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The Development of Global Citizenship Through Intercultural Virtual Exchange (IVE): A Systematic Literature Review

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| **ABSTRACT** | KEYWORDS |
| This systematic literature review (SLR) investigated the role of Intercultural Virtual Exchange (IVE) in the development of global citizenship among students. Drawing on 22 studies published between 2003 and 2022, the review synthesizes findings related to the impact of IVE on intercultural competence, global awareness, and key skills such as empathy, intercultural communication, and critical thinking. The analysis reveals that IVE offers a flexible and sustainable platform for fostering cross-cultural understanding and collaboration. However, it also highlights several challenges, including technological disparities, language barriers, and issues with pedagogical alignment, which may impede its effectiveness. The review emphasizes the significance of a well-structured curriculum, targeted educator training, and the integration of appropriate technological tools to enhance IVE outcomes. Furthermore, it identifies gaps in the literature regarding student attitudes towards IVE, necessitating further research into factors such as motivation, cultural sensitivity, and prior knowledge. The findings suggest that a comprehensive, interdisciplinary approach, involving educators, technology experts, and intercultural specialists, is crucial for optimizing the implementation of IVE. This review provides valuable insights into the current state of IVE research and offers practical recommendations for future research and practice in the field of intercultural education and global citizenship development. | Development; Global Citizenship; Intercultural Virtual Exchange (IVE);Systematic Literature Review (SLR);This is an open- access article under the [CC–BY-SA](http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/)licensehttps://licensebuttons.net/l/by-sa/3.0/88x31.png |

# Introduction

Globalization is characterized by the ease and rapid development of technology and information in the world (Kopish & Marques, 2020). The world is becoming increasingly interconnected (Reysen & Katzarska-Miller, 2013); individuals are experiencing enhanced mobility across countries, communicating without temporal or spatial limitations, and accessing diverse information across nations expeditiously (Ospina & Medina, 2020). According to various studies, globalization significantly impacts multiple aspects of human life, including social, political, economic, cultural, and educational domains. Several factors drive changes in education due to globalization, focusing on the impact of globalization on educational practices. Learning strategies that incorporate technology as a pedagogical medium represent one of the advancements in education, exemplified by the utilization of digital media, Virtual Reality, and Augmented Reality. Concurrently, globalization facilitates increased interaction, communication, and international mobility (Lenkaitis, 2021). IVE presents the potential to democratize intercultural learning by providing opportunities to a broader spectrum of students, irrespective of geographical location or financial circumstances. Consequently, IVE not only expands the scope of intercultural education but also offers a more inclusive and sustainable model for global citizenship development.

In the 21st century, student exchange and international education activities have become increasingly significant due to the impact of globalization. As international mobility in business, politics, and trade increases, the global community recognizes the importance of fostering cross-country, cross- cultural, and cross-ethnic relationships. It is becoming increasingly evident that individuals worldwide

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can collaborate and coexist (Esmaeili et al., 2022). At both the school and higher education levels, educators have incorporated multicultural issues into the curriculum to enhance students' intercultural sensitivity. These efforts aim to prepare students for a world where cultural diversity is a defining characteristic of daily life and professional environments. However, Deardorff (2019) argues that intercultural learning can sometimes overemphasize foreignness and the differences between cultures, potentially reinforcing stereotypes and ethnocentrism among learners (O'Dowd, 2003). While focusing on the diversity between cultures is essential, it is equally crucial to highlight shared human experiences to foster empathy and understanding. Various intercultural exchange programs, such as AFS, have been developed to bring students from different countries together, allowing them to engage in activities that introduce cultural diversity. These programs aim to broaden students' understanding of cultural differences and promote mutual respect. Furthermore, these exchanges often provide opportunities for personal development, helping students enhance skills in communication, adaptability, and critical thinking. Intercultural exchange is particularly valuable because it offers an alternative means to introduce and strengthen the concept of global citizenship, encouraging young people to develop a more inclusive and interconnected worldview.

In its development, intercultural exchange is not only conducted on-site at the campus or host institution but also online, known as Intercultural Virtual Exchange (IVE). This transition to virtual platforms has created new opportunities for global collaboration, enabling students from diverse cultural backgrounds to connect and interact without the necessity for physical mobility. Furthermore, during the Covid-19 pandemic, several virtual learning platforms, such as Zoom, Google Meet, Voov, and WhatsApp video, became essential in facilitating online learning. These tools enabled students to maintain their intercultural exchanges, ensuring the continuity of educational opportunities despite the global health crisis. Online learning environments provide advantages for international students to reflect upon the learning process that may occur during face-to-face classroom interactions, which could be limited without the utilization of technology (Han et al., 2022). The flexibility of IVE also allows students to engage in cross-cultural dialogues at their own pace, rendering intercultural exchange more accessible to those who might otherwise encounter logistical or financial barriers. Moreover, digital intercultural training tools play a significant role in assisting individuals to mediate cultural misunderstandings (Deveci et al., 2022) and develop global citizenship. These tools facilitate deeper understanding by guiding students through cultural complexities, offering insights into cultural norms, values, and communication styles. Through such virtual exchanges, students not only enhance their intercultural competence but also acquire practical skills in utilizing technology to bridge cultural divides and foster a more interconnected global society.

In the brief history of intercultural exchanges in education, early efforts were pioneered by Guadamillas (2017) through global learning networks in France and Italy, which established the foundation for more structured intercultural initiatives in education (O'Dowd, 2003). These initial exchanges were designed to foster understanding between students from diverse cultural backgrounds, facilitating collaborative learning and shared experiences. Intercultural learning is often presumed to provide inherent benefits between groups of learners from different countries; however, it is essential to recognize that these benefits are not always guaranteed. Further research is necessary to determine whether online intercultural collaboration effectively develops learners' understanding of the other culture's perspectives and worldview, particularly in digital environments (O’Dowd & Dooly, 2021). While the potential of virtual exchanges is significant, the efficacy of these interactions largely depends on their structure and facilitation, as well as the willingness of participants to engage meaningfully with cultural differences. Several tools have been developed to support Intercultural Virtual Exchange (IVE), including email (O'Dowd, 2019), web-based message boards, and video conferencing (O’Dowd & Dooly, 2021), which enable learners to engage asynchronously and synchronously. Additional digital tools such as augmented reality (Hadjistassou et al., 2021), teletandem (Cavalari, 2019), and platforms like Facebook (Fuchs, 2020)have further expanded opportunities for intercultural communication. More recently, advanced technologies such as Virtual Reality (Jauregi et al., 2020; Shadiev et al., 2020), Zoom (Allen et al., 2021), and Virtual Mobility tools like WhatsApp (Catalano & Barriga, 2021) have enhanced the immersive nature of virtual exchanges, enabling students to simulate real-world interactions and deepen their cultural engagement in ways that traditional methods could not achieve.

The cultural backgrounds and experiences in online learning significantly influence the quality of education, particularly among international students, and have the potential to exacerbate existing educational disparities (Han et al., 2022). These inequalities are notably apparent in intercultural virtual exchanges, where varying levels of digital literacy, access to technology, and prior exposure to intercultural contexts can present challenges for certain students. Notwithstanding these obstacles, the objective of Intercultural Virtual Exchange (IVE) aligns with the broader aim of fostering global citizenship, which is essential in the context of an increasingly interconnected world. Reysen and Katzarska-Miller (2013) define global citizenship as awareness, caring, and embracing cultural diversity while advocating for social justice and sustainability, in conjunction with a sense of responsibility to act. Numerous scholars from various disciplines have contributed to the conceptualization of global citizenship. For instance, Allen et al. (2021) discusses transnational or international citizenship, while Cavalari (2019) introduces the notion of world and earth citizenship. The indicators of global citizenship, as delineated by (Reysen & Katzarska-Miller, 2013), encompass prosocial values such as intergroup empathy, valuing diversity, social justice, environmental sustainability, intergroup helping, and a pronounced sense of responsibility to improve the world. In this article, the researchers systematically analyze these indicators to assess the efficacy and potential limitations of IVE in cultivating global citizenship among students.

# Method

A SLR can be defined as a methodical examination of a research question that employs systematic and explicit approaches to identify, select, and critically appraise relevant previous research, and to collect and analyze data from eligible studies (Moher et al., 2009). SLR provides syntheses of the state of knowledge in a field of study, from which future research priorities can be identified, facilitates the analysis of issues in primary research that should be addressed in future studies, and aids in finding solutions to complex problems that cannot be resolved by single studies (Page et al., 2021). In educational studies, SLR can assist researchers in determining the value summary of a phenomenon or trend, including the development of intercultural virtual exchange. Furthermore, SLR ensures a comprehensive and transparent approach, minimizing bias and enhancing the reliability of the findings. By aggregating evidence from multiple studies, it elucidates consistent patterns, identifies gaps in existing research, and provides a foundation for developing more effective educational practices. The utilization of SLR is particularly beneficial in fields such as intercultural education, where diverse methodological approaches and cultural contexts can complicate the interpretation of results, making it essential to draw insights from a broad range of studies.

Garner et al. (2016) posited that SLR is time-and resource-intensive, providing a snapshot of knowledge at the time of data incorporation from previous studies. Consequently, the findings of an SLR may become obsolete as new research emerges, necessitating regular updates to maintain its relevance and accuracy. Prior to conducting an SLR, researchers must determine the range of years for publication, as this decision can influence the scope and depth of the literature included. The selected time frame should align with the research question and ensure that the review encompasses the most relevant and recent studies. Furthermore, researchers must select a methodology to conduct the SLR that ensures transparency, minimizes bias, and adheres to best practices in the field. In this article, the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) 2020 statement was selected as the SLR method due to its structured, well-defined approach to the review process. The PRISMA 2020 statement comprises four main stages: identification, screening, eligibility, and inclusion, which facilitate researchers in systematically filtering studies based on predefined criteria (Moher et al., 2009). This method ensures that only studies meeting rigorous inclusion standards are selected for analysis, thereby enhancing the reliability and quality of the review. The implementation of the PRISMA 2020 statement in this article is illustrated in Figure 1, providing a visual representation of the process and ensuring transparency in the selection of eligible articles.

This systematic literature review (SLR) utilized three sources to identify relevant articles: Emerald, the ERIC database, and DOAJ. These databases were selected due to their comprehensive coverage of educational and social sciences literature, ensuring a diverse corpus of articles related to intercultural virtual exchange and global citizenship. The keyword search yielded 254 articles on intercultural virtual

exchange and global citizenship from 2003 to 2022. Following an assessment of titles and abstracts, 50 articles were selected for screening. However, 15 articles were excluded as they did not meet the study's criteria due to non-student participants, non-English abstracts, restricted full-text access, or being book chapters or articles based on previous systematic reviews. This underscores the significance of clearly defined inclusion criteria to ensure the relevance and quality of the selected studies. There were 32 articles in the eligibility stage, and the researcher examined the full articles to identify those that directly addressed the development of global citizenship through intercultural interaction. After a thorough review of the content, 22 articles were ultimately selected in the final stage, as they addressed the research questions and provided valuable insights into the impact of intercultural virtual exchanges on fostering global citizenship. This rigorous selection process ensured that only the most pertinent and high-quality studies were included in the final analysis.



*Figure 1. Selecting Article Processes*

* 1. Data Analysis

In a systematic review, the researcher should conduct an in-depth analysis to produce or write the study result. Kolm et al. (2022) stated that the researcher should follow an inductive approach to analyze the competencies emerging from the literature and assign them to themes, grouping competencies that seemed to be similar and writing them coherently. This process allows for a more structured and thematic synthesis of the findings, ensuring that important concepts are highlighted and well-organized. In this study, the researcher labeled the content regarding four primary themes, including the definition of IVE, global citizenship, the effectiveness of IVE, and the weaknesses of IVE. The thematic approach allows the researcher to clarify how each concept is defined and discussed across different studies, providing insights into how IVE contributes to the development of global citizenship. After grouping the content according to these themes, the researcher critically evaluates the findings, identifying patterns, contradictions, and gaps within the literature. This analysis also involves assessing the methodological quality of the included studies to ensure the reliability of the results. Finally, after organizing the data under the four key themes, the conclusion will be displayed as the result of the study, offering a comprehensive understanding of the current state of knowledge and highlighting areas for future research.

# Results and Discussion

* 1. Global Citizenship is not issue, but “Demand”!

The complexity of contemporary mobility and globalization necessitates that educators prepare their students to become global citizens Lenkaitis (2021). Educational institutions are required to equip students with the skills to address the challenges and capitalize on the opportunities presented by a global workforce to meet the demands of globalization (Kopish & Marques, 2020). Deardorff (2019) posited that global competence is the capacity to comprehend and respond to issues of global significance, a competency that is increasingly critical in an interconnected world. Furthermore, they contended that educational institutions should contribute to the development of students' global competence through various instructional strategies, such as investigating the world beyond their immediate environment, recognizing the perspectives of others and their own, communicating ideas effectively with diverse

audiences, and taking action to improve global conditions. This approach promotes active engagement with global issues, fostering a sense of responsibility and empathy towards diverse communities. Leask, as cited in O'Dowd (2019), elucidated that universities have responded to this need by internationalizing their curricula and incorporating competencies such as intercultural competence and global citizenship into the description of their graduate attributes. Moreover, the integration of intercultural exchanges into education can be essential for developing these competencies, as they expose students to diverse cultures and perspectives. IVE, in particular, offers a flexible and accessible means of fostering global citizenship, especially in times when physical mobility may be limited. Through IVE, students can engage in meaningful cross-cultural interactions, which enhance their intercultural sensitivity and prepare them to function effectively in global contexts. Consequently, IVE can serve as an effective and sustainable alternative to traditional international exchanges, contributing to the development of global citizenship in the digital age.

In the last decade, the concepts of intercultural and global competence have evolved and been supplemented by the notions of intercultural citizenship and global citizenship. These concepts, while related, possess distinct connotations and objectives (O'Dowd, 2019). Intercultural citizenship emphasizes the recognition of cultural diversity, the promotion of tolerance, and the active participation of individuals in their local and global communities. In contrast, global citizenship is broader, encompassing the sense of responsibility for global issues such as social justice, human rights, and environmental sustainability, beyond national or regional boundaries. This development highlights the increasing necessity for education systems to cultivate students who can navigate both local and global contexts with empathy, respect, and a commitment to collective well-being. Zong, as cited in Lenkaitis (2021), also emphasized the significance of describing how IVE programs can foster global citizenship through intercultural and global learning. IVE facilitates interactions between students from diverse cultural backgrounds, enabling them to share experiences, challenge their assumptions, and collaboratively engage in addressing global issues. Through participation in IVE, students can acquire a more profound understanding of different cultural perspectives, enhancing their capacity to engage with global challenges in a substantive manner. This form of exchange not only enriches students' knowledge but also develops the skills necessary to function as active and responsible global citizens. Furthermore, a study conducted by Lenkaitis and Loranc (2022) identified six key themes that reflect students' understanding of global education. These themes encompass the necessity to learn about diverse cultures, the importance of acknowledging multicultural perspectives, the requirement of understanding global issues and challenges, and the need for cooperation across countries. Additionally, the study underscores the importance of fostering peaceful coexistence and tolerance, as well as developing critical thinking skills related to global issues and media content. These findings accentuate the value of programs such as IVE in preparing students to engage with a globalized world and contribute to the development of global citizenship by cultivating both intercultural and global competencies.

* 1. The Effectiveness of IVE

The majority of studies posit that IVE can significantly contribute to developing intercultural communication competence (Catalano & Barriga, 2021; Lenkaitis & Loranc, 2022; O'Dowd, 2003; Shadiev et al., 2020), particularly in enhancing students' confidence (Ismailov, 2021) and improving intercultural sensitivity (Hagley, 2020). Through online intercultural exchanges, students have the opportunity to interact with peers from diverse cultural backgrounds, thereby increasing their understanding of different worldviews and communication styles. These interactions, facilitated through digital platforms, allow students to engage in real-time communication, which can enhance confidence in expressing their thoughts and opinions across cultural boundaries. Furthermore, IVE assists students in recognizing their own cultural biases and challenges them to reconsider preconceived notions, which is central to the development of intercultural sensitivity. Chen and Starosta (2000) posited that intercultural sensitivity is a fundamental component of intercultural communicative competence, which is defined as an individual's capacity to cultivate positive emotions towards understanding and appreciating cultural differences. This competence plays a crucial role in facilitating appropriate and effective behavior in intercultural communication, enabling individuals to navigate culturally diverse environments with respect and understanding. The process of engaging in intercultural exchanges through virtual platforms allows students to refine these skills, as they are required to adapt their

communication styles to diverse cultural norms. However, while current literature suggests positive outcomes, further empirical research is necessary to explore the direct correlation between IVE participation and the development of intercultural sensitivity in various educational contexts. Moreover, comprehending the impact of IVE on students' intercultural competence necessitates examining various variables, such as the duration of the exchange, the depth of interaction, and the pedagogical strategies employed. Studies have demonstrated that the quality of interaction in IVE programs is critical to achieving positive learning outcomes (Shadiev et al., 2020). Thus, future research could focus on identifying optimal practices for IVE programs, ensuring that they not only enhance intercultural sensitivity but also contribute to broader outcomes, such as social responsibility, global awareness, and intercultural collaboration. Additionally, it is imperative to consider how IVE can be integrated into existing curricula, offering students more structured and continuous opportunities to engage in intercultural dialogue. These insights will further elucidate how IVE can effectively support the development of global citizenship and intercultural competence in students.

Shadiev et al. (2018) stated that IVE can significantly enhance the skills of both students and teachers, enabling them to engage more effectively with the complexities of online learning. Through the virtual exchange process, students can develop critical perspectives on various texts and content while simultaneously forging international identities that transcend their national or regional affiliations (Porto, 2014; van Melle & Ferreira, 2022). This shift in perspective allows learners to see beyond local contexts and engage in more globally aware discussions, fostering a deeper understanding of issues from multiple viewpoints. Research by van Melle (2020) further highlights that most students show a strong interest in participating in diverse tasks within IVE settings, indicating a willingness to engage in cross- cultural learning opportunities. The international exchanges not only shed light on perennial issues in English language teaching methodology but also provide a viable model for sustainable virtual exchanges in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teacher training (Allen et al., 2021). These exchanges enhance cultural awareness, knowledge, and the ability to engage in meaningful cultural dialogue, which are essential components of global citizenship and intercultural competence.

Moreover, IVE contributes to raising positive attitudes toward cultural diversity, valuable experiences for learners, and the development of empathy (O’Dowd & Dooly, 2021; van Melle & Ferreira, 2022). Participating in intercultural exchanges helps learners better understand cultural nuances and enhances their ability to communicate effectively in diverse settings (Guadamillas Gómez, 2017; Hadjistassou et al., 2021; Hagley & Cotter, 2019). It also allows for immersive cultural exchanges, where students are encouraged to discuss course themes in a collaborative, cross-cultural context. For instance, the use of Virtual Reality (VR) environments has been shown to positively impact students’ perceptions of social and physical presence in online learning environments (Liaw, 2019), which in turn fosters deeper connections between participants. Additionally, IVE provides opportunities for learners to engage in meta-cognitive tasks, such as describing, sharing, and evaluating emotions, which can enhance empathy and emotional intelligence (Golubeva & Guntersdorfer, 2020; Lenkaitis, 2021). These activities play a critical role in developing learners' abilities to navigate emotional and cultural complexities, further strengthening their intercultural communication competence.

The effectiveness of IVE also contributes to promoting 21st-century skills to contemporary learners, as it aligns with the world language map and enhances students' capacity to engage in global conversations (Lenkaitis & Loranc, 2022). Through participation in intercultural exchanges, students establish personal connections and share collective responsibility in addressing both local and global issues, such as climate change, social justice, and cultural diversity (Lenkaitis, 2021; Szobonya & Roche, 2021). This interaction enables them to apply their learning to real-world situations and become more engaged citizens. In the teaching and learning process, IVE provides a novel perspective on teaching strategies, transforming traditional approaches into more interactive and collaborative models (Lenkaitis & Loranc, 2022). It encourages educators to reconsider their approach to intercultural communication and adjust their pedagogy to facilitate deeper, more meaningful learning experiences. IVE also creates additional opportunities for realizing the dialogue principles of participation, coherence, awareness, and unfolding, as described by Maele (2020), which enhance students' critical thinking and problem-solving skills. Furthermore, IVE facilitates methodological innovation, particularly in language acquisition, as it integrates technology and intercultural perspectives to support more dynamic and inclusive learning environments (O’Dowd & Dooly, 2021). It can contribute to improving multi-literacies, particularly in

the realm of linguistic competence, by enabling learners to engage in meaningful cross-cultural exchanges that extend beyond language learning alone (Su et al., 2021). This multifaceted approach allows students to develop their communication skills in various forms, including digital, social, and cultural literacies, which are essential for success in the contemporary interconnected world.

* 1. *The* Weaknesses *and Practical Implication of Intercultural Virtual Exchange*

Several benefits of IVE have been described above according to previous studies from 2003 to 2022. However, some studies have identified limitations of IVE as a platform for cultivating and developing intercultural skills. International students experience challenges in online learning related to English language proficiency, instructor unpreparedness, and isolation (Han et al., 2022). These challenges frequently result in feelings of disconnection, as students may encounter difficulties engaging with their peers in meaningful ways due to language barriers or cultural differences. It is evident that social interaction is a significant yet often absent component of successful online learning environments. Moreover, the absence of direct, face-to-face communication can diminish opportunities for students to receive real-time feedback, impeding their ability to develop intercultural competence effectively. Furthermore, online learning environments, particularly during transitional periods, necessitate different instructional strategies than in-person settings, and serving international graduate students in such environments requires specific considerations. A prevalent issue is the lack of pedagogical adjustments to address the unique needs of students from diverse cultural backgrounds, which can inhibit their full participation in intercultural learning. There is limited flexibility in the choice of tasks presented in all cases, which impedes the promotion of students' autonomy and responsibility, one of the characteristics of intercultural learning in virtual environments. Additionally, the reliance on pre-defined tasks restricts students' opportunities to explore intercultural issues at their own pace or according to their own interests, potentially resulting in missed opportunities for deeper engagement. Lastly, there is a need for more inclusive teaching approaches that can effectively address the varying levels of technological access and digital literacy among students from different countries.

The practice of IVE requires further development in curriculum design, particularly regarding the alignment of objectives, content, methodology, and evaluation. It is imperative to provide educators with training in intercultural education and related topics such as curricular design and educational technology (Ricardo & Haydar, 2016). In the absence of such training, educators may encounter difficulties in effectively integrating intercultural learning objectives into virtual exchange programs, potentially resulting in fragmented or ambiguous educational experiences for students. Some researchers have identified the need for implementation guidelines and specific resources to ensure excellence in language learning (King Ramírez, 2019). Furthermore, the absence of clear frameworks for evaluation and feedback mechanisms often impedes the accurate and equitable assessment of intercultural competencies. Student attitudes toward VE in the FL (foreign language) classroom remain incompletely understood (Hagley & Cotter, 2019), as varying levels of motivation, cultural sensitivity, and prior knowledge can influence their engagement with IVE programs. Research into the factors that affect these attitudes could inform strategies to enhance the effectiveness of IVE. To address these limitations, it is essential to provide educators with training in intercultural education and topics such as curricular design and educational technology (Ricardo & Haydar, 2016). Moreover, educational institutions should consider fostering interdisciplinary collaboration among language instructors, technology experts, and intercultural educators to develop comprehensive, well-rounded IVE experiences that address the diverse needs of learners.

O'Dowd (2003) mentioned that models of intercultural learning in IVE attributed to changing students’ attitudes, behavior, and perspectives had been the cause of much criticism in the literature. Intercultural learning emphasizes foreignness and cultural differences (Hamburger, 1990). Therefore, the risks led to a reinforcement of misunderstanding or even conflicts among students. If such problems keep occurring, they may eventually create negative stereotypes, which may influence future interactions with people from those cultures due to labeling them (Degens et al., 2016). Some researchers argue that focusing too heavily on cultural differences can inadvertently deepen divides, rather than fostering genuine understanding and cooperation (O'Dowd, 2007). This issue is compounded by a lack of context- specific frameworks in some IVE programs, which may fail to address the cultural nuances within particular student groups or regions (Chen & Starosta, 2000). Additionally, students who are inadequately

prepared for intercultural exchange may have limited opportunities to critically reflect on their own biases, leading to shallow or even harmful learning outcomes. It is also crucial to consider that students may experience discomfort when faced with unfamiliar cultures, which, if not appropriately addressed by instructors, can lead to disengagement from the learning process. As a result, some experts emphasize the need for IVE models that balance both cultural diversity and common human experiences, aiming to mitigate the risks of misunderstanding and fostering more empathetic cross-cultural exchanges (O'Dowd, 2021). Therefore, it is essential to incorporate more inclusive and context-sensitive approaches in IVE to avoid reinforcing stereotypes and to ensure that intercultural learning leads to positive outcomes.

# Conclusion

This SLR has provided a comprehensive examination of the development of global citizenship through IVE. The findings underscore the significant role that IVE plays in enhancing students’ intercultural competence and global awareness, particularly through fostering intercultural communication, empathy, and critical thinking skills. As the research indicates, IVE offers a flexible and sustainable platform for cross-cultural interactions, promoting understanding and tolerance among students from diverse cultural backgrounds. However, while IVE has proven to be an effective tool in preparing students for the challenges of globalization, its impact is not without limitations. Issues such as language barriers, technological disparities, and the lack of pedagogical alignment pose challenges that must be addressed to optimize IVE’s potential.

The analysis also revealed the importance of curriculum design in the effective implementation of IVE. A well-structured curriculum that integrates intercultural education, appropriate technological tools, and clear evaluative criteria is essential for achieving meaningful outcomes in IVE programs. The review highlighted the necessity for teachers to receive targeted training in intercultural education, curriculum design, and digital literacy to effectively facilitate virtual exchanges. In this context, further research is required to develop clear guidelines and frameworks that educators can apply to foster inclusive and dynamic IVE experiences. This will ensure that intercultural learning objectives are effectively met, and students are empowered to become responsible global citizens.

Despite the promising outcomes of IVE, the review also pointed to significant gaps in understanding student attitudes towards such exchanges. Factors such as motivation, cultural sensitivity, and prior knowledge of global issues can significantly influence student engagement and learning outcomes in IVE programs. Future research should explore the complex relationship between these variables to inform the development of more targeted interventions that enhance student participation and satisfaction. Additionally, the integration of interdisciplinary collaboration among educators, technology experts, and intercultural specialists could help address these challenges and create a more holistic approach to IVE implementation.

In conclusion, while Intercultural Virtual Exchange offers substantial benefits in the development of global citizenship, its effectiveness can be further enhanced through careful attention to curriculum design, educator training, and the creation of inclusive, context-sensitive learning environments. As the global landscape continues to evolve, IVE will remain a vital tool in preparing students for an interconnected world. Future research should continue to refine IVE methodologies, ensuring that they align with the diverse needs of learners and contribute meaningfully to their personal and academic growth in the realm of intercultural competence.

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