

Intercultural education in Kosovo: A longitudinal case study

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ABSTRACT

This longitudinal qualitative study was conducted with Kosovo PhD students over a 3-year period who engaged in an ongoing intercultural education project at the University of Pristina's Faculty of Education in Kosovo. The purpose of this article is to deepen the understanding of intercultural education with Kosovo as a critical case study. The data included pre-and post-open-ended surveys, one on one interviews, and follow up interviews regarding intercultural education during the longitudinal experiences. The findings of the study suggest the need to contextualize the issues of intercultural education and integrate local to global connections in relevant teaching, research, and service.

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1. INTRODUCTION

The project for this study took place in Kosovo over a three-year period; the first two times to work with educators on international education (teaching and research), the third to take university students from the US on a study abroad to Kosovo, the fourth again to extend the teaching and research with educators into a longitudinal; experience, and the fifth to continue the ongoing project. Each experience is revelatory in so many ways and truly exemplifies the importance of intercultural education.

The purpose of this article is to deepen the understanding and issues of internationalizing education with Kosovo as a critical case study. The focus of this study was to determine Kosovo doctoral students' perspectives regarding international education. The goal is also to determine if perspectives change over time due to experiences, course engagement, and project development. The research question is: What is Kosovo doctoral students' perceptions, knowledge, skills, and dispositions regarding international education?

Unfortunately, Americans know little about Kosovo and it is truly a shame; as these people are truly models of heroism and courage for today's world. It is quite humbling experiencing the people and their culture given all they have been through in recent history. The stories told of ongoing struggles throughout history, mass genocide, rape, attempted destruction of their culture, the banning of schools, and parents, teachers, and kids creating a parallel system in the dark, at night to ensure education... on and on. These stories strongly provide a realization of the ongoing issues regarding humanity. Despite the horror, we need to share these stories as we cannot deny history, we can only learn from it and act on it if we tell personal stories.

Kosovars of Albanian ethnicity (the great majority of the population) suffered unspeakable brutality in the last decade or so of the 20th century where neighbors (Serbia) attempted to not only destroy the culture, but the people as well. There are stories of 20,000 + women and girls who were tortured and raped at the hand of the invading Serbs; now memorialized in a monument in the capital of Pristina, Kosovo called Heroines. Men and boys were often killed as a way to create an ongoing culture of fear in the society. Schools were banned for years, and teachers and parents had to create moving “parallel schools” in the darkness of night so that the Serbs couldn’t find them. Entire families of the ethnic Albanians in Kosovo experienced a diaspora to all parts of the globe. A “globalized” world necessitates international connections, thus challenging traditional conceptions of nationalism, exceptionalism, and hegemony [1, 2].

Investigating the internationalizing of education through Kosovo as a critical case study provides an example suggesting that we need to contextualize the issues and investigation of global/international connections better. The findings also suggest there are threats to the public sphere and to emancipatory local to global connections, thus requiring critical approaches to such investigations/research. The methods employed offer a variety of perspectives allowing for critical analysis and ultimately transformative ideas. Using such examples provides stories, applications, ideas, and challenges that can hopefully open up the possibilities for additional perspectives to be offered.

The context in which this research is conducted makes the study relevant and innovative. Kosovo is the newest country in Europe declaring independence in 2008 following decades of hardship under former Yugoslavia and Serbia (1980s, 1990s). The educational system during the 90s operated under the conditions that formal schooling in the language of majority population (Albanians) was banned by the then regime and people organized a parallel education system in private houses. An entire generation thus experienced a very informal schooling, if at all. As a result of this and in view of its aspirations to join the European family, Kosovo embraced the concept of internationalizing education by learning from the practices and models of other education systems and by adopting the orientation towards modern values of democratic and global citizenship in its school and teacher education curricula.

The Background

Three cohorts of doctoral students are the participants of this study, each a Kosovar educator, and each with family and friends who were murdered or disappeared 20 years ago. Each of the students/educators remembers having to flee or hide numerous times as Serbs “intimidated in every way possible.” Their stories are rife with ongoing issues of desperation, unimaginable stress, and survival. They tell of their ongoing struggles to learn in private homes or mosques when schooling was outlawed for over 10 years. Despite all of this, one witnesses daily a passion, positivism, and courage unique in all my cultural experiences. These are living heroes of history.

Kosovo is ethnically mostly Albanian and Roma, and is over 90% Muslim. The typical American stereotype for someone of the Muslim faith is dispelled immediately upon interacting with people in Kosovo. There are few people dressing in traditional clothing; in fact most look as “western” as most anywhere. Equality between the genders is stressed (more women are studying in colleges than men). Many of the Kosovars encountered say they celebrate their faith once or twice a year; that their Albanian ethnicity, and tolerance for all comes before religion. They continually the sharing of their practice of tolerance of all and teaching that all Muslims are not the same.

Additionally, Kosovo appreciates the US more than perhaps any other country as they see the US as they savior during the genocidal years of the 1990’s. There is even a statue of Bill Clinton in a city square, major streets named Bill Clinton Ave. and George Bush Ave., and a clothing store named after Hillary Clinton. A special place in the national library is called “American Corner.” The U.S. Embassy is very engaged in supporting civil society programs; and the U.S military base in Kosovo is still quite active.

Kosovo has basically rebuilt their country in less than 20 years; it is poor, and ignored by many in the world, but proud and passionate they are. Kosovo is struggling with 30%+ unemployment, lack of infrastructure funding, corruption in business and government, and a mass exodus of the young. They desire strongly to be in the EU, but remain unrecognized as an independent nation by Russia and China, for example (those countries still consider them to be a Serbian province). Nevertheless, they have developed partnerships with numerous countries, NGO’s and foundations that provide needed funding, consistency, and organization. It does seem that there may be quite an overlap or even smothering by “helpers” from abroad. Kosovo seems appreciative for this, however. Nevertheless, Kosovo is a “new” country in more ways than one.

The Projects

Despite all of horror in the past all Kosovars are welcoming, open, helpful and basically just incredibly nice people. Young and old are always willing to sit for a coffee and talk, or interact in a museum or street. To restate, they love the U.S. and Americans almost as much as they love their own country-which

makes one ponder, given what the US has come to stand for as of late... They are struggling with current U. S. activities in the world, but strongly believe that the U.S. will “be back.”

The initial project called for interactions with doctoral students regarding international education, qualitative research, and general advising on the doctoral process. In the project included the partnership of an American professor with a Kosovar professor (from who many in US academia could learn much) on research, a memo of understanding and additional partnership projects. It was an incredible time here the first year, the second time was just the same, and the third was intended to allow US educators/students an opportunity to experience through study abroad what one had the previous two years.

The initial project stemmed from an email from Fulbright asking for proposals to serve as a Fulbright Specialist to Kosovo focusing on a doctoral program in education. The themes I proposed to address with the students and faculty included, qualitative research methods, international education, doctoral research and writing, advising students, and research on Kosovo as a case study in international/intercultural education. A little over two weeks were spent focusing on these themes in courses, individual and group meetings, and in larger presentation. Additionally, travel around the country was of course included.

The second experience was designed much like the first. The project was made possible through grants from the University of Pristina and the University of Houston. The focus included the same themes but engaging mostly with a second cohort of students. It was also. Important to meet individually and in small groups with previous cohort students for follow-up. Travel around the country and to Macedonia was also included.

The third experience was designed as a study abroad for US educators/students to experience Kosovo as a case study in international education. A particular goal was to facilitate partnership between US students and Kosovo students in educational research. The University of Pristina was the host for 10 US participants. The program included daily lectures and excursions in Pristina to cultural and educational sites. Other components included travel to other cities in Kosovo and to Macedonia and Albania.

The fourth and fifth experiences stemmed from a Fulbright Scholar Award and was divided into two components divided by a winter break. A goal was to continue advising students in their doctoral research and writing process, to teach PhD level research and content courses, to work with faculty on potential research projects and to engage in a variety of outreach projects through presentations, meetings, consulting, and conferences. The fifth experience was cut short due to the COVID-19 health crisis.

Literature Review

Developing the critical capacity for “new operational and cultural ‘knowledge’ in order to acquire a global perspective that provides access to new forms of work, civic and private practices in their everyday lives” is vital in the 21st century [3]. Likewise, a key is improved intercultural education with a focus on intercultural competence [4]. Our educational approaches could be the place to enable the critical investigation of meaningful knowledge and issues, debates regarding globalization, and relevant problem-based global education that can provide the context for developing the skills engage in active transformation for social justice. “Reading the world” through context and relevant connections provides the opportunity to apply knowledge and develop skills in critical ways, as Kincheloe [5] recommends. Responsible global citizenship requires knowledge of “others” in the world, whoever they might be. It also requires the skills to understand and act in the best interest of the majority of the people.

Teaching and learning must include education for a global perspective so that students might also become responsible “active” citizens of the world [6-8]. A critical component of education in general, and social education specifically, is to promote an understanding of diversity at home and abroad: “integrating global realities within an existing school curriculum meets the needs of an ever-changing, ethnically diverse, increasingly interdependent, international community [9-10].”

Global/international education efforts must begin with an attempt to understand globalization. Globalization can be defined as “the intensification of worldwide social relations which link distant localities in such a way that local happenings are shaped by events occurring many miles away and vice versa [11].” In turn, critical research in social education attempts to challenge the unbridled neoliberal hegemony associated with globalization. Increased globalization presents many challenges for societies and the institution of education has a responsibility for addressing these “globalized” issues. Education in general should play a strong role and is enhanced through internationalizing partnerships and projects. International education calls for context and connections of comparative educational practices [1, 12].

In addition, cultural competence, collaboration skills, and an appreciation of global connections can be facilitated through cross-cultural experiences in teacher education, thus translating to the classroom. The benefits of a student-centered approach enhance interaction and integration of intercultural learning [13, 14]. Many schools, colleges and universities are recognizing the need for global competence and promoting understanding among cultures [15]. In addition, linking multicultural education and global issues is facilitated through meaningful international education projects [16]. James suggests that internationalizing

education develops a sense of interconnectedness, empathy, and tolerance, which are much needed in today's world [17]. Education programs have much work to do to accomplish these ideas. A way to move forward is to share ideas and engage in collaborative internationalizing of the curriculum.

The knowledge base should include an understanding of who people and cultures in the world are, what they do, and where they are. The skill set should include inquiry and critical literacy/thinking skills, leading to activism. Rethinking teaching and learning in these ways could provide the opportunity to deepen our understanding and appreciation of others in the world, something essential to our roles and responsibilities as global citizens. A model for understanding global/international education is a web of interconnected and intersecting experiences as individuals become aware of the ways that political issues and actors shapes the local, familiar world around them [18] Given the global interconnectedness of the world today, the local to global context must be present. According to Merryfield [19] students must develop a global perspective that will emphasize cross-cultural experiential learning and stress commonalities in cultures that transcend diversity. James suggests that internationalizing education develops a sense of interconnectedness, empathy, and tolerance, which are much needed in today's world. Internationalization must examine the impact of a more internationally open program, classroom, and institution on students and effects on creation of new knowledge influenced by exposure to scholars and researchers from other parts of the world [20].

2. METHODS

Critical qualitative research suggests that educators at all levels must be engaged in collaborative research, teaching, and service [21]. Critical qualitative educational research highlights the need to cultivate knowledge, skills, and dispositions for global and civic awareness and responsibility [22-24]. Additionally, to be engaged, global citizens, students need exposure to multiple literacies and diverse perspectives [25, 26]. Critical qualitative research intends to investigate complex "real-life" educational and societal issues in great depth [27].

Kincheloe, McLaren and Steinberg [28] also suggest that such methods highlight humanistic approaches and challenge empiricism and positivism, for example. Critical education research is framed in in a social reconstruction tradition, continually investigating for social justice. The intention is to ensure research that is critically and explicitly grounded in personal and collective experiences-investigating the human condition in an educational context [28, 29]. In order to understand better the complexities of education in a culturally responsive context and to engage a local to global framing, a variety of relevant critical qualitative methods are integrated and adapted as need to address questions and issues. In order to record the "experiences, ideas, fears, mistakes, confusions, breakthroughs and problems that arise" narratives are integrated in such research [30, 31]. These approaches approach is intended to provide a structure, by which we can begin to understand the educational process, linked individual and societal issues, the local to global tensions and, the ways in which theory and practice impact.

Critical qualitative research methods (CQRM) were implemented prior to, during, and after the project [27]. CQRM assumes issues of equity and social justice in teaching, research, and service, challenging traditional approaches through bricolage, subjectivity, and critical consciousness [32]. Critical qualitative research informs global/international education through a lens that ensures the investigation of issues in education tied to power and privilege, ultimately leading to advocacy, agency, and activism [3]. Critical qualitative educational research also highlights the need to cultivate knowledge, skills, and dispositions for global and civic awareness and responsibility [33]. This methodology borrows from many other qualitative research methodologies; however, what distinguishes it from other methodologies is its orientation on the social justice and societal transformation [34].

Methods integrated include story/narrative, open-ended and semi-structured interviews/surveys (individual and focus group). Specific CQRM included pre- and post-project open-ended surveys, individual interviews with doctoral students, and follow-up interviews over time. A convenience sample of Kosovo doctoral students were sent the open-ended survey and asked to complete the survey and send back to the Fulbright Specialist prior to his arriving in Kosovo during the initial year and again to the second cohort during the second year. An initial activity during the teaching portion of the project included small group and then large group sharing of the survey responses. Subsequently the courses designed for the project focused on an investigating themes and issues in global and international education. During the courses, individual interviews were conducted; following the courses, students were asked to complete the post-survey; and then they were asked to engage in a follow-up interview approximately 6 months after the courses. All data were recorded and transcribed to determine relevant themes at each point.

3. RESULTS

Particular guidelines for CQRM include [35]: 1) Critical qualitative research is aimed at problems and issues encountered by the researcher, participants, and society in general in investigating equity and social justice in teaching and learning; 2) Critical qualitative research challenges traditional quantitative research, teaching and learning by encouraging a variety of interactions, including a focus on critical theory as a foundation; 3) Critical qualitative research employs a variety of qualitative methods (bricolage) to enhance triangulation, but also allowing for the evolution of the study (questions, themes, and issues); 4) Critical qualitative research facilitates a broader understanding of research particularly tied to the human endeavor.

Kosovo doctoral students were sent the open-ended survey and asked to complete and send back to the Fulbright Specialist prior to his arriving in Kosovo. An initial activity during the teaching portion of the project included small group and then large group sharing of the survey responses. Subsequently the course designed for the project focused on an introduction to global and international education (see sample module items in the appendices). Following the course, students were asked to complete the post-survey. The pre- and post-open-ended survey included the following questions and was provided to the doctoral students at the University of Pristina during each cohort experience:

- 1) What is your description/definition of global/international education??
- 2) How are global, international, and comparative education different? How are they linked?
- 3) What are 3 primary issues in global/international education? Why?
- 4) Why is global/international education important?
- 5) What knowledge, skills, and dispositions are needed to improve global understanding?
- 6) How does nationalism affect global/international education?
- 7) How important is developing the idea of global/world citizenship?
- 8) What issues and/or questions do you have regarding global/international education?
- 9) What comes to mind when you think of the United States?

While responses to the pre-experience survey were quite general, they did provide a basic understanding of the concepts of global and international education. Initial responses from the doctoral students indicate a need to be active in the world in order to affect change. Responses also indicated a variety of perceptions regarding global education, but generally suggested an understanding and appreciation of peoples and nations. Following the initial survey, students then participated a variety of global education teaching and learning modules/courses including readings, discussion, activities, and projects, in addition to semi-structured follow-up interviews. The responses were coded each time for emerging themes and students engaged in member checks to ensure accurate representation of the themes emerging.

Responses included from the initial survey and follow-up interviews include:

"Global education is important because it helps learners to understand interdependence in the world, understand that the person is part of the world, and that everybody's actions, positive, or negative have effects beyond themselves, community and the country where he lives."

"Changes are always brought through actions. People around the world have to act and actively participate in different projects nationally and internationally that aim to promote human rights, education, and social justice. It is the only way to create a better future for all people living in the world."

"Global education contributes to the awareness and consciousness of the students, respecting different diversity, as racial, ethnic, religious, cultural, and linguistic; it contributes in the understanding of human and natural diversity as social and natural values. Global education also helps in preparation of the students to become an active citizen in their benefits, society and the environment too."

"Developing the idea of global world citizenship is important because we need people who can advocate for global issues, to address global problems and to participate in solution processes and to reflect and share different points of view in this diversity world, to think and to work for global issues. For developing the idea of global citizenship, it is important to be aware for global issues, to be responsible and to participate."

A variety of themes emerged from initial coding of the responses from the pre-experience survey and the follow-up interviews. Initial themes included active citizenship, importance of global understanding, and the possibility of change through better international connections. These are often listed as goals of

global/international education [3]. The students expressed some confusion initially when addressing concepts such as global education, international education, comparative education, globalization, and intercultural education, but were able to debate and distinguish ideas, examples and issues as the experience progressed.

Responses included from the post-experience survey and interviews include:

“Global education is a creative approach of bringing about change in our society. Is an active learning process based on the universal values of tolerance, solidarity, equality, justice, inclusion, co-operation and non-violence? Global education begins with raising awareness of global challenges such as poverty, environmental degradation, violent conflicts or human rights. Global education motivates and empowers people to become active, responsible global citizens.”

“Global/international education is important because people around the world in different ways are linked and need to connect and communicate to each other in an interconnected society of the world. It is important because it help people to be more engaged in global society, to build bridges across different cultures, civilizations, languages, religions and races. It is important to make people to reflect for their role in the world and to be aware for global issues.”

“Global education is important because it helps learners to understand the interdependence in the world, understand that the person is part of the world, and that everybody's actions (positive or negative) have effects beyond themselves, community and the country where he lives. Global education contributes to the awareness and consciousness of the students, respecting different diversity, as racial, ethnic, religious, cultural, and linguistic; it contributes in the understanding of human and natural diversity as social and natural values. Global education also helps in preparation of the students to become an active citizen in their benefits, society and the environment too.”

“Global and international education are important because they raise awareness about different problems for all the people around the world. At the same time, they try to offer solutions for those problems. Global and international education helps on creating bridges and connections between countries and eliminating prejudices that can exist between nations. This would create possibility to prepare every citizen around the world with basic competences that they need to survive in this fast development of technology. Every system of education should put in his curriculum topics that will educate students for global issues and that will contribute in raising awareness for global education.”

The post-experience survey results demonstrate much more depth of understanding and impact of global/international education, perhaps as a result of the project experience. Participants shared specific examples and issues and indicated the importance of these concepts much more strongly. Awareness is suggested as vital with global connections as a beginning, but that education (teaching and learning) also needs to include more active involvement in international contexts. Participants also focused on a variety of global issues necessary to address in the 21st century.

Themes emerging from the experiences and post-experience survey and follow-up interviews demonstrate a more in-depth awareness, appreciation, and interest in global/international education. Themes are often mentioned in connection with what participants list as important global issues for the 21st century. Students also expressed ongoing interest in activism tied to global/international issues, including educating the world about Kosovo and other developing nation's issues following the experience. Specific themes commonly addressed include global citizenship, community, tolerance, and culture.

3.1 Global citizenship

Global citizenship emerged as a primary theme in the surveys, interviews and class interactions. A key is attempting to make sense of the concept for education and application purposes. Participants indicated a variety of issues regarding successful global citizenship, but generally focused on national curriculum and teacher education as to its application in teaching and learning. Additionally, participants suggested strongly that. The ministry of education and government in general should prioritize global engagement since Kosovo continues to struggle as a developing nation.

3.2 Community

The idea of community is vital in Kosovo's culture, as participants used the term to describe relationship building in a variety of contexts locally and globally. Several indicated that the Albanian culture

of Kosovo values family, neighbors, the municipality, and state as central to humanity-both individually and collectively. Again, the role of education in enhancing community through teaching and learning is stressed. The goal of Kosovo's increased involvement as an independent nation in the global community is also mentioned by participants.

3.3 Tolerance

The struggles of Kosovo through history and especially the last 50 years in mentioned by all. There seems to be a need for the world to understand the issues of the past, but that Kosovars see mutual respect, understanding, and tolerance as important goals in the 21st century. Kosovo's relations with other countries (Serbia, Russia, and China) and the social/cultural issues within the country are stressed as particular areas that need work. Several participants indicated that tolerance is a life skill.

3.4 Culture

Each participant speaks of a proud Albanian/Kosovo culture stepped in history. They often suggested that teaching of the appreciation of diversity and perspectives tied to culture are also very important. Many offered the unique perspectives in Kosovo of its language, history, and culture as tied to the United States, the United Nations and the European Union-that broad-based intercultural connection as much needed in today's world.

3.5 Significance and implications

The themes that emerged from the data collected in this study can raise a number of questions that are relevant for the contexts that are aspiring internationalization and embracing the global issues. The Kosovo context is unique in terms of having come out of an ethnic conflict less than two decades ago and the country is still having challenges to secure the opportunities for proper internationalization of education due to financial difficulties and limited possibilities for student and staff mobility. This research raises the following important questions that remain to be addressed by the international education research in order to provide a frame for countries to develop an agenda for internationalizing education:

Which are best practices to create quality cross-cultural experiences for faculty, staff, and students and to promote awareness of global/international issues?

- 1) How important is direct connection between people and cultures to improve global understanding?
- 2) How can we integrate global/international education in school and university classes?
- 3) Does knowing about global/international education enhance professional development opportunities for teachers and teacher educators?
- 4) In what ways does it enhance students in considering the perspectives of others?
- 5) What additional global/international experiences, questions, and issues need investigating?
- 6) What are specific needs of Kosovo regarding global/international education?

Finally, the study demonstrated that global/international education and experiences teaches us how to live in an international context, and provides vital knowledge, skills, and dispositions needed for the 21st century. Kosovo's context has shown that it is critical that education focuses on cultural awareness and diversity. This study also provides a model for advancing global/international education beyond traditional approaches through true intercultural experiences, using a local to global framework.

As a result of the 3-year study (although it is ongoing) initial implications for Kosovo and the larger international community include: The need to prioritize global/international education at all levels of the education experience; the need for awareness and activism related to global/international issues; the need to engage multiple perspectives and controversy in teaching and learning global/international education; integrating local to global themes in an integrated teaching and learning at all levels of the education experience; and supporting global/international experiences including study abroad, exchanges, and general travel.

This longitudinal study will be extended for the foreseeable future with subsequent doctoral cohorts at the University of Pristina, and will also include follow-up interviews with past participants. The research will continue to focus on ideas and issues related to internationalizing education, but also will be enhanced through narratives of Kosovo educator stories from the 1990's to the present. The initial research question in addition to those emerging from the initial study will be addressed going further.

4. DISCUSSION

"Humans are storytelling organisms who, individually and socially, lead storied lives. The study of narrative and other qualitative approaches, therefore, is the study of the ways humans experience the world [36]." The fundamental idea of critical inquiry in social education is that education is life and experience as

well, and can better help provide much needed local to global connections. Therefore, education and critical qualitative educational research are the construction and reconstruction of personal and social stories of teachers, as well as other strategies in which learners and researchers engage within an equity and social justice framing, for the betterment of society. Accordingly, the responsibility of critical researchers of education is to investigate the hard questions, to critically analyze issues and to suggest alternatives, and to render their experiences in meaningful ways so as to challenge issues of power and privilege. Intercultural education needs such stories [37].

We live in a world made up of many texts; it is essential that they develop multiple literacies that will facilitate the reading of signs, symbols, and images (texts) of that world. We must develop the critical capacity for “new operational and cultural ‘knowledge’ in order to acquire a global perspective that provides access to new forms of work, civic and private practices in their everyday lives [38].” Our educational approaches could be the place to enable the critical investigation of meaningful knowledge and issues, debates regarding globalization, and relevant problem-based global education that can provide the context for developing the skills engage in active transformation for social justice [39]. “Reading the world” through context and relevant connections provides the opportunity to apply knowledge and develop skills in critical ways, as Kincheloe [25] recommends. Responsible global citizenship requires knowledge of “others” in the world, whoever they might be. It also requires the skills to understand and act in the best interest of the majority of the people. The knowledge base should include an understanding of who the other people in the world are, what they do, and where they are. The skill set should include inquiry and critical literacy/thinking skills, leading to activism.

Increased globalization not only presents many challenges to the economy, society, politics and culture, but also has important implications for education, and the institution of education has the responsibility for addressing these issues. However, there is an increasing concern that educational systems throughout the world are not adequately preparing students for understanding of the world’s cultures, economies and political relationships [40, 18]. Educators and students should develop the habit of thinking of global ramifications: Is this in the common good? Will this protect the rights of all people? To create a positive atmosphere, in which students are encouraged to participate in global discourse and engage in global issues in today’s multicultural society, educators need to, first of all, develop multiple perspectives and understand the experiences and points of view of people different from themselves. As Fantini [4] and Jibeen and Kahn [20] suggest meaningful international education projects can help educators’ impact openness and awareness of the globe, and internationalizing education can develop a sense of interconnectedness, empathy and tolerance, which are much needed in today’s world.

5. CONCLUSION

Teaching and learning must include education for a global perspective so that students might also become responsible “active” citizens of the world. Global/international education efforts must begin with an attempt to understand globalization. In addition, cultural competence, collaboration skills, and an appreciation of global connections can be facilitated through cross-cultural experiences in teacher education, thus translating to the classroom. The teaching and learning process should include an understanding of who people and cultures in the world are, what they do, and where they are. The skill set should include inquiry and critical literacy/thinking skills, leading to activism. Rethinking teaching and learning in these ways could provide the opportunity to deepen our understanding and appreciation of others in the world, something essential to our roles and responsibilities as global citizens. It needs to contextualize the issues of intercultural education and integrate local to global connections in relevant teaching, research, and service.

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