Introduction

Global citizenship is a foundational concept that is especially relevant in our diverse society. At its most basic, global citizenship is the idea that we belong to a shared community of fellow human beings. That is to say, we are not only citizens of a nation, we are also citizens of the world. This concept is particularly relevant today as individuals, communities, and nations become increasingly interconnected.

**Global citizenship: A concept based on social justice principles and practices that seeks to build global interconnectedness and shared economic, environmental, and social responsibility.**

**Cultural awareness: An ability to interact effectively with people of different cultures and socio-economic backgrounds.**

**Critical thinking: The mental process of actively and skillfully conceptualizing, applying, analyzing, synthesizing, and evaluating information to reach an answer or conclusion.**

1. **Global Citizenship—What Does It Mean?**

The United Nations Academic Impact (UNAI) initiative defines global citizenship as “*an umbrella term for the social, political, environmental, or economic actions of globally-minded individuals and communities on a worldwide scale*” (UNAI, n.d.). This definition, however, is broad. One might ask what it means to be “globally minded” or how all of these actions are linked to one another. What impact could this interconnectivity have on us as individuals? Furthermore, what roles do civic rights and responsibilities have in the global context?

There is no standard definition of global citizenship, but scholars and writers

generally, agree on common topics that fit under the umbrella term of global citizenship.

Such topics include:

• economic fairness

• equitable distribution of resources

• education

• poverty alleviation

• cultural identity

• the environment

• human rights

• health

• gender equality

• globalization

• social entrepreneurship

• social justice

• sustainable economic development, and

• corporate responsibility towards one another as global citizens

* Globalization: The increasing integration of world economies, trade, products, ideas, norms, and cultures in ways that affect all humanity as members of the global community.
* Social entrepreneurship: A commerce model that combines the principles of business with the objectives of social action or charity.

Taking action is another aspect of the definition. We can look at a global citizen as someone who believes in and identifies with being part of an emerging global community where he/she is an active participant in shaping its values, culture, norms, and practices.

The creation of this community further enables the spreading of technology across the globe that helps individuals to build a sense of belonging. The ability to communicate seamlessly strengthens our ties and connects us to the rest of the world. This is possible through the use of the Internet, our increasing individual and collective global economic activities, and through our feelings of empathy at the sight of inequality in our world However, technology continues to be available in limited ways to the majority of the world’s.

Global citizenship allows an individual to see the interdependence of nations and the interconnectivity of human activity that provides the impetus to advocate for the disempowered peoples of our world. It means to speak against injustices around the world and to be aware of the process of policy formation, to understand people of diverse cultures, and to learn from interactions with them. It also includes the acquisition of an acute sense of empathy that informs social action not only in one’s immediate environment but around the world.

* **Historical and Theoretical Overview of GlobalCitizenship**

In the world of our early human ancestors, social circles were small and knowledge was either passed down from elders or experienced first-hand. Compare that to society today where we live in communities of millions, have access to knowledge far beyond the *lore* of our elders, and contact with the rest of the world is literally in our hands. This places us all in a powerful position. We can enrich the world with good ideas or we can spread harm. Each person you know about and can affect is someone to whom you have responsibilities: to say this is just to affirm the very idea of morality. The challenge, then, is to take minds and hearts formed over the long millennia of living in local troops and equip them with ideas and institutions that will allow us to live together as the global tribe we have become. **The concept of global citizenship can provide the modern world with much needed** **critical and ethical perspectives on big-picture topics such as social justice** **and equity for all people. Furthermore, global citizens seek to ensure the well-being** **of animals, plants, and ecosystems on which all life depends**. The study of global citizenship provides us with multiple perspectives that can guide us toward understanding and experiencing the world more clearly and in new ways. It offers us diverse and critical considerations of many of today’s important issues. Above all else, it provides us with tools to be critically aware of our own biases /influencias and agendas.

As global citizens, we must consider our impact on communities that we are not members of, but ones that we have, nonetheless, invited ourselves to be a part of.

Although the term global citizenship is relatively new, it is part of a long tradition of something known as **cosmopolitanism**. The word cosmopolitan means “*world* *citizen*.”

Citizenship usually refers to membership and participation in a specificcommunity, which has specific legal rights and duties.

For example, a Canadian citizen has to obey the law and pay taxes. In return, Canadians have freedom of conscience, speech, and religion, and the right to vote, among other things. But those considered to be the early thinkers of global citizenship questioned this notion that citizenship should be tied to one location. The ancient philosopher Diogenes was one of the first documented global citizens. Much like an artist or musician today, Diogenes was notorious for challenging the conventions of Greek society in numerous and often outrageous ways. For example, he lived in a large clay pot in the marketplace of ancient Athens. When asked where he came from, he replie this notion that citizenship should be tied to one location. The ancient philosopher

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Philosophers throughout the ancient world had many shared ideas about what global citizenship should involve. Examples of their thinking included treating all people as fellow citizens and having one law common to the entire planet rather than a different set of laws in each country. These early philosophers were united by a belief in the shared humanity of all persons.

The spirit of global citizenship has emerged in many parts of the world over the centuries. Much of South and Southeast Asia was united by language and the activities of wandering traders, writers, religious figures, and adventurers.

There was a similar period of cultural flourishing under the Islamic Abbasid Dynasty, which stretched from the Middle East and Persia to North Africa and Spain.

Philosophy, science, mathematics, and literature thrived in a cosmopolitan environment that mixed languages, religions, and ethnicities. Global citizenship was also experienced in the great multicultural centres of the Ottoman Empire, including Istanbul, Aleppo, and Baghdad, where people from all faiths and ethnicities lived and worked