



Institutional Efforts and Challenges to Boost the Internationalization of the Curriculum and Global Citizenship Education: Insights of Educators

Esfuerzos y desafíos institucionales para impulsar la internacionalización del currículo y la educación para la ciudadanía global: Perspectivas de Educadores

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Abstract

As education transcends national borders and attempts to nurture future leaders with a global perspective, the insights of educators are invaluable. This paper delves into the perceptions of 40 educators across four Bachelor's programs within a Faculty of Education regarding Internationalization of the Curriculum (IoC) and Global Citizenship Education (GCED). The research employs a multiple-case study approach within an interpretative paradigm. One of the instruments carried out in this study was a survey instrument which contains four primary sections: participant characterization, an investigation of institutional policies concerning IoC and GCED, an assessment of ongoing initiatives fostering these processes, and the role of academic programs in supporting educators. Survey questions are structured with a Likert Scale, supplemented by a single open-ended question for additional insights. The results underscore the university's resolute commitment to enhancing IoC. Educators have actively embraced specific actions and consider themselves well-versed in IoC, resulting in increased participation in endeavors to internationalize their courses. In stark contrast, GCED lags in development, despite its recognized significance. Educators perceive an incomplete integration of GCED into institutional policies and academic programs, translating into a dearth of guidance and engagement. The findings demonstrate a significant correlation between educators' teaching dedication and their familiarity with, and involvement in, IoC and GCED initiatives. This reveals a pronounced institutional but emerging focus on international curriculum. However, the alignment with 21st-century teaching competencies remains a continuously evolving and somewhat vague journey.

Keywords: Curriculum Internationalization, Global Citizenship Education, Educators, Higher Education Institutions.

Resumen

A medida que la educación trasciende las fronteras nacionales e intenta fomentar futuros líderes con una perspectiva global, las percepciones de los educadores son invaluable. Este artículo profundiza en las percepciones de 40 educadores de cuatro programas de licenciatura dentro de una Facultad de Educación en relación con la Internacionalización del Currículo (IC) y la Educación para la Ciudadanía Global (ECG). La investigación emplea un enfoque de estudio de casos múltiples dentro de un paradigma interpretativo. Uno de los instrumentos usados en este

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estudio fue una encuesta que contiene cuatro secciones principales: caracterización de los participantes, una investigación de las políticas institucionales relacionadas con la IC y la ECG, una evaluación de las iniciativas en curso que fomentan estos procesos y el papel de los programas académicos en el apoyo a los educadores. Las preguntas de la encuesta fueron estructuradas con una escala Likert, complementadas por una única pregunta abierta para obtener información adicional. Los resultados destacan el firme compromiso de la universidad con el fortalecimiento de la IC. Los educadores han adoptado activamente acciones específicas y consideran estar mucho más familiarizados con la IC, lo que resulta en una mayor participación en esfuerzos para internacionalizar sus cursos. En contraste, la ECG se rezaga en su desarrollo, a pesar de su reconocida importancia. Los educadores perciben una integración incompleta de la ECG en las políticas institucionales y los programas académicos, lo que se traduce en una falta de orientación y participación. Los hallazgos demuestran una correlación significativa entre la dedicación docente de los educadores y su familiaridad e involucramiento con las iniciativas de IC y ECG. Esto revela un enfoque institucional pronunciado pero incipiente en el currículo internacional. Sin embargo, la alineación con las competencias de enseñanza del siglo XXI sigue siendo un proceso embrionario y en evolución continua.

Palabras clave: Internacionalización del Currículo, Educación para la Ciudadanía Global, Educadores, Instituciones de Educación Superior.

Introduction

In the dynamic landscape of higher education, the significance of the Internationalization of the Curriculum (IC) and Global Citizenship Education (GCED) has emerged as a pivotal area of focus, highlighted by its profound impact on shaping the perspectives and competencies of future educators. The role of teachers in driving this transformative agenda is crucial, as they play a central part in sculpting the educational experiences of students. The IC involves infusing global perspectives, cross-cultural understanding, and intercultural competencies into the academic fabric, transcending traditional borders, and fostering a comprehensive worldview (Byker & Putman, 2019; Krebs, 2020; Sánchez et al., 2004). Simultaneously, GCED seeks to equip individuals with the knowledge, skills, and values necessary to navigate an interconnected world, promoting a sense of responsibility toward global challenges (Cely et al., 2023; Giesenbauer & Müller-Christ, 2020; Morin, 1999; OECD, 2018; UNESCO, 2020)

In this context, the role of teachers becomes vital. They are architects of an inclusive and globally aware educational environment. Teachers, as facilitators of learning, have the power to shape the minds of the next generation, instilling in them the qualities of open-mindedness, cultural sensitivity, and a sense of shared global responsibility (Burgos et al., 2019; Palomino et al., 2022; UNESCO, 2021). As higher education institutions strive to prepare students for an increasingly interconnected world, teachers serve as the conduits through which the ideals of IC and GCED are imparted.

This introductory exploration delves into the multifaceted importance of IoC and GCED in higher education, revealing the transformative role teachers play in shaping the educational landscape.



As we navigate the complexities of preparing students for a globalized future, understanding the intricate interplay between teachers, curriculum internationalization, and global citizenship education becomes imperative.

Hence, the significance of teachers' perceptions in the processes of IoC and GCED is preeminent. Despite their pivotal role, these perceptions are often overlooked or taken for granted in educational discourse. This research, along with the conducted survey, aims to explore the perspectives of educators concerning the complexities inherent in their roles in shaping the educational experiences of future professionals and citizens requirements geared toward the dynamically evolving landscape of the twenty-first century. This inquiry is particularly relevant given not only the urgency faced by higher education institutions to adapt to global dynamics but also the challenges faced by teachers due to the lack of clear guidance, educational initiatives, and active participation in the processes essential for alignment with the principles of IoC and GCED.

Theoretical framework

The Transformative Power of Internationalization of the Curriculum

In the 21st century, curriculum internationalization is crucial for higher education due to the dynamic global landscape and the evolving needs of students and society. Hence, in the last decade IoC, as part of the Internationalization at Home, has proven to be an effective approach for redirecting attention to cultivate students' international perspectives, emphasizing the role of educators and learners in local classrooms and communities (Leask, 2015, p. 19). First of all, it helps students acquire the information, skills, and cultural competences necessary to succeed in an interconnected world. Hence, it is evident that universities are increasingly focused on enriching students' knowledge and experiences by integrating global, international, and intercultural skills and knowledge into their educational programs. On top of all, adopting a broad and inclusive approach will allow universities to establish a structured and cohesive system that aligns with the skills students need to succeed in the global job market and contribute meaningfully to society as engaged citizens (González-Castro & Manzano-Durán, 2015; Özturgut, 2021).

As the world becomes increasingly interconnected, the internationalization of curriculum has gained prominence in higher education institutions worldwide. This process involves integrating global perspectives, diverse cultural experiences, and international competencies into the curriculum to prepare students for global citizenship. In the context of Colombia, the IC is primarily focused on promoting cross-cultural understanding, fostering global and intercultural competencies, and creating opportunities for international collaboration in higher education, as part of one of the most significant commitments undertaken by the Ministry of National Education (MEN) to continue strengthening the development of those competencies among youth and enhancing the substantive functions of higher education institutions (HEIs) (Marcano-Navas, 2021; Prieto Martínez et al., 2015; Salmi et al., 2014; Yepes & Montes, 2021). This framework is underpinned by the need to prepare students to thrive in a globally interconnected society and



contribute to the economic, social, and cultural development of Colombia (Ministerio de Ciencia Tecnología e Innovación, 2020).

In addition, curriculum internationalization promotes critical thinking and informed citizenship by fostering a broader understanding of global issues (de Wit & Leask, 2015; n-Ávila & Rodríguez-Rodríguez, 2018; Hudzik, 2011; Knight, 2007; Wallace, 2022). Students exposed to a curriculum that incorporates global and intercultural dimensions are more likely to engage with complex global challenges, such as climate change, poverty, and human rights, and work towards innovative solutions (UNESCO, 2022).

Furthermore, it enhances the reputation and competitiveness of higher education institutions on a global scale, attracting diverse student populations and facilitating meaningful academic collaborations (León & Madera, 2016; Sebastián, 2005). In essence, curriculum internationalization not only prepares students for success but also cultivates global-minded citizens who can address the multifaceted challenges of our interconnected world (John et al., 2017).

The Vital Role of Global Education Developing Global Citizens

In modern education, global education plays a crucial role in nurturing global citizens. It goes beyond traditional academic boundaries and aims to create an understanding of the interconnectedness of our world. (Figueroa & Leyton, 2022; UNESCO, 2020). Global education provides exposure to diverse cultures, global challenges, and perspectives, and equips individuals with the necessary tools to engage thoughtfully and responsibly in a globalized society. This education fosters critical thinking, cultural empathy, and a sense of shared global responsibility, providing individuals with the foundation to navigate the complexities of our interconnected world (Banks, 2008; Nussbaum, 2002; Sánchez & de Haro, 2004; UNESCO, 2014).

The significance of global education is even more evident when considering its impact on the education of future professionals. In a world where borders are increasingly porous, professionals across various fields require a skill set that extends beyond technical expertise (OECD, 2018; Sánchez & de Haro, 2004). Hence, it is crucial to prioritize students' experiences and implement a curriculum that equips them with the knowledge, skills, and values necessary for active citizenship engagement (Morosini et al., 2017). Global education has become an essential element in preparing future professionals to work in a culturally diverse and interconnected global environment. It enhances their ability to collaborate effectively across borders and instills a sense of ethical responsibility and cultural sensitivity, which are essential qualities for professionals navigating the 21st-century landscape (de Sousa Santos, 2007; Enslin, 2011). Therefore, the integration of global education into the academic journey of future professionals is crucial for their holistic development and success in an ever-evolving globalized world.



The Crucial Role of Educators in Shaping Tomorrow's Citizens

Certainly, higher education institutions must fully engage with their surroundings by adopting educational methods that aim to cultivate students as change-makers. This should be incorporated into all aspects of their operations, including teaching, administration, and research. The university community provides an ideal platform for promoting critical thinking and education for global citizenship (Sanabria Fernandes & Longueira Matos, 2022).

In this regard, educators play a critical role in supporting this objective, as well as in the implementation of IoC and GCED, since they are responsible for creating and delivering a curriculum that integrates international perspectives and nurtures global citizenship, which cannot be possible just within the framework of institutional rhetoric and, in general, the entire system, regarding the responsibility of educating citizens for the future. Hence the importance of reclaiming value in the initial training of future teachers but also strengthening that of teachers working in higher education (Quevedo-Padilla, 2023). However, for all of the above to be feasible, the institution must allocate greater resources to meet all these requirements geared toward the internationalization of academic programs (MEN, 2022). As role models for global citizenship, educators must promote values such as diversity, empathy, and social responsibility, thus, they must enhance their understanding and teaching abilities to meet evolving requirements and curriculum and content effectively since they are at the forefront of education and play a critical role in ensuring real learning experiences (UNESCO, 2018). However, teachers face a variety of challenges to align with the 2030 educational policies, including the need for professional development to enhance their intercultural competence, overcoming institutional barriers to curriculum internationalization, and dealing with resistance to global perspectives from students and colleagues (Burgos et al., 2019), this involves creating policies and strategies to restore the social significance of teachers as a crucial pillar of society to effectively encourage and facilitate IoC and GCED in higher education institutions. Finally, it is worth noting that to establish a positive environment that empowers teachers to effectively teach Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) and GCED, it is essential to gather insights and feedback from various stakeholders, such as individuals and groups from academic and systemic domains (UNESCO, 2020, 2021).

Related Studies

In the past few years, there has been a growing academic tendency with the interrelation between IoC and GCED. Many studies in these domains concentrate on specific aspects such as curriculum development, strategies to foster global education, faculty development policy and institutional approaches, and the higher education institutions' resistance and issues to incorporate these elements. These areas of research demonstrate the growing importance of IoC and ECG in education and the need to go deeper into this matter and the demands of a rapidly changing global landscape.

Teacher education colleges can play a pivotal role in advancing GCED within a country. Kim's and Yoo's study (2023) on a Philippine normal university uncovered the impactful role of



teachers in advancing GCED, aided by strong institutional leadership and collaborations with international organizations. This dynamic collaboration has been instrumental in enhancing institutional efforts in promoting GCED and ECG. In the same year, Kasa et al. studied UNESCO schools in Finland, examining educators' views on GCED alignment with curricula and international commitments. They found a focus on equality, democracy, and ecological sustainability, with noted areas for improvement regarding racism and inequalities. Additionally, in 2023 Zahid and Neary investigated faculty perceptions of undergraduate curriculum internationalization, focusing on three subscales: labor market information integration, employability skills integration, and global citizenship integration. This underscores educational institutions' multifaceted efforts in fostering global citizenship. Likewise, Andrews and Aydin's (2020) research examines pre-service teachers' views on integrating GCED into social studies. Their findings emphasize educators' role in incorporating GCED principles, fostering cultural sensitivity, and deepening students' understanding of global issues. Similarly, in 2021 Adaspayeva and Parkes examine aligning the New Zealand Curriculum with UNESCO's GCED definitions, recommending integrating GCED concepts into curriculum guidelines to advance Sustainable Development Goal n^o4. Also, Clifford and Montgomery (2014) found in their study how Western capitalist values impede the inclusion of global citizenship education in higher education. Despite resistance, there are signs of transformative change in university policy discussions. However, the full extent to which this may influence the overarching goals and curricula of higher education institutions remains an area prepared for further exploration and realization. This transformation, as Mendoza and Matyók stated in their study in 2013, is based on offering a comprehensive education that encourages engagement with the principles of democracy, involvement, and global empathy.

Methodology

Research Design

The research design corresponds to a case study, as it involves an inquiry process characterized by the detailed, comprehensive, systematic, and in-depth examination of the object of study, which seeks to comprehend the subjective experiences and perspectives of participants, examining a phenomenon within its real-world setting (Creswell and Creswell, 2022; Yin, 2014). This investigation was conducted as part of a multiple case studies design, which seeks to contrast disparate outcomes or anticipate similar results across the studies, thus facilitating the extraction of overarching conclusions or the exploration of patterns and variations among them (Yin, 2014). This investigation examined four different undergraduate programs that are part of the Faculty of Education at Antonio Nariño University. The analysis formed an integral component of the research, centered around two primary units of analysis: Internationalization of the Curriculum (IoC) and Global Citizenship Education (GCED). These units constituted the central focus of the investigation.

In this regard, the interpretative paradigm was selected for this qualitative study to understand the meanings that the group of educators ascribes to their experiences and actions (Creswell and

Guetterman, 2019), to foster IoC and the GEC in their institution and their specific academic program.

Participants

This study employed a convenience sample. Participants consisted of 40 professors (21 females and 19 males). The participants' ages ranged from 31 to 67 years. Of the participants, 31 were employed as full-time professors, 6 as part-time, and 3 as lecturers. They were associated with four academic programs within the Faculty of Education at a private university located in Bogotá: Bachelor in English and Spanish (18), Bachelor in Social Sciences (11), Bachelor in Mathematics (4), and Bachelor in Scenic Arts (7).

Table 1

Percentage of Educators Participating in this Research

<i>Program</i>	<i>% of survey</i>	<i>% Full-time</i>	<i>% Part-time</i>	<i>% Lecturers</i>
English and Spanish	45.0%	77.77%	16.66%	5.5%
Scenic Arts	17.5%	85.71%	14.28%	0%
Social Sciences	27.5%	81.81%	9.09%	9.09%
Mathematics	10.0%	50.0%	25.0%	25.0%

Data Collection and Analysis

A survey method was employed as the primary means of inquiry. The target population consisted of undergraduate professors (N=40). The survey was designed to explore a spectrum of institutional processes and actions in support of IoC and GCED. It sought to identify institutional challenges within these two domains and specific programmatic initiatives aimed at promoting IoC and GCED integration into the curriculum, encompassing a total of 25 questions. To ensure a comprehensive assessment, the survey included closed questions with scales and multiple-choice options, as well as one open-ended question. This approach allowed participants to provide valued insights, by that means enriching the dataset.

Before the implementation of the survey, a pilot testing phase was conducted with a group of internal and external professors (n=10) chosen to evaluate the clarity and effectiveness of the survey questions. This crucial step aimed to refine and optimize the survey instrument for subsequent administration. The survey was administered electronically. Participants were allocated a specified timeframe of two weeks to complete the survey. To support participation some reminder emails were dispatched shortly before the survey deadline.

Furthermore, the SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) was utilized to conduct data analysis, including descriptive statistics such as means, frequencies, and distributions and



significance tests, for example, a chi-square test was conducted to determine whether professors' program affiliation and duration of employment at the university have any effect on their knowledge, understanding, and implementation of activities related to IoC and GCED within their courses.

Results

Results are categorized into four distinct sections, aligning with some of the questions from the conducted survey. Firstly, these sections will include an assessment of professors' familiarity with and training in the concepts of IoC and GCED. Secondly, they will involve an evaluation of the institutional significance and initiatives aimed at strengthening IoC and GCED. Thirdly, there will be an examination of the relevance of IoC and GCED in their respective programs, as well as the measures undertaken to promote them. Lastly, there will be an exploration of the challenges encountered and the prospective opportunities for institutional advancement in these two domains.

Knowledge and Instruction in Internationalization of the Curriculum and Global Citizenship Education

When participants were queried regarding their level of familiarity with IoC and GCED, 42.5% indicated a greater familiarity with IoC, in contrast to the 10% who were familiar with GCED. Nonetheless, it is noteworthy that 20% of the professors reported having some knowledge of both processes within the university, while only 7.5% expressed unfamiliarity with either. Additionally, a Chi-Square test was employed to determine whether a statistically significant relationship existed between the hours of class taught by educators in the faculty and their level of acquaintance with both concepts. The findings, presented in Table 2, indicate that there is a statistically significant relationship between how familiar professors are with the IoC and the GCED and their time dedication (chi-square with one degree of freedom = 21, 218a, p = .007).

Table 2

Significance of Educators' Teaching Education and Their Familiarity with IoC and GCED

Chi-Square Test			
	Value	Df	Exact Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-square	21.218 ^a	8	.007
Continuity Correlation	20.661	8	.008
Linear-by-Linear	8.053	1	.005
N of Valid Cases	40		

In response to the query regarding the academic training related to IoC and GCED at the university, findings reveal notable insights. Specifically, 40% of the surveyed professors indicated that they have never participated in any form of IoC training, while 65% reported no prior involvement in GCED training. In contrast, a comparable percentage of respondents (25% for IoC and 22.5% for GCED) acknowledged the existence of instructional offerings provided by the institution.

However, a substantial disparity emerges when examining active participation in these courses. While 35% of respondents have engaged in coursework of IoC, only 12.5% have had the opportunity to partake in GCED-related training. These findings underscore the substantial proportion of educators who, despite being aware of the existence of such instructional opportunities, have not actively participated.

Furthermore, the data underscores that GCED is the less familiar of the two areas among the surveyed educators, with a notably lower level of participation compared to IoC training. These findings also highlight that the university has comparatively explored IoC to a greater extent than GCED in its educational offerings.

Table 3

Degree of Engagement in Institutional Training Related to IoC and GCED

Level of participation	IoC	GCED
Non-participation in any training	40.0%	65.0%
Enrollment in some courses	35.0%	12.5%
Awareness of the existence but no prior participation	25.0%	22.5%

Institutional Significance and the Advancement of Internationalization of the Curriculum

When educators were surveyed regarding the inclusion of an international dimension in institutional policies, 70% affirmed its presence. However, 25% expressed uncertainty, citing limited familiarity with university policies, while only 5% perceived a lack of a clear international component guiding academic programs toward curriculum internationalization.

Considering their perception of the existence of an institutional internationalization culture, 80% indicated that there was such a culture, while 20% considered the university still did not have a clear strategy to foster an international culture that emerged in the different academic and administrative areas of the university.

In terms of the perceived level of importance that educators attributed to IoC within their academic context, 65% of the participants firmly asserted that IoC held a highly significant position. This was supplemented by the 22% who viewed it as a significant aspect within the institution, in addition to the 10% who regarded it as moderately significant. Only 2.5% considered it to be of minor significance, but none perceived it as an insignificant element for the university.



In the survey, when educators were asked to identify the primary factors influencing the university's relevance in the context of IoC, the following observations were made: 37.5% of respondents considered it to be a prerequisite for national and international accreditation. 7.5% believed it was essential for inclusion in national and international rankings. Additionally, 25% perceived IoC as a strategic approach to establishing connections between the university and other global higher education institutions. In terms of the 17.5% who recognized it as a response to the expressed interest of the institution's academic staff, including professors and researchers from various faculties. Lastly, 12.5% regarded IoC as a consequence of shifts in institutional priorities. These findings illuminate the diverse perspectives among educators regarding the factors shaping the university's engagement with IoC.

Furthermore, when educators were requested to identify the specific approaches through which the university promoted IoC, based on their personal teaching experiences within the institution, a significant 30% of respondents highlighted the dissemination of information about Collaborative Online International Learning (COIL) courses and virtual exchange programs as a prominent strategy. Similarly, 25% of the sample acknowledged the university's commitment to fostering awareness and understanding of diverse cultures as a prevalent practice within academic programs. A substantial 20% underscored the incorporation of foreign language study materials into the curriculum as a deliberate tactic in promoting IoC. An equivalent 20% of participants emphasized the institution's dedication to expanding opportunities for academic and research partnerships with national and international counterparts. Finally, a smaller percentage, 5%, indicated their perception that the university was actively engaged in conducting ongoing curriculum reviews aimed at integrating international perspectives and fostering cultural diversity.

These results offer insight into the multifaceted approaches employed by the university to advance IoC, as perceived by educators based on their teaching experiences within the institution.

Institutional Relevance for the Enhancement of Global Citizenship Education

GCED into institutional policies, the results indicated that 65% of respondents expressed uncertainty, primarily due to their perceived lack of knowledge on the subject. This observation was further substantiated by the 25% who asserted that there was no direct inclusion of GCED-related components within the core elements of the Agenda 2030. Conversely, only 10% of participants affirmed that such elements were indeed incorporated into the normative framework of the university.

Similarly, findings indicated that only 27.5% of respondents believed that the institution had a policy that incorporated internationalization as a means to support Sustainable Development (SD). Conversely, 37.5% of participants strongly contended that there was no explicit linkage between internationalization and initiatives related to the SD Agenda. The remaining 35% of educators expressed uncertainty about the connection between these areas, primarily due to their limited familiarity with the subject matter. These results underscored a significant lack of awareness among participants regarding the true essence of SD and its potential integration into the institution's internationalization processes, as guided by their policies. The data concerning

the inclusion or exclusion of SD principles, along with educators' knowledge gaps regarding the Agenda 2030 and Education for Sustainable Development, were summarized in Table 4.

Table 4

Incorporation of Agenda 2030 and the SDE Elements into the Institutional Policies for Internationalization

	Agenda 2030	Sustainable Development Education
Excluded	25%	37.5%
Encompassed	10%	27.5%
Unfamiliar with the components	65%	35%

The Significance and Initiative for Advancing IoC and GCED in Bachelor's Programs

The results presented in Table 5 demonstrate a consensus among the surveyed participants regarding the high relevance of IoC and GCED as essential elements.

Table 5:

Relevance of IoC and GCED in the Training of Future Teachers Based on the Program

	IoC for future educators				GCED for future educators			
	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
Unimportant	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Minor significance	0%	9%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Significant	28%	18%	29%	50%	17%	73%	71%	50%
Moderately significant	0%	9%	0%	25%	0%	18%	0%	0
Highly significant	72%	64%	71%	25%	83%	9%	29%	50%

Note: English and Spanish (1), Scenic Arts (2), Social Sciences (3), Mathematics (4)

Nevertheless, educators considered GCED a significant element in their programs, with a mean of 52.75%, while IoC was highly significant, with a mean of 58%, across the four bachelor's programs. Furthermore, within the English and Spanish programs, both areas were of very high importance, with a notable difference of 11% in favor of GCED (IoC=72%; GCED=83%). In the Scenic Arts program, IoC was more relevant (64%) than GCED (9%). Similarly, educators in the Social Science program (64%) expressed that IoC was a highly essential element, but only a minor percentage (9%) assigned the same level of importance to GCED. In contrast, for the

Mathematics program, a higher percentage (50%) believed that GCED was quite significant, while half of the participants (25%) considered that IoC held greater relevance.

On the other hand, when the participants were asked if they had engaged in any activities aimed at enhancing IoC and GCED, 67.5% affirmed that they had included such activities at least once. Mirror classes, inclusion of texts in English, and debates on global topics and issues were the most common activities conducted by them. Nine percent of the participants mentioned that they were still unclear about what type of activities could promote these areas and how to implement them. Finally, 10% of the educators reported that they hadn't conducted any activities in this regard.

Challenges and Prospects for Enhancement

Findings in Table 6 indicate that 32.5% of the educators perceive a significant challenge in fulfilling the commitment to IoC and GCED as part of their institutional mission, primarily attributed to the absence of a comprehensive strategic framework guiding these processes within the institution. Furthermore, two additional obstacles such as the institution's constrained strategic vision and its limited financial resources are identified, which appear to exert a potential influence on the advancement of IoC and GCED within the four Bachelor's programs in the Faculty of Education.

Table 6

Challenges in Advancing IoC and GCED

Main difficulties	%
Limited institutional leadership/vision	22.5
Scarcity of financial resources	20.0
Institutional priority conflicts	7.5
Lack of a strategy or plan to guide the processes	32.5
Low level of interest or involvement from the institutional academic community	12.5
Insufficient quantity of international opportunities for stakeholders	2.5
Inflexible curriculum plan that affects the internationalization of academic and administrative processes	20.5

Finally, concerning the most pressing future for universities to consider moving forward in enhancing IoC and GCED processes, the highest priority, identified by 80% of respondents was the training of academic staff in international, intercultural, and global competencies. Following closely, at 50%, were the incorporation of the international and intercultural dimensions into curricula and the definition of a clear institutional policy for curriculum internationalization and global citizenship education. Additionally, respondents noted the importance of adopting an

institutional vision aligned with the elements of Agenda 2030 for global citizenship development, receiving 10% of the responses. Supporting these efforts, 20% of respondents highlighted the need for increased opportunities and funding for outbound mobility for students, academic, and administrative staff. Finally, 5% of respondents each underscored the importance of enhancing institutional research capacity and quality through international collaboration and amplifying the positive impact of curriculum internationalization initiatives on local communities.

Discussion

The objective of this study was to gather the perspectives of educators regarding the existing institutional and pedagogical strategies at Antonio Nariño University in Colombia aimed at fostering IoC and GCED. This study will emphasize five primary findings derived from the aforementioned results sections.

One of the initial aspects to highlight in the results is the disparity in familiarity and participation between IoC and GCED among the surveyed educators. While a significant portion of participants showed a higher level of familiarity with IoC in comparison to GCED, this contrast is highlighted by the difference in participation since a considerable percentage of respondents took part in IoC coursework, whereas a very low number participated in training related to GCED. These results suggest that the university has prioritized IoC over GCED in its educational offerings, potentially indicating a gap in addressing global citizenship competencies within the curriculum. This finding underscores the need for greater attention to GCED initiatives and training opportunities to ensure a comprehensive approach to internationalization and global citizenship education within the university setting, very congruent with the study conducted by Mendoza and Matyók (2013). Moreover, another significant outcome in this study was the statistically significant relationship between educators' familiarity with IoC and GCED and their time dedication further emphasizes the importance of targeted training and professional development opportunities in fostering educators' understanding and engagement with these concepts, closely consistent with the findings outlined in the investigation carried out by Kim and Yoo (2023) and Zahid and Neary (2023).

Another aspect to spotlight is the diverse perspectives among educators regarding the factors influencing the university's engagement with IoC. The survey results showed that while a significant proportion of respondents perceive IoC as a prerequisite for national and international accreditation, finding that is congruent with Salmi et al. (2014) those who ensure this constant seek of institutional strategies and mechanisms to integrate much more internationally programs and the institutional projection itself, accreditation has been an effective tool for positioning and promoting key aspects for quality assurance and evaluation of these processes.

Additionally, the findings underscore the multifaceted approaches employed by Antonio Nariño University like the strategic establishment of connections with global higher education institutions and the response to expressed interests of academic staff to promote IoC. These insights contribute to a comprehensive understanding of the strategies guiding the university's efforts toward internationalization, emphasizing the importance of considering more flexible



perspectives and approaches in fostering a globally engaged academic environment. A perspective that is very consistent with Özturgut's (2021) study emphasizes that internationalizing a campus is a multifaceted process extending beyond language courses, study abroad programs, and student exchanges. This underlined the importance for universities to meticulously define and communicate how their teaching, research, and service efforts align with their strategic planning, with a focus on promoting inclusivity. Thus, the results of this study reinforce the need for universities to carefully define and communicate how their teaching, research, and service efforts are aligned in their strategic planning, with an emphasis on promoting inclusivity.

Furthermore, another noteworthy aspect of the results is the significant lack of awareness among participants regarding the integration of elements from the 2030 Agenda for Global GCED and SD into institutional policies. The results indicate that a majority of respondents express uncertainty or perceive a lack of direct inclusion of GCED-related components within the core elements of the Agenda 2030, with only a small percentage affirming their incorporation into the university's normative framework. This should be considered a pressing problem to tackle urgently. Teachers are constantly struggling to effectively incorporate these principles into their teaching practices, based on the institutions' rhetoric. However, in reality, there are missed opportunities to prepare students to become informed and active global citizens due to teachers' lack of comprehension and training in this regard. It cannot be assumed that students can achieve this if educators are unfamiliar with and have no opportunities to integrate these principles into their teaching daily as found in Andrews and Aydin's study (2020). Similarly, results revealed that there is notable uncertainty and disagreement among participants regarding the existence of policies linking internationalization to initiatives related to the SD Agenda. These findings highlight the need for greater awareness and clarity among educators regarding the importance and integration of GCED and SD principles into institutional policies, as emphasized in Adaspayeva's and Parkes' investigation (2021).

From this, it can be said that insufficient curriculum coverage and inadequate institutional training on ESD and GCED are the primary systemic obstacles including them in educators' teaching practices. Therefore, underscoring potential gaps in knowledge and understanding may hinder the effective implementation of sustainable development goals within the university context (UNESCO, 2014, 2018, 2020, 2021). As a consequence, establishing supportive policies and strategies is a must to enable teachers to utilize their full range of abilities to address global challenges, while also emphasizing the importance of restoring the teacher's social standing as a crucial societal cornerstone as Burgos et al. (2019) pointed out.

Moreover, another key point to emphasize is the consensus among surveyed participants regarding the high relevance of IoC and GCED as essential elements in academic programs (UNESCO, 2021). The results reveal that educators across various bachelor's programs perceive both IoC and GCED to be highly significant. Interestingly, while IoC is generally considered more relevant across different programs, there are variations in the perceived importance of GCED, with particularly high importance attributed to it in English and Spanish programs



compared to other disciplines. Additionally, the data highlight that a significant portion of educators has engaged in activities aimed at enhancing IoC and GCED, such as mirror classes and debates on global topics. However, a notable percentage of participants still express uncertainty about the types of activities that can promote these areas, suggesting a potential area for further exploration and support in curriculum development and implementation. This can be largely attributed to the limited institutional knowledge and training available, which directly affects the teachers' lack of familiarity with these subjects, in agreement with other investigations (Bentall, 2020; Hou, 2020). As a result, these areas are not regularly incorporated into their classroom practices, despite recognizing their importance and their desire for more specialized and detailed training in this regard.

Additionally, another important aspect to consider is the identification of significant challenges hindering the fulfillment of the commitment to IoC and GCED within the institutional mission. Specifically, the absence of a comprehensive strategic framework, constrained strategic vision, and limited financial resources are highlighted as major obstacles affecting the advancement of IoC and GCED within the Faculty of Education's Bachelor's programs. This underscores the need for universities to address these challenges strategically to effectively promote IoC and GCED initiatives (de Sousa Santos, 2007; Freire Oliveira Piccin & Finardi, 2019; González-Castro & Manzano-Durán, 2015; Sánchez & de Haro, 2004). Furthermore, the prioritization of future actions by respondents emphasizes the critical importance of training academic staff in international, intercultural, and global competencies, alongside the incorporation of international and intercultural dimensions into curricula and the establishment of clear institutional policies for IoC and GCED (Acedo, 2012; Andrews & Aydin, 2020; Bourn et al., 2017; Byker & Putman, 2019; Maquilón Sánchez, 2011; Palomino et al., 2022; Quevedo-Padilla, 2023; UNESCO, 2018, 2021). These findings suggest that addressing these challenges and prioritizing strategic actions are essential for universities to enhance IoC and GCED processes effectively.

Conclusion

This study has provided valuable insights into the institutional and pedagogical strategies at Antonio Nariño University for promoting GCED and IoC, based on the educators' experiences within the institution. Data analysis revealed some key findings. Firstly, there is a noticeable difference in the understanding and participation of surveyed educators in GCED and IoC, indicating a potential gap in addressing global citizenship competencies within the curriculum. The above is attributable to the correlation found between teaching dedication and involvement in IoC and GCED initiatives. This relationship highlights that educators who are more committed and familiar with these concepts are more likely to effectively integrate IoC and GCED into their teaching. This enhances the quality of education provided to students. This highlights the need to provide professional development opportunities and institutional support to strengthen educators' engagement in these endeavors. Therefore, there is a need for greater attention to GCED initiatives and training opportunities to ensure a comprehensive approach to internationalization and global citizenship education.

Secondly, the research has identified diverse perspectives among educators regarding the factors affecting the university's engagement with IoC, highlighting the importance of flexible approaches in promoting a globally engaged academic environment. Furthermore, there is a significant lack of awareness among participants regarding the integration of elements from the 2030 Agenda for Global GCED and SD into institutional policies, indicating the need for greater clarity and understanding in this regard. Addressing this gap is essential to aligning institutional practices with global education priorities and fostering meaningful contributions to sustainable development agendas.

Finally, the consensus among surveyed participants regarding the high relevance of IoC and GCED as essential components in academic programs emphasizes the need to address challenges impeding the fulfillment of the commitment to IoC and GCED within the institutional mission. Therefore, prioritizing strategic actions such as targeted training for educators and the establishment of clear institutional policies for IoC and GCED will be crucial for enhancing both processes effectively, within the university setting.

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