCE in rural settings (Olugbenga & Olaniyan, 2022; Wang et al., 2024). A comparative analysis of these contexts can illuminate the factors shaping stakeholder perceptions and their impact on curriculum implementation (Gore, 2017; Alam & Mohanty, 2023). Moreover, actively involving stakeholders in the design and implementation processes can foster a sense of ownership, ensuring that the curriculum better aligns with their expectations and needs (Estellés & Fischman, 2020).

2.3 Benefits of Integrating GCE into CCC

The integration of Global Citizenship Education (GCE) and 21st-century skills into Ghana's Common Core Curriculum (CCC) offers numerous transformative benefits, equipping students with the knowledge, skills, and attitudes required to thrive in an interconnected and

dynamic global environment (Gore, 2017; Fredriksen, 2023; Addae et al., 2024; Ahmed & Mohammed, 2024). Bosio et al. (2023) highlight that Global Citizenship Education (GCE) promotes an understanding of global issues, fosters an appreciation of cultural diversity, and cultivates a shared sense of responsibility for addressing critical global challenges. Concurrently, the integration of 21st-century skills such as critical thinking, collaboration, problem-solving, and digital literacy equip students to navigate the demands of an increasingly competitive and dynamic global workforce (De Vries, 2023; Bolat & Deneme-Gençoğlu, 2024). Together, these components empower learners to make meaningful contributions to both their local communities and the broader international landscape.

Urban schools are particularly well-positioned to harness the benefits of GCE integration due to their access to advanced resources, smaller class sizes, and comprehensive teacher training programs. These schools often utilize technology-enhanced learning environments, allowing students to engage with global perspectives and develop critical competencies for global citizenship and workforce readiness (Gore, 2017; Mncube, 2023). For example, urban students frequently benefit from ICT tools, digital learning platforms, and interactive pedagogical approaches that align with international educational standards (Mncube et al., 2023). This exposure provides them with a deeper understanding of global issues, technological advancements, and cultural diversity, enabling them to navigate and excel in a globalized world.

Additionally, GCE fosters values such as empathy, ethical decision-making, and respect for cultural differences, which are essential for promoting peaceful coexistence and collaboration in diverse societies (Estellés & Fischman, 2020; Golden, 2016). Urban students often have greater access to multicultural environments and global networks, which enhance their ability to internalize these values and translate them into meaningful action.

2.4 Challenges in the integration of GCE into CCC

The integration of Global Citizenship Education (GCE) into Ghana's Common Core Curriculum (CCC) faces significant challenges shaped by disparities between urban and rural basic schools. Urban schools benefit from relatively better access to teaching resources, ICT infrastructure, and professional development opportunities, enabling a smoother integration of GCE concepts like digital literacy and global awareness (Fredriksen, 2023; Gore, et al. 2017; Opoku-Asare & Siaw, 2015). However, gaps remain in contextualizing global themes to local realities, as urban teachers often struggle to adapt GCE to specific community contexts (Drake & Reid, 2020). Conversely, rural schools struggle with a severe lack of resources, inadequate teacher training, and poor infrastructure, such as overcrowded classrooms and limited access to electricity or digital tools, which hinder GCE implementation (Aboagye & Yawson, 2020; Zweeris et al., 2023; Olugbenga & Olaniyan, 2022). Additionally, urban stakeholders, including parents and educational leaders, generally perceive GCE positively due to its alignment with global job market demands, while rural stakeholders often view it as less relevant to their immediate vocational and economic needs,

prioritizing practical skills like agriculture and craftsmanship (Haile & Mekonnen, 2024; Le et al., 2017). Language barriers and cultural differences further exacerbate these challenges in rural areas, where students often face difficulties relating abstract global concepts to their lived experiences (Golden, 2016; Estellés & Fischman, 2020). Logistical issues such as long travel distances, high student-teacher ratios, and inconsistent attendance complicate interactive and participatory teaching methods essential for GCE delivery (Hardman & Sandi, 2024; Alam & Mohanty, 2023). These disparities underscore the need for equitable resource allocation, context-sensitive teacher training, curriculum adaptation to local realities, and stronger stakeholder engagement to ensure that both urban and rural students benefit equitably from GCE integration and are prepared for global and local challenges.

3. Methods

3.1 Research Approach

This study employed a quantitative research design to comprehensively examine the implementation of the CCC across urban and rural settings in Ghana. The quantitative approach was selected for its ability to generate broad, generalizable findings that enhance the study's reliability and validity.

3.2 Population and Sample

The population of this study focused on key stakeholders within Ghana's educational system, including teachers, school leaders, and curriculum leads recruited from both urban and rural schools to capture a range of socioeconomic and geographical contexts. The multistage method was used in selecting the sample for the study. In the first stage, Ghana, with its 16 regions, was divided into three geographical zones based on their socio-cultural and geographical dynamics: the Coastal Belt, Middle Belt, and Northern Belt. From these zones, four regions (Accra, Ashanti, Eastern and Northern) were randomly selected. These regions were selected to reflect diverse geographical, cultural, and economic contexts within Ghana. At the second stage, four districts (2 urban and 2 rural) within each region were randomly selected, totalling 16 districts. In the next stage, 5 schools were also randomly selected from each of the districts selected. The total number schools selected were 80. After the schools were selected, teachers were randomly chosen using a simple random sampling method, ensuring that the sample was unbiased. Only teachers who had been continuously teaching in school for a minimum of six years were eligible for the study. In all, a sample size of 480 was selected using Krejcie and Morgan's (1970) sample size determination table. The sample distribution is shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Sample Distribution

Geographical Zone	Number of Regions	Number of Regions Selected	Number of District selected	Number of Schools Selected	Number of Teachers Selected
Coastal Belt	4	1	4	20	120
Middle Belt	7	2	8	40	240
Northern Belt	5	1	4	20	120
Total	**16**	**4**	**16**	**80**	**480**

Table 1 shows the number of regions, district, schools, and teachers selected from each geographical zone.

3.3 Data instrument and analysis

The survey consisted of structured questionnaire primarily featuring closed-ended questions. The items of the questionnaire measured the perception, challenges and expectation of the implementation of CCP. The questionnaire items were assessed using a five-point Likert scale, where participants may indicate their level of agreement or disagreement, ranging from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree." The scale accurately measures attitudes and perceptions (Hirose & Creswell, 2023). A numerical number ranging from 1 to 5 was assigned to each response. We conducted a pilot test involving 30 teachers for the purpose of ensuring clarity and reliability. The Cronbach's Alpha of the 42 items yielded 0.85 and this high value suggests internal consistency among the items in the questionnaire. According to Tayakol and Dennick (2011), a Cronbach's Alpha of 0.85 is considered acceptable, indicating that the items effectively measure the study's core constructs.

Quantitative data collected from the stakeholders were analysed using descriptive and inferential statistical methods. Descriptive statistics, including percentages and mean were used to summarise biodata. Inferential statistical techniques analysis included t-test, Mann Whitney U-test, and Fisher's F-test to examine potential differences in CCC implementation between urban and rural schools. This analysis allowed for an in-depth assessment of variations in stakeholders' perceptions, challenges, and expectations, providing valuable insights into the implementation of the CCC across diverse educational contexts in Ghana.

The research adhered to ethical guidelines, and consent was obtained from all participants prior to their involvement in the study. Participants received a detailed information sheet explaining the study's purpose, procedures, potential risks and benefits, and their rights as participants, including the right to withdraw from the study at any time without penalty. To protect participants' identities, pseudonyms were used in place of real names in all data records and publications.

4. Results and discussion

4.1 Demographic characteristics of respondents

In all 460 questionnaires were retrieved representing 95.8% of the respondents. The demographic characteristics of respondents are indicated in Table 2.

Table 2. Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

characteristics	Frequency	Percent
Gender		
Female	206	44.8
Male	254	55.2
Total	460	100.0
Age (years)		
20 - 30	26	5.6
31 - 40	154	33.5
41 - 50	177	38.5
51 – 60	103	22.4
Total	460	100.0
Highest academic qualification		
Diploma	74	16.1
First Degree	301	65.4
Second Degree	85	18.5
Total	460	100.0
Years Teaching Experience		
6 - 16	138	30.0
17 - 27	207	45.0
28 - 38	89	19.3
Above 38	26	5.7
Total	460	100.0

As shown in Table 2, the demographic characteristics of respondents indicate a well-qualified and experienced teaching workforce, which is critical for the successful implementation of initiatives such as the integration of GCE into the CCC. Also, a gender-balanced participation can contribute to inclusive pedagogical practices and curriculum adaptation that address the unique needs and experiences of students from all backgrounds, ensuring equitable access to the transformative potential of GCE.

4.2 Perception of Global Citizenship Education among Rural and Urban Areas

Respondents were required to indicate their perception about the integration of GCE into CCC. The results from respondents are shown in Table 3.

Table 3. Perception of Global Citizenship Education among Rural and Urban Areas

Variables	Difference	t (Observed value)	|t| (Critical value)	DF	p-value (Two-tailed)	alpha
KSC	-0.125	-1.272	1.965	458	0.204	0.05
SSGJ	-0.210	-2.418	1.965	458	**0.016**	0.05
PGSIE	0.022	0.233	1.965	458	0.816	0.05
IGCN	0.027	0.424	1.965	458	0.672	0.05
PCL	0.227	3.008	1.965	458	**0.003**	0.05
COCBA	-0.213	-2.461	1.965	458	**0.014**	0.05
LBSE	-0.234	-2.087	1.965	458	**0.037**	0.05
LTB	-0.177	-2.065	1.965	458	**0.040**	0.05

KSC=21st-century Skills; SSGJ= Support for Students to get Lifelong Goals and Jobs; PGSIE= Promote Gender and Social Inclusive Education; IGCN= ; PCL= promoting collaborative learning; COCBA= Creating Opportunity for Competency-Based Assessment LBSE= Lack Broader Stakeholder Engagement; LTB= Lack of Textbooks

The statistical evidence from Table 3 revealed no significant difference in perceptions between rural and urban areas regarding Global Citizenship Education equipping learners with 21st-century skills, (t (458) = -1.27, p = 0.204). This suggests that both groups perceive Global Citizenship Education as key to providing learners with the required skills and knowledge to be relevant in any community. A similar observation was also made concerning the ability of Global Citizenship Education to promote gender and social inclusive education ((t (458) = 0.233, p = 0.816). However, significant differences were observed concerning support for students to get lifelong goals and jobs ((t(458) = -2.218, p = 0.016), promoting collaborative learning ((t(458) = 3.008, p = 0.003), creating opportunity for Competency-Based Assessment ((t(458) = -2.461, p = 0.014), lack broader stakeholder engagement ((t(458) = -2.087, p = 0.037), and lack of textbooks ((t(458) = -2.065, p = 0.040). These differences likely reflect the disparities in resource availability and educational infrastructure between rural and urban areas. For instance, rural areas might experience more

significant challenges in stakeholder engagement (LBSE) and access to textbooks (LTB), which could explain the negative perceptions in these areas compared to urban regions.

4.3 Benefits of Integrating Global Citizenship Education into Ghana's School Curriculum

The researchers aimed to examine whether significant differences exist in the perceived benefits of integrating GCE into CC between rural and urban areas. A Fisher's F-test (Two-tailed test) was conducted to compare the variance between these two groups across several variables related to GCE. Tables 4 and 5 present the descriptive statistics and results of the two-sample comparison.

Table 4. Descriptive Statistics -Benefits of Global Citizenship Education

Variable	Obs.	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. deviation
ELKGC | Location-Rural	213	1.000	5.000	4.146	0.748
ELKGC | Location-Urban	247	1.000	5.000	4.320	0.811
TLFSI | Location-Rural	213	1.000	5.000	3.657	0.885
TLFSI | Location-Urban	247	1.000	5.000	3.862	0.944
ELKAVRD | Location-Rural	213	3.000	5.000	4.023	0.723
ELKAVRD | Location-Urban	247	2.000	5.000	4.069	0.806
ELCTPSS | Location-Rural	213	1.000	5.000	4.178	1.017
ELCTPSS | Location-Urban	247	2.000	5.000	4.271	0.683
EECER | Location-Rural	213	2.000	5.000	3.972	0.700
EECER | Location-Urban	247	2.000	5.000	4.101	0.700
PISEI | Location-Rural	213	1.000	5.000	4.061	0.784
PISEI | Location-Urban	247	1.000	55.000	4.514	4.640
EECGE | Location-Rural	213	1.000	5.000	3.709	1.153
EECGE | Location-Urban	247	1.000	5.000	3.960	0.940
PUDPRRL | Location-Rural	213	1.000	5.000	4.009	0.818
PUDPRRL | Location-Urban	247	1.000	5.000	4.142	0.874

Table 4 shows that urban respondents generally report higher mean values than rural respondents. This suggests that urban schools may be better equipped to implement GCE effectively due to their greater access to resources such as textbooks, technology, and training programs. Despite the differences in means, rural and urban respondents agree on the overall benefits of GCE, especially in fostering respect for diversity, promoting ethical reasoning, and supporting democratic education. This indicates a widespread recognition of the importance of GCE across Ghana.

A Fisher's F-test was further performed to determine whether significant differences exist. The results are displayed in Table 3 below.

Table 5. Fisher's F-test -Rural-Urban Comparison on

Variables	Ratio	F (Observed value)	F (Critical value)	DF1	DF2	p-value (Two-tailed)	alpha
ELKGC	0.850	0.850	1.296	212	246	0.223	0.05
TLFSI	0.878	0.878	1.296	212	246	0.330	0.05
ELKAVRD	0.805	0.805	1.296	212	246	0.104	0.05
ELCTPSS	2.215	2.215	1.296	212	246	**<0.0001**	0.05
EECER	1.000	1.000	1.296	212	246	0.997	0.05
PISEI	0.029	0.029	1.296	212	246	**<0.0001**	0.05
EECGE	1.504	1.504	1.296	212	246	**0.002**	0.05
PUDPRRL	0.876	0.876	1.296	212	246	0.322	0.05

From Table 5, no significant variance was found between rural and urban in equipping learners with knowledge about their existence as global citizens (ELKGC) ($F(212, 246) = 0.850$, $p = 0.223$). The same was observed for social justice training ($F(212, 246) = 0.878$, $p = 0.330$), enhancing empathy and ethical reasoning, ($F(212, 246) = 1.000$, $p = 0.997$) and equipping students with knowledge, attitudes, and values to respect diversity ($F(212, 246) = 0.805$, $p = 0.104$). This consistency suggests that, despite the different contexts of rural and urban environments, there are shared views on how GCE equips students with global citizenship knowledge, trains them in social justice, fosters respect for diversity, and promotes democratic values. These findings could indicate that implementing these components of GCE is fairly uniform across different regions.

However, a significant difference in variance was found in equipping learners with critical thinking and problem-solving skills (ELCTPSS) between rural and urban respondents, $F(212, 246) = 2.215$, $p < 0.0001$, promoting interpersonal skills and emotional intelligence (PISEI) between rural and urban respondents, $F(212, 246) = 0.029$, $p < 0.0001$ and enhancing employability and competitiveness, (**$F(212, 246) = 1.504$, $p = 0.002$).** Urban respondents likely perceive GCE as more effective in these areas due to greater access to modern educational resources, technology, and student interaction opportunities in diverse environments. Urban areas may offer more opportunities for critical thinking, emotional intelligence development, and preparation for a globalized economy, explaining the higher variance.

4.4 Challenges of incorporating Global Citizenship into the New Curriculum

The integration of Global Citizenship Education in common curriculum programme is important but it is not there without challenges. In view of this, the study aimed to identify the challenges faced by both rural and urban areas in incorporating Global Citizenship Education (GCE) into the new curriculum. To analyse these challenges, a Mann-Whitney U test was performed and Table 6 presents the results.

Table 6. Challenges of incorporating Global Citizenship into the New Curriculum

Variables	U	U (standardized)	Expected value	Variance (U)	p-value (Two-tailed)	alpha
CLWL	23458	-2.083	26305.500	1868073.608	**0.037**	0.05
IATER	26334	0.022	26305.500	1678547.302	0.983	0.05
LTB	27499	1.050	26305.500	1290891.020	0.294	0.05
TKGI	28452.500	1.646	26305.500	1700062.520	0.100	0.05
BGPLV	24367.500	-1.463	26305.500	1754858.294	0.144	0.05
RSH	23533	-2.049	26305.500	1830612.254	**0.040**	0.05
LITSP	29363	2.261	26305.500	1827571.436	**0.024**	0.05

The results from Table 6S revealed a significant difference in the perceived challenge of learner workload between rural and urban areas: U = 23458, p = 0.037. This could imply that rural or urban learners face a disproportionate burden when incorporating GCE into the curriculum. Rural areas, with fewer resources and larger class sizes, may be more affected. A significant difference in perceptions of stakeholder resistance between rural and urban areas was found (U = 23533, p = 0.040). This might reflect differing cultural perceptions of GCE, with certain communities being more resistant to its implementation. Again, a significant difference in perceptions of institutional support challenges was observed between rural and urban areas (U = 29363, p = 0.024).

However, there was no significant difference in perceptions of inadequate access to educational resources (U = 26334, p = 0.983). This indicates that rural and urban schools struggle with similar levels of resource scarcity. Regarding teacher knowledge gaps, no significant difference was observed (U = 28452.5, p = 0.100), indicating both settings experienced a broader issue in teachers' preparedness to implement GCE. This means that Rural schools may struggle to receive the institutional backing needed to successfully implement GCE, further widening the gap in educational equity.

4.5 Discussion of Findings

The findings reveal important insights into how teachers across rural and urban settings perceive the impact of Global Citizenship Education (GCE), particularly on skill development and inclusivity. The lack of significant difference in perceptions regarding GCE's role in equipping learners with 21st-century skills (t(458) = -1.27, p = 0.204) indicates a shared understanding of GCE's relevance in preparing students to navigate and contribute to a globalized world. This uniform perception suggests that GCE's core values—such as critical thinking, adaptability, and global awareness—are widely acknowledged by educators in both contexts, aligning with the views of Waghid (2024) and Franch (2020), who argued that GCE offers universally recognized competencies necessary for modern learners. Furthermore, the consensus on GCE's role in promoting gender and social inclusivity (t(458) = 0.233, p = 0.816) points to a shared acknowledgment of inclusivity as a key component of

effective education across regions. This observation aligns with Estellés and Fischman's (2020) work, which found broad support for educational inclusivity across geographic and socio-economic divides, suggesting that GCE's promotion of equitable education is a widely accepted objective that resonates with educators regardless of setting.

However, the significant differences observed in perceptions around more resource-dependent aspects of GCE, such as support for lifelong goals and employment ($t(458) = -2.218$, $p = 0.016$), collaborative learning ($t(458) = 3.008$, $p = 0.003$), competency-based assessment (CBA) ($t(458) = -2.461$, $p = 0.014$), stakeholder engagement ($t(458) = -2.087$, $p = 0.037$), and textbook access ($t(458) = -2.065$, $p = 0.040$), highlight the structural and resource challenges that persist in rural educational settings. These discrepancies suggest that while rural and urban educators agree on GCE's overall importance, the practical implementation is hindered in rural areas by constraints in infrastructure, materials, and support systems. Support for Lifelong Goals and Employment: The difference in perception may stem from the varying levels of career guidance and resources available in urban versus rural schools. Urban educators likely have more resources and networks for career preparation activities, which rural schools often lack. Studies such as Olugbenga and Olaniyan (2022) underscore the need for robust resource allocation to rural areas to bridge this gap and foster equitable career and goal-setting support through GCE. Promotion of Collaborative Learning: The urban advantage in collaborative learning perception suggests better access to digital tools, flexible classroom spaces, and training that supports interactive learning. Mncube et al. (2023) noted that rural schools often face logistical challenges in implementing collaborative learning due to overcrowded classrooms and limited technological resources. Competency-Based Assessment (CBA): Urban teachers may view GCE as more conducive to competency-based assessment because they have access to CBA-aligned resources, including digital assessment tools and diverse instructional materials. In contrast, rural schools face difficulties in adopting CBA, as Esseh, et al., (2024) found, that inadequate resource inhibit CBA.

These findings underscore the need for policy interventions aimed at providing equitable resources and support structures for rural schools to facilitate the effective implementation of GCE. Increased investment in rural education infrastructure, professional development for teachers, and community engagement initiatives can help bridge these gaps and ensure that all students, regardless of location, receive a comprehensive, inclusive education that aligns with the objectives of Global Citizenship Education.

The statistical analysis in Table 2 reveals nuanced perspectives across rural and urban educators regarding Global Citizenship Education (GCE), particularly in areas dependent on resources and infrastructure. Below, each finding is discussed in detail, confirmed or refuted by existing literature, and contextualized through an equity-focused lens. The analysis found no significant difference between rural and urban educators regarding GCE's role in equipping students with 21st-century skills ($t(458) = -1.27$, $p = 0.204$). This shared perspective suggests a universal understanding of GCE's importance in cultivating critical skills like problem-solving, adaptability, and global awareness, essential for success in a

globalized context. Studies by Drake and Reid (2020) and Kim et al (2019) echo these results, showing widespread support for GCE's role in fostering essential competencies, regardless of location. Thus, this finding is confirmed by previous research, indicating that both rural and urban educators see GCE as crucial to preparing learners for future challenges. Similarly, no significant difference was observed regarding GCE's role in promoting gender and social inclusivity ($t(458) = 0.233$, $p = 0.816$). This indicates a consensus that GCE contributes to an inclusive educational environment, reinforcing shared educational values. De Vries's (2023) study supports this finding, identifying a general acceptance of inclusivity as a core GCE principle across geographic and socio-economic boundaries. This broad agreement underscores GCE's universal appeal in promoting social justice and equity, confirming the alignment with previous research. Significant differences emerged in perceptions regarding GCE's support for lifelong goals and employment ($t(458) = -2.218$, $p = 0.016$). Urban teachers perceived GCE as more effective in preparing students for future careers, likely due to better resources, career guidance programs, and access to industry networks in urban schools. Hardman and Sandi (2024) and Mncube et al. (2023) highlight similar disparities, pointing out that rural schools face significant constraints in career-related resources and opportunities, limiting students' aspirations and preparation for future employment. This finding aligns with previous research, underscoring the need for targeted support to enhance career development opportunities in rural schools. Perceptions around collaborative learning revealed significant differences, with urban educators perceiving GCE as more supportive of collaborative practices ($t(458) = 3.008$, $p = 0.003$). This gap likely stems from urban schools' greater access to interactive tools, technology, and flexible classroom spaces conducive to collaborative learning. Adam-Yawson et al. (2021) observed similar patterns, noting that rural schools struggle with implementing collaborative methods due to larger class sizes and fewer resources. These findings are supported by existing literature, emphasizing that equitable access to collaborative learning resources is crucial for effective GCE implementation.

Urban educators rated GCE's facilitation of competency-based assessment more favourably than rural educators ($t(458) = -2.461$, $p = 0.014$). Competency-based approaches require adaptable assessment tools, access to which is often limited in rural schools. Alonzo et al (2021) found that rural educators face challenges adopting CBA due to traditional assessment methods and insufficient resources. This significant difference reflects structural barriers that affect rural schools' ability to implement modern assessment practices, and the finding is confirmed by prior studies.

Broader stakeholder engagement also showed significant differences, with urban schools benefiting from more robust networks and engagement ($t(458) = -2.087$, $p = 0.037$). The logistical, economic, and geographic challenges facing rural schools often hinder active stakeholder involvement. Adam-Yawson et al. (2021) noted similar challenges, highlighting the limitations rural schools encounter when mobilizing community and parental support due to geographic and socioeconomic barriers. These results align with prior research and underscore the necessity for community engagement initiatives tailored to the unique challenges of rural settings. Access to textbooks also demonstrated a significant disparity,

with urban schools reporting greater availability of essential resources (t(458) = -2.065, p = 0.040). This finding reflects well-documented issues in rural areas, where resource shortages are a frequent challenge. Olugbenga and Olaniyan (2022) and Wang et al (2024) both found that rural schools often struggle to obtain necessary materials, creating inequities that directly impact teaching and learning quality. Thus, this finding is supported by previous studies and highlights the urgent need for resource distribution that prioritizes rural schools.

The findings in Table 4 highlight both shared and context-specific challenges in incorporating Global Citizenship Education (GCE) into the curriculum across rural and urban areas. These insights provide a comprehensive view of the hurdles educators face and the unique needs of different settings. Below, each finding is discussed with references to relevant literature and U-values from the analysis. A significant difference in perceptions of learner workload between rural and urban educators (U = 23458, p = 0.037) suggests that rural students may experience more difficulty balancing GCE with other academic demands. This disparity likely reflects the larger class sizes and limited resources typical of rural schools, which can lead to a heavier workload for both teachers and students. This finding aligns with Opoku-Asare and Siaw (2015) and Adam-Yawson et al (2021), who found that rural schools face challenges managing curriculum requirements, particularly with the addition of new subjects like GCE. This result is therefore confirmed by previous studies, emphasizing that GCE can increase workload in settings already strained by resource limitations. There is a significant difference in perceptions of stakeholder resistance between rural and urban schools (U = 23533, p = 0.040). This suggests that community attitudes toward GCE may vary, with rural areas potentially experiencing more resistance. The reluctance in rural communities may stem from cultural differences or scepticism about the relevance of global content, as GCE introduces concepts that might not align with local values. Mncube et al. (2023) found similar findings, noting that some rural communities resisted educational changes they perceived as externally driven or incompatible with local traditions. This finding is supported by previous research and highlights the importance of culturally sensitive approaches to GCE in rural areas. The results show a significant difference in perceptions of institutional support challenges between rural and urban schools (U = 29363, p = 0.024), with rural schools likely facing more obstacles. Successful GCE implementation depends on strong institutional backing, which includes support for teacher training, resources, and alignment with school policies.

Interestingly, there was no significant difference in perceptions regarding inadequate access to resources between rural and urban schools (U = 26334, p = 0.983). This suggests that both rural and urban educators face similar challenges related to limited resources, pointing to a systemic issue rather than a geographically specific one. Mncube et al (2023) similarly noted that resource shortages affect schools across various settings. This result is consistent with previous findings, confirming that limited access to quality educational materials is a widespread challenge in GCE implementation. No significant difference was observed in perceptions of teacher knowledge gaps between rural and urban schools (U = 28452.5, p = 0.100). This indicates that educators in both settings feel similarly unprepared to teach GCE,

which suggests that teacher training and preparedness are systemic issues. Esseh et al (2024) reported similar findings, noting that many teachers lack specific training in GCE topics. This result is therefore confirmed by previous studies, highlighting the need for comprehensive, GCE-focused professional development for educators across all regions. There was also no significant difference in perceptions of textbook access between rural and urban schools ($U = 27499$, $p = 0.294$), indicating that both settings face challenges in acquiring necessary educational materials. Although the perception differences regarding balancing global and local values were not statistically significant ($U = 24367.5$, $p = 0.144$), there is still an indication that rural and urban educators may encounter unique challenges when introducing GCE topics. Previous research by Kerkhoff & Cloud (2020) and Li (2022) suggests that, especially in rural areas, educators may find it challenging to align global topics with local cultural values. While this finding wasn't statistically significant, it partially aligns with existing research that emphasizes the need for culturally responsive GCE practices, particularly in rural areas.

5. Conclusion

In conclusion, the integration of GCE into Ghana's CCC holds immense potential to transform the nation's education system into one that is both globally relevant and locally impactful. By equipping students with the knowledge, skills, and values necessary to address complex global challenges, GCE fosters a generation of active, informed, and responsible citizens. However, the significant differences in workload, stakeholder resistance, and institutional support could be attributed to disparities in infrastructure, socioeconomic conditions, and cultural attitudes. Urban areas may have more robust institutional support systems, while rural areas may face more challenges in these areas, exacerbating the difficulties in implementing new curricula such as GCE. Addressing persistent challenges through equitable resource distribution, teacher training, stakeholder engagement, and curriculum adaptation will ensure the inclusivity and effectiveness of this initiative. Ghana's CCC can thus serve as a model for integrating global competencies into national education frameworks, contributing significantly to both local development and global progress.

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