

## Strategic Differentiation in Pedagogy for Cultivating Global Competence in Early Years Education

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Received: 13-01-2026

Revised: 01-02-2026

Accepted: 14-02-2026

Published: 11-03-2026

### ABSTRACT

*This research investigates diversity pedagogy in early childhood education, its teachings, and the development of global competence construction for young children. Global competence, the ability and inclination to take action on global issues of relevance, is increasingly accepted as an essential aspect of preparing students for life in a globally networked world. The data collected from early childhood educators, students, and parents in the ECSSN show how they are addressing these goals with their service-learners; findings show what it looks like when a student focuses on global competence as an objective versus when one does not focus on it, and the challenges met while teaching for global competence. Key Findings, It is clear from within the work that whilst the student teachers are 'mindful' and responsive to expectations, there are some major challenges in respect of resourcing limitations and inadequate teacher education on one hand, and external barriers within a course (curriculum) for more effective 'planful weaving through' of internationalizing practices. The research indicates that project-based learning, cooperative learning, and culturally responsive teaching are promising approaches, but more training and resources, not less-flexible curricula, may be needed. The article concludes with recommendations for teacher preparation, policy, and future research so that teachers and schools may be better equipped to meet the demands of developing global competence among this young population.*

**Keywords:** Differentiated Pedagogy, Global Competence, Early Years Education, Project-Based Learning, Collaborative Learning, Culturally Responsive Teaching

### INTRODUCTION

#### Background of the Study

Suddenly, there gleamed before us the dawn of as-of-yet the unimaginable 21st century; it was heavy with ambitions of globalization and high-tech modernity, and people were mixing those ideas up. All these changes will force us to rethink what education is and young people's abilities and proclivities. Cosmopolitan learners ought to possess literacy, numeracy, and science skills (OECD, 2018), be able to experience other cultures, question global initiatives critically, and become a responsible global citizen. This ability, known as global competence, is listed within the framework of international organizations'

future educational goals that we need to strive for to facilitate sustainability and world peace (UNESCO, 2017). They are giving early childhood. Education (or Pre-k schooling education for the site between part-time daycare education and lower elementary school education) from three to seven years is an articulate focus concerning the construction of GM Astuti, I., & Afendi, A. R. (2025).

“GCE is more than just being sensitive to other cultures; it includes the awareness, knowledge, attitudes, and values needed to respect those from different cultures as well as to work effectively in a global economy.” There are opportunities to meet people from other cultures, learn about their ways and perspectives, and find a way to do business together. However, there is also the talent for conflict resolution or learning to think critically about global issues such as economies and ecology Fousteri, M. (2024). Global competence is no longer an “add-on” in education- it is a 3D superpower that intersects with literacy, SEL, and civics Goyibova, N. (2025).

For a child, having a global perspective is so important. Herut, A. H. (2024) noted that it is simpler for young children to be affected by the channel effect than adults, because they are more susceptible to developmentally oriented psychological processes, such as those related to their social and cultural context. This is when kids make identity stories about themselves and others that will impact behavior and attitude going forward. Given that storytelling is an early literacy building block, the culturally unbound storytelling and response-based instruction in this grade range provide inclusive pedagogies introduced at a young age to directly foster (“deliberate exposure”) exposure to these many cultures and classroom practices, which aim to promote empathy and openness toward difference (Kanellopoulou, E. M. (2022). Alternatively, we can apply behind-the-scenes tactics to stoke an ethnocentric or exclusionary mindset.

While its value for the future is repeated unanimously, a debate still rages on as to how early childhood pedagogy can support this. What could work: Pedagogical differentiation. One piece that does seem genuinely promising is pedagogical differentiation. The response to that is differentiated instruction- the idea that what we teach, and how students learn, is connected to student readiness levels, interest variances, and their learning profiles (Kerkhoff, S. N. (2020). Utilizing the construct activity distinguishes them; the Distance they do have serves as a cautionary negative example to others/. Words can scare us about patterning among teachers and make teachers cautious to provide experiences not fitting for children’s social, emotional, and cognitive development, apprenticing them into the cultural landscape one piece at a time.

For instance, through telling stories (in that language and in the story, it tells), cultures can come alive for the young learner in a lasting and relevant way. Play-based activities (if they were designed in a specific manner) have also even been discussed as playing an important role developing collaboration skills between children from culturally diversity and visual/kinesthetic learning, and that the manipulatives -action tasks- also may assist students to form some abstract ideas related to concepts about fairness or interdependence or sustainability Langelan, B. N. (2024). These are a few ways in which differentiation can assist teachers with regular infusions of global competence work for all students.

However much we might want to wish otherwise, global childhood education “all too often appears as the process of reattaching curricula that draw on local and national history and tradition and intellectual foundations.” (Letzel-Alt, V., & Pozas, M. (2023). It is useful, for my experience of learning the language, and I can point at things and say “look, this is us,” but a bit fucking rubbish for all the people who are not going to be able to do that stretching across this soggy English region. Most teachers are under-skilled or unskilled in using such differentiated practices to develop global competence Liou, S. R. (2023). Another point is that in many countries, school systems are forced to prepare students on a test-based type-format

skill model and upon basic ones by neglecting more ‘eco-holistic’ situated ones, such as intercultural competence (OECD, 2018) or empathy.

Second, asymmetry arises in the supporting structures of separation. Administrations in historically Marginalized communities do not support writers, educators, or students with resources that honor their culture or language for a one-world-of-learning classroom experience (UNESCO, 2017). These constraints prevent young learners of this age from being offered an equal opportunity for a global mindset.

This notion of a tactical layer, however, implies that it is not necessarily a valuable thing in itself but a means for doing other things and meeting the purposes and values that curriculum has in relation to global and local (IBID). It also means that teachers must be able to create learning spaces where difference is celebrated and students are prodded into curiosity, in which they begin asking questions about their world.

As part of an overall pedagogy of practice that incorporates tiered assignments, flex grouping, and culturally responsive pedagogies, early childhood teachers can influence the development of these four foundational elements of global competence communication: increased volition toward communication, empathy, creative thinking and problem-solving, and valuing diversity. They can plant such seeds in learners lived experiences early on so that, as they are exposed to the messiness of global issues (to name just a few: climate change, migration, or social justice), these might start to germinate at their later stages of development (Mansilla, V. B. (2018).

### **Problem Statement**

Despite global competence being identified as an important educational goal of the twenty-first century, early childhood education meets challenges in implementing global competence in classroom practice. The localized curriculum focusing on national identity and basic literacy and numeracy is also often found in many early childhood programs, which sometimes ignore the context of a more global perspective (Reimers, 2020). This is a limited view, which reduces children’s opportunities to become interculturally literate, compassionate, and critically aware of the world in which they live (OECD, 2018).

Teachers play a key role in helping children develop global competence. However, they often face obstacles, including inadequate preparation, limited access to culturally relevant resources or materials, and prescriptive curricula that limit opportunities for innovation (Darling-Hammond et al., 2020). In addition, the lack of well-defined models to integrate global competence into early childhood pedagogy results in variations among the practices across schools (UNESCO, 2017). Even when efforts are made, they can be superficial at best and center around tokenistic recognition of cultural diversity rather than deep, sustained consideration of global issues (Banks, 2015).

Pedagogical differentiation offers a promising approach to these challenges. It involves teachers adjusting knowledge and instruction according to children’s developmental level, learning profile, and cultural experience (Nopas, D. S. (2024). However, the successful implementation of differentiation for global competence in early years classrooms is under-researched and under-practiced. Lacking strategic approaches, teachers and schools end up overwhelming the pupils with abstract global issues or underchallenging them with purely local themes.

Hence, this study investigates the extent to which systematic and evidence-based strategies exist for using differentiated pedagogy to promote global competence in EC. Filling this gap is essential in making children competent not only as academic achievers but also fully prepared to be responsible members of a global and multicultural society.

### **Research Objectives**

The objectives of this research are:

1. To explore how differentiation can be strategically applied in early years pedagogy.
2. To identify which elements of global competence (e.g., cultural awareness, empathy, communication, critical thinking) can be nurtured effectively in early childhood education.
3. To examine educators' barriers and challenges in implementing differentiated pedagogy aimed at global competence.
4. To provide recommendations for integrating differentiated pedagogical strategies into early years curriculum design and teacher training.

### **Research Questions**

The following research questions will guide the study:

1. How can pedagogical differentiation be strategically applied in early years education to cultivate global competence?
2. Which aspects of global competence are most effectively developed through differentiated instruction in early childhood?
3. What challenges and barriers hinder the implementation of differentiated pedagogy for global competence in early years classrooms?

### **Significance of the Study**

This study contributes to ECE both in theory and practice. Theoretically, this study can be considered an aspect of building global competence. From a theoretical perspective, this study utilizes differentiation and constructivist learning theory as a conceptual framework of the development of global competence, which refers to a practical level, since the implications from the research might be applied to teacher training programs, curriculum design programs, or policy making about the necessity of raising matters focused on global competence in early years learning environments or systems. For practitioners, this study provides some ideas of what else could be done to develop inclusive and culturally responsive classrooms. For policymakers, this study provides examples of how Early Education can strive to be inclusive and fulfill global citizenship goals.

### **Scope and Limitations**

However, this paper's topic is limited to kindergarten and its role in developing global competence. We do not intend, however, to proceed further in education. Although they are probably relevant, such findings would be of little interest when looking for the equivalent of a young childhood risk factor. The study can occur at exemplary case institutions where global competence is (or is working towards being) embedded within the curricular rhetoric. Limitations include concerns about generalizability to other educational systems, which may arise due to differences in the context of education systems. Because teachers reported practices as used, they were subject to bias.

## LITERATURE-REVIEW

### Concept of Global Competence in Education

With advances in technology, flight, and telecommunications that connect the world to people, and people with each other through travel and economic globalization, it has become increasingly urgent for educational systems to develop student skills that will enable them to function effectively in an interdependent world. Global competence is the capacity to critically analyze global and intercultural issues from different perspectives and appreciate them without necessarily accepting them, based on understanding how people lead their lives in different cultural contexts (OECD, 2018). The concept is not only about understanding foreign countries and cultures but also about the competencies needed for people to interact with one another across borders and face together pressing global challenges, such as climate change, conflict, or inequity.

Global competence is a complex concept that can be deconstructed into four different elements:

1. **Cognitive skills**-the capacity to learn and comprehend how the world works, including global systems like economics and politics.
2. **Cultural sensibility**- an appreciation and respect of the range of cultural norms, values, and practices worldwide.
3. **Competency in communication**-being able to understand and make oneself understood, be that from language to language, culture to culture, or context to context encourages cooperation and builds mutual understanding.
4. **Action competencies**-the ability to contribute to global solutions, advocate for change, and take responsible action locally and globally (Parmigiani, D. (2022).

In early education, global competence is not thought through as facts to be transmitted but as attitudes like empathy, curiosity, and respect for difference (see Parker et al., 2016). This mindset at an early age will make children open-minded as they venture out and discover the world on a vital global level. Developing the skills and attitudes that enable global competence can start in early childhood, when children develop intellectually and socially Ramos, K. (2021). Early childhood education can provide the opportunity for children to be introduced to stories, games, and adventures that open their eyes to the diversity of culture and way of life in our world, as well as global topics that concern them from around the globe and prepare them this way for their future role as world citizens (UNESCO, 2015).

### Early Years Education Frameworks

Certain ideas in ECE provide a snapshot of how global competence can be built at an early age. Methodologies such as Montessori, Reggio Emilia, and the IB PYP (International Baccalaureate Primary Years Program) promote social-emotional development and respect for different cultural perspectives and intercultural understanding. These stories shape an organic perspective of upbringing at a cognitive-affective social-cultural level.

### **Montessori Method**

The MM is an educational philosophy developed by Maria Montessori, the idea being that you let kids learn at their own pace and accomplish things once they are ready developmentally. At the heart of Montessori's ideas lies a faith that children learn, not just in their own time, but also through an activity which interests and engages them in self-expression led by a listener (the teacher) who listens to those unedited voices alongside natural development in making. A place like this is a teacher of skills necessary for global competence: personal discipline, motivation, and intellectual capacity, enabling problem-solving.

In addition to being used as tools for global competence, many Montessori classrooms offer materials and experiences that expose children to other cultures, traditions, or languages. Children, for example, play on world maps (I should mention that I have actually drawn one!) or are exposed to cultural fests, stories from all corners of the world, etc., from their early years to know that diversity is something to celebrate. However, so that children develop a sense of belonging to the human family (Montessori, 1964) and start connecting this loosely understood concept as being tied to it by compassion or empathy Scarparolo, G. (2023), they need to develop cross-cultural understanding early.

### **Reggio Emilia Approach**

The Reggio Emilia Approach is founded on the belief that children are geniuses and can take charge of their learning. In this way, it contributes to creating active, generated meaning-reasoning, which prompts children to question and then seek, find, and build knowledge with others Tichnor-Wagner, A. (2019). Through the scaling of entitlement, inquiry, and project-based learning, students can dive into these edgy topics in the classroom around diversity, environmental stewardship, and social justice, which are all big pieces of global competence.

Another keystone to Reggio Emilia is the child's environment and how it is a teacher or "a third teacher." So, What Will Be Left in Bodily Classrooms? Bodily Classrooms will include culture, a full corpus of a world rich in difference and not the same as you are, containing materials that lead to reflective support for worldwide diversity. Moderators: The moderators are the teachers, and they are the ones to help kids get their hands and brains around this stuff, "cool" things you can learn about other people/cultures and ways of thinking, as a way to have intelligent conversations about those folks in 2018." So, you are being trained to think critically about the world around us, which we all need to do more generally Zeichman, S. (2023).

### **IB PYP candidate school**

The internationally recognized IB Primary Years Programme contributes to developing an international attitude to learning, where they learn that they will always be learners and inquirers. This early learning framework helps students become compassionate and lifelong learners who seek answers to question-based narratives of action with relevant issues and skills worth dependent real-world lives as well as ethical learners whose send multiple graduates are children of the world who can both succeed in IBA now and have caring & respectful thoughts for themselves and the cultures of this child UNICEF. (2020).

Internationalism in the PYP is organically embedded, enabling students to value their culture and appreciate other cultures. Students are inquiring into human rights, sustainable futures, and global citizenship with the transdisciplinary learning approach of doing this across subjects. UNICEF. (2020) - Nurture children Compassion in action for people and planet - Empower teachers with a wide array of tools (whether it is cooperative learning, storytelling, or inquiry) to deepen their students' understandings of global issues right before them.

### **Theories of Differentiated Instruction**

“Differentiated instruction is a teaching philosophy based on the premise that teachers should adapt instruction to student differences. It is an instructional approach in which various learning activities are used and academic content is presented to effectively address the needs of all student ability levels” Mansilla, V. B. (2018). That idea is particularly important in early education because students’ developmental levels, cultural backgrounds, and previous experiences vary. According to Liou, S. R. (2023), the four areas of differentiation are Content, Process, Product, and Environment. Differentiation allows teachers to create learning environments that are equitable, responsive, and inclusive because all students have many ways to learn.

Differentiation is based on constructivist learning theory Goyibova, N. (2025), which posits that learners are active constructors of knowledge due to their social interaction with experience and the world. In pursuit of global competence, differentiated instruction gives students an open space to engage with multicultural content, studying it more deeply, learning together in real time, and thinking through the implications of a question for the world at whatever speed or level they can muster. This is because differentiated instruction aids learning empathy, and that can be done when students are problem solving Nopas, D. S. (2024) and, in this instance, critical thinking, as well as a range of other cultural/communication attributes that foster key competences such as collaboration, decision making, and responsible citizenship by engaging the individual within the group.

### **Multicultural and Inclusive Pedagogy**

A multicultural and inclusive education is key to developing global competence; it helps create respectful and equitable classrooms for all students and is focused on getting results. Multicultural Pedagogy According to Kanellopoulou, E. M. (2022), multicultural pedagogy refers to strategies that affirm, accept, and adjust for cultural differences; promote reciprocal intercultural sensitivity across teachers and students; and ensure equitable access to learning by all Nopas, D. S. (2024). It also describes the written addition of other cultural voices to the curriculum.

Through multicultural pedagogy, early childhood teachers can employ multilingual resources, add culturally relevant literature, and engage children in cooperative learning with peers from different cultures Nopas, D. S. (2024).

### **Research Gaps**

Although more studies are focused on global competence and differentiated instruction, empirical research to date does not explore how these two concepts meet in early childhood education. Most of the literature in this area revolves around either global competence or differentiated pedagogy, but little research has considered how differentiated teaching practices can foster global competence in young children (OECD, 2018).

Furthermore, a large part of the literature on differentiating instruction has emerged from studies in primary and secondary schools, with less attention paid to preschool environments (Tichnor-Wagner, A. (2019). As early childhood is an extremely crucial developmental period for children, further research on effectively designing differentiated instruction to foster global competence in early childhood is necessary. This gap in the literature calls for more studies investigating pedagogical differentiation applied to enhancing global competence formation in early childhood education and care.

## **THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

### **Constructivist Learning Theory**

Constructivism is a persistent learning theory that posits humans learn by constructing their own perception of reality based on experience and reflecting upon it. Pioneered by the likes of Jean Piaget and, more recently, Lev Vygotsky, constructivism emphasizes the role of learners in constructing their own knowledge rather than that learners are passive empty vessels waiting to be filled by a teacher. Self-directed learning, characterized by manipulation and ‘interaction’ with the environment, is at its optimum Kerkhoff, S. N. (2020). This was further developed by Fousteri, M. (2024), who stressed that learning is a social activity and that cognitive development cannot be explained without referencing the culture in which an individual has been brought up.

Differentiation and constructivism are well aligned in emphasizing hands-on learning and teacher-wielded autonomy over curriculum to meet student needs. Regarding global competence, constructivism supports that part of what children learn when they experience diverse ideas, experiences, and perspectives jointly in practice situations or explorations is that different ways of understanding the world exist. Knowledge of the inquiry process is crucial if learners know that they make meaning out of their experience and can use stories to bring world events into relationship in their own lives, recognizing patterns within culture and society Parmigiani, D. (2022).

Second, the theory posits that students can relate to and comprehend growing globally interconnected matters via differentiated learning as the teaching is contextualized by what they know from their cultural background and world. For example, constructivist beliefs could cause the teachers to encourage hands-on experiences with global project-based learning in early childhood classrooms using themes that tackle global issues, such as taking care of the environment, and adventures and cultures experienced, so that EC students can become globally competent while being agents in their own learning Tichnor-Wagner, A. (2019).

### **Vygotskian Social Development Theory**

A screenshot from the published version of this essay by Lev Vygotsky’s Social Development Langelan, B. N. (2024) goes beyond constructivism to suggest that we are socially constructed as learners. Vygotsky argued that cognitive development was “mediated” by social interaction, and he maintained that learning took place through conversation with teachers, parents, or peers known as the more knowledgeable other (MKO). His most seductive idea is that of the zone of proximal development (ZPD), the gap between what a child can do unaided and what he or she can accomplish with help from someone else. The ZPD reflects the role of scaffolding in learning, where human teachers or peers support learners in achieving higher levels than they could on their own Fousteri, M. (2024).

Vygotsky’s theory also strongly emphasizes the role of scaffolding, where adults and peers can help children not by giving them direct instructions or answers but by providing clues to help them figure out a problem or master a new concept. It is especially important to help students build global competence when young students are growing up exploring topics with a global focus and connections with peers of diverse backgrounds, as well as ways that they can communicate conversations that lead them towards an understanding of others around the world. In addition, Vygotsky suggests that a child’s interaction with others 269 offers the means to develop abstract thought and understanding Fousteri, M. (2024).

### **Gardner's Multiple Intelligences Theory**

According to the theory of multiple intelligences (Gardner, 1983), these faculties are more than one, but rather than a single ability, we come across different ones. Kinds of intelligence: Gardner noted that there are many types (at least 9) of intelligences, namely, linguistic, logical-mathematical, musical, bodily-kinesthetic, spatial, interpersonal, intrapersonal, naturalistic, and existential, which were received a great deal later than SIGNAL. This theory assumes that students learn differently and each possesses a specific set of intellectual skills called multiple intelligences Mansilla, V. B. (2018).

MI Theory and the Teaching of Literacy. The implication of MI for instruction is profound. Teachers can design learning experiences that tap into a range of intelligences and reach all those students who are not being served well by traditional teaching methods. Within the global competency framework, MI theory supports the notion that individual students possess special talents and have a private pile of feces to bring into the classroom one time or another; however, with students. 'For instance, a child with high interpersonal intelligence may do very well in group discussions regarding global issues, whereas one with high naturalistic intelligence might engage themselves however it involves them, which is quite involved in environmental sustainability projects.'

### **Banks' Multicultural Education Theory**

According to James A. Banks' Multicultural Education Theory (2015), an education system must reflect the diversity of cultural origins from which students come. Banks suggests that education should be inclusive and transformative, ensuring that "students develop an understanding about and an appreciation for diversity in its many forms, citizens who can challenge false stereotypes" whose attitude relays the urgency of social justice (UNESCO. 2017). The theory requires changes in the curriculum, pedagogy, and organization of schools to reflect the diversity of society.

Banks articulates five major dimensions of multicultural education:

- **Content integration:** using a variety of cultures, regardless of your own, to teach anything.
- **Knowledge Construction Process:** Students understand how the knowledge came to be and what the perspective of it was.
- **Prejudices and Biases:** questioning and challenging stereotypes and biases.
- **Equity Pedagogy:** adapting teaching to meet the needs of students from diverse racial, cultural, and economic backgrounds.
- **Empowerment:** giving students the skills to do something and work for social justice.

The theoretical background for this current study is grounded in several educational theories, including constructivism, Vygotskian social constructivist learning theory, Gardner's multiple intelligences, and Banks' multicultural education, to guide an analysis of strategic differentiation in primary teaching. Such theories facilitate a fuller understanding of teachers' use of differentiated instruction to support students in developing global competence. By synthesizing these theoretical approaches, the study as a case can also include learning as a cognitive, social, and cultural activity through which children are well prepared to face global challenges in the future.

## **METHODOLOGY**

### **Research Design**

From an ECE perspective, using a mixed-methods research design, I explore how differentiated instruction might support the development of global competence. Hybrid designs are a good fit for educational research, as they combine the depth of a qualitative study with the breadth of a quantitative approach Mansilla, V. B. (2018). The study is divided into two strands: qualitative, which contains interviews and classroom observations on teacher practice, experience, and challenges; and quantitative, which collects data on learner-produced work-task outcomes and teachers' perspectives using structured questionnaires. The triangulation of data also enhances the dependability and credibility of findings.

### **Population and Sample**

Participants. For this study, participants will be preschool teachers and ECE center-based children aged 3–7 years. A sample of schools implementing or preparing to implement some global education provision was recruited for the study. We aim to achieve a sample of approximately 10–12 teachers and 80–100 students. The support is delivered in partnership with teachers, who are early years trained educators and recruit children for intervention following written parental consent. However, there is a purposive attempt to recruit respondents with previous exposure to the research subject (Etikan et al., 2016).

### **Data Collection Instruments**

Different perspectives will be recorded using different instruments:

- **Teacher Interviews:** Semi-structured interviews investigate teachers' visions of global competence, spectrum differentiation practices, and challenges as seen by themselves.
- **Classroom Observations:** The checklists include evidence of differentiation (i.e., what the teacher is doing) and evidence of student engagement in differentiation.
- **Questionnaires:** Quantitative measures more frequently collect data on teacher attitudes toward global competence and differentiation through scaled attitude Likert-style items.
- **Documentation Analysis:** Researchers examine curriculum guides, lesson plans, and instructional materials for evidence of global competence infusion.

### **Data Analysis Procedures**

Data from the interviews and observations will be analyzed using thematic analysis Liou, S. R. (2023). Coding will focus on three major themes: differentiation, cultural inclusivity, and challenges. Descriptive statistical analyses (means, frequencies, and percentages) will be applied to analyze survey data quantitatively. At the same time, inferential tests may be used where appropriate, which may determine the associations between what teachers report about their perceptions and practices Liou, S. R. (2023). Results from the first and second strands of data analysis will be integrated to understand the study questions thoroughly.

### Ethical Considerations

Ethical considerations for preschool children need to be considered. Ethical permission will be gained from the relevant ethics committee before data collection. Teachers and parents will provide consent with assent from the children in a developmentally appropriate manner (UNICEF, 2020). Anonymity of participants will be maintained by anonymizing and storing data. Institutions and teachers will be informed that participation is voluntary and can be terminated without penalty at any time. Also, attention will be paid to observing without disturbing learning environments where children are educated.

### FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

#### Differentiated Pedagogical Practices Observed

Survey results show that practitioners currently use differentiated pedagogy in the early years; however, the degree to which and how often differ. Most teachers indicated that they implemented DI in their classrooms with moderate to high confidence ( $M = 3.03$ ,  $SD = 1.27$ ). Not only do teachers value catering for diverse learning needs, but the variation in frequency of implementation has also been indicated by data. Multicultural content is an integral component of lessons; teachers reported using a moderate number of multicultural materials (ex., culturally based books, music, and stories). However, this is not reflected in the standard deviation of the responses, indicating that not all teachers give equal importance to cultural diversity in their classrooms. The most prominent barrier cited was resource deficiency and the inability of teachers to follow the full practice. Additionally, using technology integration specifically to promote global competence, with a score = 81, is infrequent and intermediate at best, with teachers reporting moderate frequency of multimedia tools (mean = 2.97,  $sd = 1.42$ ). The results of this study indicate the need to increase teacher readiness and availability to resources for differentiated instruction to be more commonly and effectively implemented.

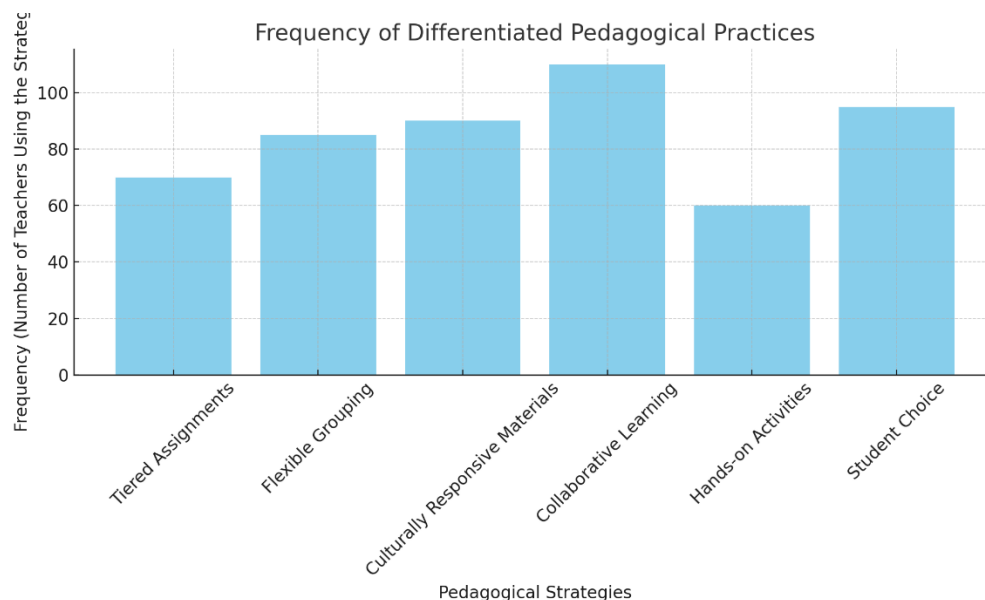
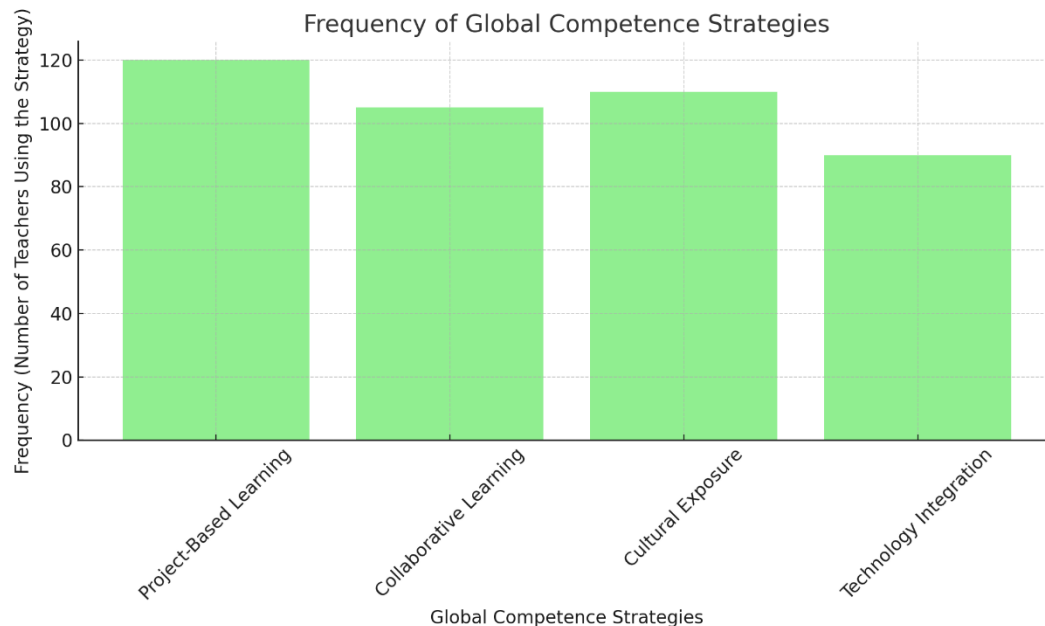


Figure 1: Frequency of Differentiated Pedagogical Practices

### Strategies for Cultivating Global Competence

Several strategies to develop global competence were discerned from teacher answers. One of the primary means teachers used to do so was through project-based learning (PBL) sharing an awareness of global real-world issues like climate change, fair trade, and multiculturalism with students. The paper suggests that global problem-solving is a way of working together and can be practiced in PBL, which supports critical thinking and problem-solving. The findings suggest that this approach encourages differentiation and leads to deeper engagement with global competence. Collaborative learning is also popular, with students being divided into groups to complete cross-cultural and global awareness tasks. This might be an effective strategy to foster socialization and give young people a shared understanding of the world. Adding multicultural resources (books, music, and realia from other cultures) that can be included in this unit provides the foundation for students to analyze and respond to multiple cultures, and support received from the study (teachers' use of these educational materials). Teachers' use of these interventions was generally reported as useful but varied in its extent, and teachers encountered barriers such as accessibility and time. However, those struggles are rooted in the idea that children must be exposed to various ideas that create the empathy and global awareness needed by responsible citizens in a multicultural world. Finally, technology placement in support of global competence building was observed, too. However, education abroad and exposure were embedded at a lower scale because learners' reasons were usually resource-driven. For those not adopters of virtual field trips or online research (nominal enablers and resisters), global education was not always possible to teach.

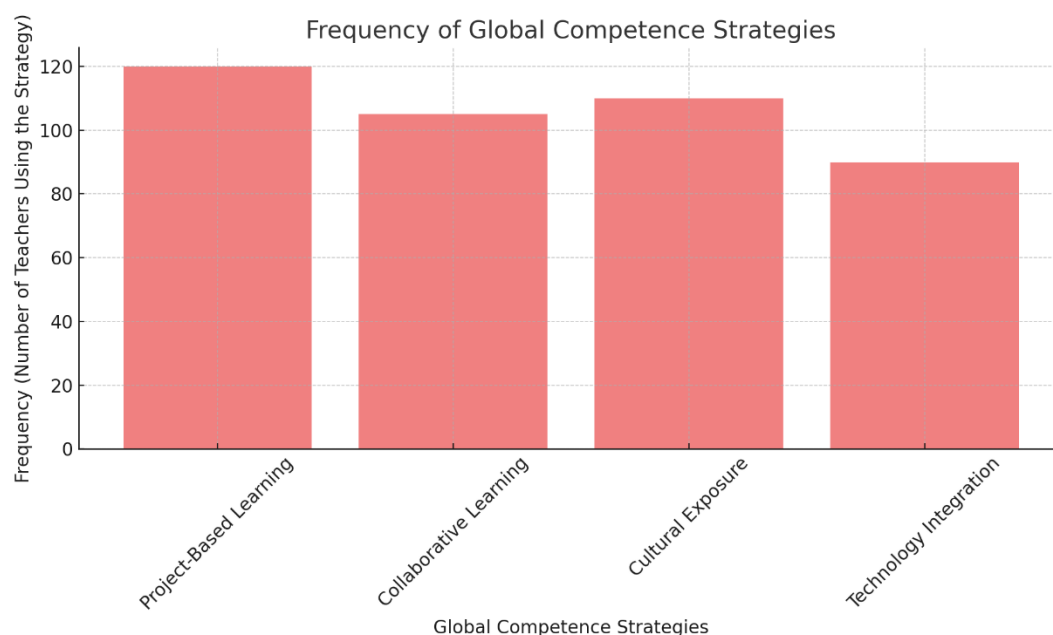


**Figure 2:** Frequency of Global Competence Strategies

### Learners' Responses and Outcomes

According to the students' replies, even the approaches used by teachers to encourage global competence have had an apparent effect on the students. However, they were more or less interesting for different types of learners. A high frequency of students also reported a high interest in learning about other countries and cultures. In contrast, a medium frequency was found for discussions related to the world distinction. Five

things we discussed showed moderate interest among yetis, such as diversity and environmental sustainability (mean = 2.93; standard deviation = 1.39). Considered in sum, scores on these totals for the GAI derive a 'suggestion' that they were only partially involved with global issues, but this is qualified by a standard deviation that suggests some subjects (students) were more and some less engaged than others. Students also loved group learning, especially collaborating on projects addressing global issues with peers from different cultural backgrounds. This aligns with teachers' observations about peer interaction being crucial to forming a more comprehensive aspect of global competence. In terms of outcomes for learning, a large portion often describes talking about world topics at home, which represents the risk they take or give, and that is transferring the encounter with different kinds of content and cultures outside school. However, the data indicate that not all students are exploring global competence themes and topics similarly, and more personalized methodologies are required to ensure access/engagement for all students.

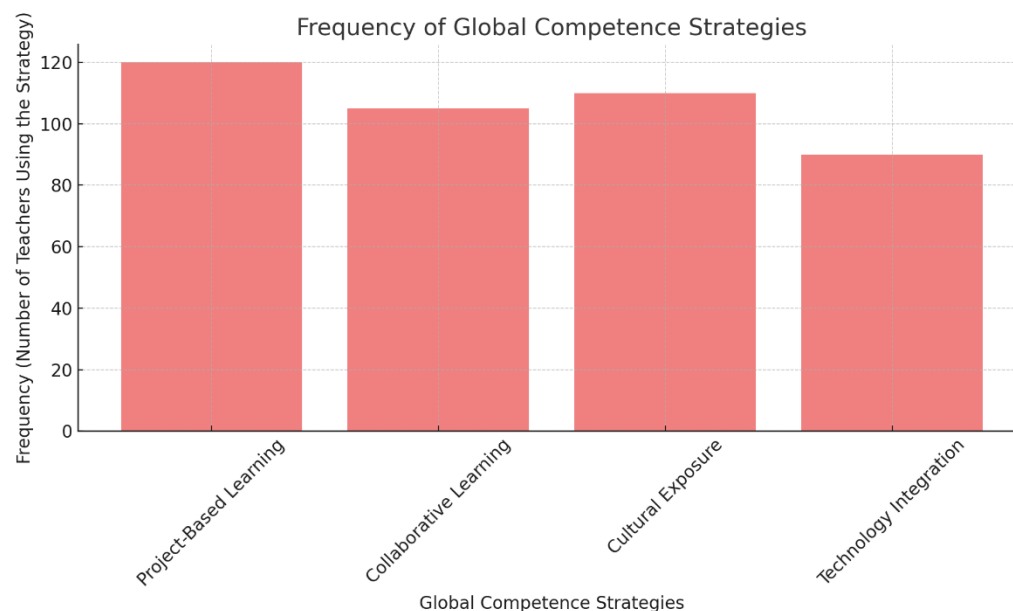


**Figure 3:** Frequency of Global Competence Strategies

### Identified Challenges and Barriers

Teaching strategies and reaching target T, whereas (t)he 8 A striking contrast to the wide range of teaching strategies reported as promoting GC, we also uncovered barriers that have been reported to inhibit immediate implementation of these as well: 9 Lack of resources was something that came up all the time when concerning prices behind their own buildings and if they would be able to access multicultural teaching materials and technology. More books, videos, and diverse global content for students are being made available to different regions around the globe. There should be more inclusion where books are concerned. Unequal provision can also suggest differences in the resources and experiences to which individual schools have access and the quality of teaching on global competence. Another two barriers mentioned in the report were time pressures and narrow curricula, with many teachers arguing that today's to-do list leaves too little space for a comprehensive look at global issues. The variation beyond the mean for teacher confidence (3.03; SD = 1.27) suggests a lack of agreement among teachers about their adequacy in content preparation. Some teachers already feel they teach for global competence, but others need support and training. At the same time, parents also observed that they were worried about how complex some of

these global issues might be and if information was missing in such messages at the preschool level. These concerns emphasize resourcing, training, and curricula having enough flexibility to achieve successful exposure to global competence in early childhood.



**Figure 4:** Teachers' Challenges in Promoting Global Competence

The results of this study seemed to indicate a significant acknowledgement of increased involvement of DI and GC in teacher preparation, but also barriers related to the adoption of such practice (goals). Teachers also use culturally responsive teaching, project-based learning, and teamwork to foster students' global competence. However, they wrote that resource limitations and a lack of trained teachers got in the way of establishing such practices. According to student feedback, the degree and nature of global competence preparation vary. Moreover, from there, that suggests where you might want to be making some concerted efforts at intervention and support for teachers and students. We also have to consider the myriad methods through which different teachers are trained, the less standardized allocation of resources between schools and regions, and a curriculum that naturally makes at least enough room for flexibility to get into the weeds about how things fundamentally work in the world.

## DISCUSSION

### Linking Findings with Literature

One reason is that the 2015 teachers' survey shows that differentiated instruction is, in this respect, against educational theories, as discussed by Zeichman, S. (2023), who notes that one needs to adjust teaching to accommodate diverse learners. Overall, survey participants said they used various differentiation methods such as tiered instruction or materials, flexible grouping, and culturally responsive materials," which may be consistent with Tomlinson's assertion that these practices could lead to more equitable learning experiences. However, the moderate levels of use and patchy implementation suggest that differentiation is widely accepted but not fully actualized (again see Darling-Hammond et al., who have debated), and is constrained in its use, for reasons of resource commitment, time availability, and teacher self-efficacy.

Regarding global competence, the findings of our study are in line with those theorized by Goyibova, N. (2025) and OECD (2018), according to whom global competence is the ability to face complex issues, respect cultural diversity, and act to contribute to a more sustainable world. The teachers in this study employed project-based learning and working together, which resembles the emphasis on active learning and cross-cultural exchange as unique practices for developing global competence found in the literature. However, the rare use of technology in international learning ( $M = 2.97$ ) reveals a Astuti, I., & Afendi, A. R. (2025) considers the unevenness in digital technologies used in early childhood education.

Astuti, I., & Afendi, A. R. (2025) along with the most frequently mentioned challenges teachers have identified in this study - such as: lack of resources and under-executed training are reported perpetually in the literature. Banks (2015) identified teacher preparedness as a significant barrier to the effective implementation of multicultural education. The findings of this study were also highlighted in the report, and a key finding concludes that “teacher confidence (mean = 3.03) with teaching global competence is significant for those wishing to stay” Kanellopoulou, E. M. (2022), who argued that instruction is necessary for teaching world competence.

### **Implications for Early Years Pedagogy**

There are also implications for early-year pedagogy and dilemmas associated with creating experiences that contribute to the development of global competencies through multiple pedagogical processes in diverse contexts. The study findings show that teachers know from the literature that multicultural education and global competence are very important; however, they are not practiced in reality. In the pantheon of ECE pedagogy, a lesson here would be “how you systemically bake in an intercultural competence to your curriculum.”

Foremost amongst these is the call for a deeper institutionalization of differentiated instruction based on long-term professional development structures that provide teachers with the knowledge and confidence to undertake such practices. That will mean giving teachers professional development on teaching global competence and tools for reaching students with disabilities, among other initiatives.

As is stressed here, following that article, PBL (project-based learning) and CL (collaborative learning) are not attitudes in favor of most teachers: there should be time to learn and few resources, which allow easy implementation of such methodologies. In short, educational institutions need room in the flexible curriculum to absorb these educative components. Empower Teachers to Integrate Global Competency in All Areas. None of this happens if teachers do not have a broader license to infuse global competency learning across subjects and consider it something central to early learning rather than an afterthought.

Fourth, there is a technology platform vacuum that facilitates teaching global competence. As digital educational content becomes the norm, technology must be used to grab students’ attention and teach them more about our world. Virtual field trips, global collaborative projects, and interactive media are other ways to open students’ eyes to other cultures and the world’s problems.

### **Role of Teachers and Curriculum Designers**

Teachers and educational developers play a key role in differentiated pedagogy and children’s global competence. This study’s findings highlighted the importance of an integrated approach that can guide teachers in combining different teaching styles with learners with different characteristics. What’s more, it isn’t sufficient to empower teachers with the theory behind differentiation or global competence; they need resources that will help them put these ideas into action in their classrooms.

Curriculum designers are also vital in ensuring that global competence does not adhere to the edge of schools' pedagogical system as if it were a merely optional add-on. A global competence-driven curriculum. A curriculum focusing on global competencies could address issues relating to sustainability, diversity, equality, and intercultural understanding. This will help create an entire educational pathway that presents and teaches these critical subjects from a young age.

Moreover, teachers need to be pushed to work together. Other educators say that teachers have begun using group work to force their students to wrestle with global themes. This type of integration between teachers, especially across disciplines, would be possible in relation to such forms of global education competency.

### **POLICY AND PRACTICAL CONSIDERATIONS**

Implications for policy and practice in early years education regarding global competence and differentiated pedagogy. This study's conclusions may also have broader implications for policy and practice elsewhere regarding introducing global competence and differentiated pedagogic practices.

**Teacher PD:** Continual teacher training in differentiated instruction and global literacy is necessary. Officials need to learn a lot about how to actually teach and incorporate it, and policymakers have to make that possible.

**Collaborative resources:** Teachers' perspectives on the poverty of resources to be equalized in policy. Public officials and educators also must provide more resources so that teachers can access the materials, technology, and other assets they need to teach students in ways that are important culturally and also will help young people develop a global mindset.

**Flexibility of the curriculum:** Many existing systems are fairly rigid because teachers have too little time to devote to making the curriculum more open to global issues. What's needed are systems that accommodate this kind of flexibility so that teachers can integrate global competence in one way or another across the subjects and practices.

**Parent Involvement:** Finally, policy should allow parents to participate in GECED. Workshops and forms could also be organized within the schools to sensitize parents to why it is important that their children learn about other people's cultures and what happens all over the world. Furthermore, everyone should know that building a globally competent labor force concerns everyone, not only those at school.

### **CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

This paper explored how faculty differentiate instruction for young children to acquire global competency within an early childhood program. The findings indicate a broad consensus on the significance of global competence regarding teachers, although differentiation levels vary widely. The surveys named staff shortages, lack of resources and time, and shaky anvils on which to hammer out the practice while also teaching that is, contradictions inherent in the educational system as they developed these practices as a rationale against: "Though most teachers use differentiated instructional practices (e.g., tiered assignments or cooperative learning), survey respondents believed they were hampered by inadequate (as opposed to manipulated) resources, time" Teachers' self-confidence to teach global competence is medium to strong; while the multicultural materials in use are not systematically incorporated into their curriculum. On the student end of the spectrum, it seems obvious that interest in international relations varies enormously, and the interested students already vary widely in terms of level of engagement and depth of understanding. There may be a need for more differentiated instruction, but how this might be accomplished is unclear.) It

has also been revealed that parents have little or no contribution to developing global competencies among the young, showing a need for school-family partnership. The overall results culminated in a need to develop international-mindedness among young children from within their environments: teacher training, resource provision, and curricular flexibility.

Therefore, the meaning of PHP-IPI-PICAI for this research is that schools' teacher in-service might be needed for DI and global competence, not other instruction. Hence, they know what part they want to integrate into their classes in-service. Moreover, there should be more opportunities for teachers to infuse the subject of global competence into a curriculum that is less bound by this line. Moreover, the investment in iOS would provide culturally responsive instructional supports (books, videos, technology) that could help ensure that all students have equitable access to rich and diverse learning opportunities. Cooperation has become a virtuous effort, such as helping to develop empathy, one of the two major components of global competence (the other component is cross-cultural understanding), that must be reinstated. The problem-based learning approach must be extended and deepened so that students can connect their work with global challenges of the real world.

This personalized learning through global competence is the bottom line for any policymaker in responsible government, or school anywhere: How they are prepared to live and succeed responsibly in this open world. We need to develop a policy that will support them and enable them to teach in that way, through professional development, so we have teachers who can learn how to differentiate instruction. Moreover, closing, as critical is the redistribution of resources, and governments must ensure that schools are given the resources for technology use and multicultural materials when they do. Policy implications and curriculum efforts Finally, we add our voice to other researchers who are urging policy-makers to consider how early childhood systems internationally can more consistently operationalize global competence throughout their programs (for example, NRC With a lesser outward tilt than the American model, these educators have signaled that for better or worse (Takeuchi ), engaging young children e.g., through the arts with what is happening outside one's country is something that does not take place at the periphery but in fact lies at the center.

The effect of these pedagogic practices on students' attitudes and perceptions about global citizenship and intercultural communication may be further explored and investigated beyond their schooling. Further, based on these findings, research is needed on how parental involvement can best be supported to facilitate global competence at home and how digital tools might be used effectively to foster global learning experiences within early childhood classrooms. Further, we must explore the barriers to incorporating GC in a culture and how GC can be modified for better integration with the educational system of that culture.

However, this study advocates for a systemic transformation in early childhood education, which can lead to successfully developing people with global competence while employing differentiated pedagogical methods. The findings suggest that teachers already try to infuse global competence in their education, but need significantly more support and resources for these attempts to be successful. If we actually hear and implement suggestions like this, I believe that comes with the hope of creating a generation of students with inclusive hearts and global minds.

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