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Promoting Global Citizenship Education (GCED) in the Sultanate of Oman: An Analysis of National Policies

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Abstract: Global citizenship has recently attracted significant attention from nations for its importance in sustainable development. This study explores the extent of the adoption of global citizenship concepts and principles in Omani education by analyzing the reality of including global citizenship concepts in national policies in Oman. Qualitative Document Analysis (QDA) was used in order to establish the support force in achieving the main requirements of GCED in three Omani national policies: Education Philosophy, the Basic Law of the State, and Oman Vision 2040. The results reveal that the Education Philosophy is one of the most comprehensive documents on concepts, principles, and requirements. Additionally, sustainable development issues are among the key principles contained in the analyzed national documents. These are followed by principles of ecological balance, scientific thinking, and technology, with significant interest in other principles as well.

Keywords: citizenship education; global citizenship education; education policies; education in Oman

1. Introduction

Globalization has made the world similar to a small village and compressed time and space by means of modern technologies that link distant parts of the world together. Accordingly, the national education systems of nation states have been significantly affected by these technologies and their accelerating effects [1]. Consequently, the purpose of education is no longer merely to produce individuals capable of reading, writing and arithmetic, but rather its central role is to help people live in fair, safe, moderate, and inclusive societies [2].

Global citizenship emerged as a concept, practice, and term to capture a wide range of ideas related to anything from political identities, moral sensitivities, international competencies, environmental responsibilities, and local actions [3]. According to the United Nations (UN), global citizenship education (GCED) provides the skills, values, and behaviors that students need to meet the intellectual challenges of the twenty-first century, which include climate change, conflict, poverty, famine, and issues of equality and sustainability [4]. Education for global citizenship also gives learners the competencies and opportunities to benefit from their rights and fulfill their obligations in order to encourage the building of a better future for all [5]. Education for global citizenship includes many related fields such as human rights education, peace education, and education for international understanding, which are aligned with the goals of education for development [6].

It is well known that the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)'s commitment to education for global citizenship is rooted in its unique vision of peace, which in turn is based on its belief that lasting peace is not limited to security and freedom from violence, as mentioned in the organization's founding charter [7]. Thus, Oman is proactively cooperating with activities that are in line with UNESCO's core values. For example, a source of pride in the Arab world and the region is that Oman was the first Arab country to cooperate with UNESCO in the field of regional education by

promoting the values of global citizenship, which has become a key focus of UNESCO's efforts [8].

Moreover, the Omani Ministry of Education (MOE) has played a major role in promoting the concept of global citizenship among youth. A special department within the ministry concerned with citizenship worked on introducing the principles of global citizenship into the school curricula [9]. In October 2018, the Omani National Committee for Education, Culture, and Science, in cooperation with the College of Education at Sultan Qaboos University and the UNESCO Regional Bureau for Education in Beirut, organized a regional seminar on integrating GCED in teacher training in the Arab countries. It aimed to promote the values of education for citizenship to enable learners to work towards a more peaceful, just, sustainable, and inclusive world.

Considering these efforts, to what extent has Oman laid the foundation for creating global citizens in its education systems? What do the national policies tell us about the efforts toward and frames for promoting GCED in Oman? By reviewing the literature and analyzing education policy documents, this study aimed at answering these questions.

2. The Omani Context

Oman is one of the Arab Gulf states, and its capital is Muscat. Oman shares borders with the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in the west, the United Arab Emirates in the northwest, and Yemen in the southwest. The coast of Oman consists of two main seas, the Arabian Sea in the south and east and the Gulf of Oman in the northeast [10]. As of April 2021, the population of Oman was 4,482,335, of whom 61.1% (2,751,842) were Omani citizens, while expatriates constitute 38.9% (1,755,481) [11].

Oman has an ancient historical civilization, as many geographic and political factors enabled it to control overseas territories. Until the late seventeenth century, Oman was a powerful empire competing with Portugal and the United Kingdom for influence in the Persian Gulf and the Indian Ocean. The Omani empire reached its zenith in the nineteenth century, when its influence extended across the Strait of Hormuz into modern Iran and Pakistan and reached as far south as Zanzibar. However, its power declined in the twentieth century, and the Sultanate came under the influence of the United Kingdom [12]. Oman remained in a state of stagnation until 1970 when HM Sultan Qaboos bin Said took power, and since then, Oman has witnessed amazing development in all sectors, especially education. However, despite the significant development of the Omani education system, there remain many internal and external challenges facing this sector [13].

Although the Omani education system was initiated in 1970, the number of students at that time did not exceed 900. In only 5 years, there were 207 schools with 55,752 students [14]. By 1986, there were 588 schools with 218,914 students enrolled, and at the end of 2015, there were 56,211 teachers and 523,522 students [15,16]. As of 2017, there were 565,184 students in schools, and there were 1091 schools offering what is currently known as basic and post-basic education programs for grades 11 and 12. The number of school employees serving these schools reached 60,165 [17]. Recent statistics show that the number of schools has reached 1163 schools, with 633,860 male and female students attending and 68,048 male and female teachers employed. In addition, more than 834 private schools will be added in 2020, serving more than 126,003 students, and employing 11,155 male and female teachers [18]. Overall, recruiting teachers and attracting Omani youth to the teaching profession proved a challenge for the Omani government [19].

The Omani education system has also witnessed many reforms. In 1998, Oman introduced a modern educational system called the Basic Education System, which aims to teach communication, learning, critical thinking, and modern science and technology skills. This system includes two phases: the first and second cycles of basic education, which last for ten years for grades 1–10, followed by post-basic education for two years for grades 11–12 [20–22]. Afterwards, students who succeed in the general education diploma can enroll in the government's higher education institution programs or grants

and scholarships through the Higher Education Admission Center, which guarantees fairness and transparency in student admission to these programs.

Oman's National Education Strategy 2040 seeks to achieve a strong education system with high-quality output in line with international standards, and it is aimed at strengthening the role of educational institutions in inculcating societal values, model citizenship, and positive attitudes and encouraging volunteer work. Sultan Qaboos' speech to the Oman Council in 2012 affirmed these principles. His Majesty stressed the need to review educational policies, plans, and programs to keep pace with current changes in the country and the world [23].

3. Oman GCED Experience and Its Challenges

Since the early 1990s, citizenship education has occupied a high place in educational policies around the world. However, this field has not received the same attention in the Arab countries, as indicated by the studies that have thus far focused on this field [24]. Furthermore, indicators, ideas, and experiences regarding GCED in Arab contexts indicate that there are several difficulties in introducing citizenship education into the curricula and determining its content and manner of presentation [25]. Likewise, the idea of promoting global citizenship has gained momentum in education as part of a movement to advance twenty-first century skills or critical thinking skills in Oman [26]. However, there are several aspects that need to be developed in order to create more effective channels for promoting a sense of global citizenship among Omani students.

Several previous studies have explored the fulfillment of GCED requirements in the Oman context based on policy and literature analysis. A study conducted by Al-Maamari [27] on GCED in a social studies primary teacher preparation program showed that both teachers and students have suffered from limited and traditional applications of GCED in the social studies preparation program. This finding was linked to the dissatisfaction of policymakers, especially the MOE, with the insufficient preparation of teachers for the development of citizenship. Additionally, Al-Abri [28] showed how globalization has reshaped the landscape of education policy in developing countries. These changes in education policy in developing countries are illustrated by the Oman case study. The results show that education policy in Oman has been seriously affected by the challenges of globalization, leading to profound shifts in the ways in which educational policies are developed, implemented, and evaluated. Another study by Al-Maamari [9] reviewed current practices regarding GCED in the Omani education system. Specifically, the study attempted to identify current practices implemented by Omani schools to help students develop a sense of effective global citizenship. The results of the study indicate that in the Omani context, GCED appears in three forms: as a separate subject within the optional subject "The World Around Me", as an element integrated into social studies curricula, and as an extracurricular activity, for example, the participation of some schools in the initiatives of the global citizenship campaign.

Recently, Kooley [29] analyzed the main features of the philosophy of education in Oman. The results measure the achievement of the government's educational orientations and link the various features observed in its educational philosophy to the main educational curricula, showing that this philosophy stands between conservatism and modernity by combining openness to universal values with preserving the national Arab and Islamic culture and values. Moreover, Al'Abri, Al-Naabi & Ambusaidi [30] have investigated the presence of GCED principles in Omani schools' vision and mission and found that GCED principles exist in varying degrees. The most common principles were commitment to social justice and democracy. Al'Abri, Al-Naabi & Ambusaidi [30] conclude that schools must review their visions and missions for better inclusion of GCED principles.

Similarly, some studies conducted in Oman have shown that GCED is still associated with the field of social studies [9,25,27]. Therefore, the role of other subjects such as English, geography, science, and Islamic culture must be strengthened in order increase the effectiveness of GCED. Furthermore, the lack of adequate levels of GCED in both

initial teacher preparation and in-service teacher education impedes the promotion of global citizenship among school students, and so it must become an essential component of teacher education and training. Teachers may not be able to communicate the principles of global citizenship as they are outlined in educational policy documents [27]. Besides, Al-Maamari [31] found that educating global citizens is a necessary task for the Omani geography curriculum. However, this curriculum is currently focused on the cognitive rather than behavioral dimension of global citizenship.

Alternatively, the new educational reform in Oman has emphasized the use of interactive teaching methods. The results of some national studies have shown that teachers' existing methods of discussing the global issues in Omani social studies textbooks are still somewhat dominant in Omani schools [32–37]. Therefore, the international curricular initiatives implemented by some Omani schools require a paradigm shift away from educational methods that prefer the acquisition of separate, evaluable educational outcomes towards a more comprehensive and inquiry-based approach to interpretation. Students need direct experience in developing a sense of global citizenship. Teachers should set an example to their students in the vocabulary they use to describe people, races, and other religions. It should provide students with opportunities to discover and discuss global issues in interactive and non-traditional ways.

4. UNESCO and Global Citizenship

It is illogical to think that globalization will naturally eliminate boundaries and build the global village that the famous Canadian sociologist Marshall McLuhan spoke of in the 1960s [38]. Therefore, it is necessary to teach schoolchildren the principles of global citizenship, to inculcate the idea of coexistence, to develop an understanding of the other, to identify aspects of interdependence between all human beings through the creation of joint projects, and to learn how to settle conflicts and achieve understanding and peace with respect for pluralism and cultural diversity [39]. According to UNESCO, education for global citizenship aims to provide learners of all ages with values, knowledge, skills, and behaviors based on respect for human rights, social justice, diversity, equality between men and women, and environmental sustainability. It also aims to provide them with the skills necessary to be responsible global citizens [40].

Therefore, in December 2013, UNESCO organized an International Forum entitled "Global Citizenship Education: Preparing Learners for the Challenge of the Twenty-first Century", in Bangkok, Thailand [41].The forum was organized to support the campaign launched by the UN Secretary, Ban Ki-moon, called the "Global Education First Initiative", which brought together educational policymakers, practitioners, civil society organizations, and youth from all over the world with an interest in equipping learners with the knowledge, skills, and values needed to thrive as global citizens in the twenty-first century [42,43]. Despite the many challenges and the global financial crisis, UNESCO is considered an effective tool of soft power that brokers ideas, persuades key actors, and sets new standards. This power unites the necessary parties to pursue joint goals and draws on the wealth of civil society, local communities, and the private sector for stronger collective action [44]. Thus, UNESCO's strong relationship with Oman facilitated its cultural diplomacy activities. Al-Abri [8]. believes that the cultural scene in Oman, including the preservation of cultural diversity, has greatly developed in the past five decades and that Oman's international experience, including its membership in UNESCO, has helped the country enhance its cultural and natural heritage.

In light of this, most countries have been keen to cooperate with UNESCO and other international organizations to rectify the matter by setting agendas to contribute to creating a sustainable global society. One of the most important international efforts is the "Sustainable Development Goals 2030", which were developed by the UN [45] as an ambitious plan for collective international action. The aim is to achieve seventeen goals that strive for a better future through the eradication of poverty and hunger; the provision of health, education, transportation, water, and quality systems for all; gender equality; and

the establishment of sustainable communities where peace, justice, and prosperity prevail. It is hoped that the member states of the organization will direct their efforts and energies to push each of their local systems to achieve these goals, fill gaps, seek sustainability in services, and give priority to the global dimension in their handling of various issues and challenges [46,47]. There are 17 goals in the agenda with 169 targets to be achieved by 2030 which are deemed to continue the efforts of UN in the previous Millennium Development Goals. These 17 goals are made holistic to achieve sustainable development through three dimensions which are: economic, social environmental. The fourth goal on the list is to ensure quality, equitable, and inclusive education for all and to enhance lifelong learning opportunities for a sustainable world [39]. The seventh item of this goal is focused on ensuring that all learners acquire the knowledge and skills necessary to support sustainable development through GCED, which aims to create global citizens of the world who believe in human rights, gender equality, a culture of peace and non-violence, and the value of cultural diversity [4].

5. Education Systems and Global Citizenship around the World

In recent decades, many countries have begun integrating GCED into their curricula. Frequently, this integration occurs alongside an increasing emphasis on national and nationalistic values within schools and education systems. Therefore, previous studies in many countries have attempted to analyze their educational policy documents to determine the level of global citizenship incorporation in the education systems. Lee and Leung [48] found that teachers in Hong Kong and Shanghai support GCED in their schools, but they face a number of difficulties, including curricular pressures, frequent exams, lack of training, lack of support from the school and government, as well as a lack of self-efficacy and belief in personal efforts' ability to make changes in the world. Zahabioun et al. [49] indicate that citizenship education aligned with international standards requires an overview of the curriculum objectives as one of the most important components of the education system. However, in the Canadian context, Carr et al. [3] discuss the conceptual constructivist approach attributed to GCED, monitoring its position in the Canadian curriculum, and the extent of its link to education for democracy by surveying the teachers' views. The study findings describe the negative, prevailing, or neutral perception of democracy, with respondents reporting little, no, or no association with equality or social justice with democracy. In the context of Spain, Engel [50] explored the reform of civic education by analyzing the Spanish curriculum for citizenship education and human rights and associated textbooks. Specifically, the results focused on human rights, national and global citizenship, cultural diversity, and coexistence. The study found that educators and policymakers are increasingly confronted with changing notions of citizenship, both local and global. They are tasked with analyzing and understanding the complex issues of national and global citizenship, including cultural and linguistic diversity, and the global social problems of poverty and migration. Likewise, Symeonidis [51] explored GCED policies and practices by comparing Greece and Sweden with a qualitative research approach, in which documents and interviews were analyzed. The results reveal issues related to global citizenship in school curricula and how they have been addressed in GCED campaigns. The analysis also shows how primary school teachers and students perceive the concept of global citizenship and its practical application.

Leek [52] presented GCED from a Polish perspective. This perspective considers global problems as part of the country's challenges and perceives local and global problems as linked together and affected by one another. On the one hand, there was a clear lack of support for human rights education requirements related to the inclusion of human rights content, while non-political problems and a misguided focus on responsibilities are all major obstacles to universality [53]. Meanwhile, Blackmore [54] has developed a pedagogical framework for GCED which includes the four dimensions of critical thinking, dialogue, reflection, and responsible being/action. This framework has potential for application in the evaluation of complex teaching and learning processes involved in

GCED. Engel et al. [55] focused on exploring how GCED and competence is being defined and practiced within the U.S. education policy landscape, with specific attention to the local primary and secondary school level. Findings show a focus on global citizenship and global competency in local initiatives but also illustrate multiple approaches to GCED, revealing diverse system ecologies within the national system. Pashby [56] considered the growing interest in framing GCED using post- or de-colonial perspectives and discourse studies. These perspectives are alert to the real possibilities that despite good intentions, educating for global citizenship can reinforce unequal, colonial systems of power. The study then reviews the main themes in the scholarly literature on GCED and critiques of the field, highlighting those that note the failures of GCED theory and practice to interrogate or change what are often taken-for-granted colonial systems of power. Finally, it considers the risks of failing to interrogate good intentions behind GCED initiatives in non-formal and formal educational contexts. Additionally, Goren and Yemini [57] found that teachers perceive global citizenship according to three major dimensions: boundaries of global citizenship, practical aspects of GCED, and the effect of Israel's context. They offer a comparative perspective that demonstrates the differing impacts of school context and student background on teacher perceptions.

In a later study, Goren and Yemini [58] identify a possible lacuna in the existing research and suggest a framework for future research in GCED as well as drawbacks to avoid. They explain why educators and policymakers in many countries increasingly seek to integrate GCED. In further research, Goren and Yemini [59] provided evidence of a GCED gap involving students, schools, and teachers, shedding light on this gap's possible consequences in the Israeli curriculum. Meanwhile, Clark and Savage [60] study the meaning of global citizenship in an international school in Thailand, which has strong commitments to promoting the concept. They argue that the concept remains highly contested, not only amongst theorists and policymakers, but also by teachers. They argue that this lack of clarity poses significant problems for researchers, policymakers, and educators who seek to further develop GCED as part of a more global approach to schooling reform.

Moreover, Goren and Yemini [61] describe the factors that would hinder attempts at incorporating GCED in a conflict-ridden state, including a lack of consensus surrounding citizenship, increased nationalism, and an ambiguous attitude towards human rights. They show that under these conditions, GCED as a concept may be threatening, and conflict-ridden states may choose to opt out altogether or at least rename the concept with a less controversial title. Specifically, Yemini [62] examined the way GCED is articulated and manifests at a school catering to a highly diverse population in inner London. He reveals the exclusionary form of GCED that is being promoted in this specific context and the hegemonic nature of the global/local nexus. Similarly, VanderDussen [63] conducted a comparative analysis of three key documents that have emerged in the past five years to frame the content and pedagogy of GCED among member states and educational stakeholders, including the UN and UNESCO. She suggests that it is important to reflect constructively on the values, assumptions, and strategies of key actors who answer fundamental questions about the nature, purpose, and applications of education for various local educational contexts, needs, and conditions. Sant et al. [64] discuss several fundamental perspectives on the topic, capturing the complex histories, issues, and interconnections that affect people across the world, and demand an education that supports learning how to be in this world. However, Cho and Mosselson [65] argue that these approaches reflect South Korea's geopolitical reality and that attitudes towards GCED in South Korea also reflect its cultural norms, which value working together towards a common good. Ultimately, we call for a more nuanced approach to GCED scholarship that moves away from theoretical divisions and turns to practical applications of social justice within increasingly capitalist/neoliberal interests for a more inclusive world. For example, Dvir et al. [66] have examined the construction and significance of International Baccalaureate (IB) schools as manifest in four locations: Chicago, the Netherlands, Hong Kong, and the United Arab Emirates. They suggest a nuanced conceptualization of GCED by reviewing these schools' engagement with the

topic and how this many be shaped by local context. In light of the growing prominence of International Baccalaureate Organization programs worldwide, it is important to foster theoretical discussions of the ways GCED is articulated. Likewise, Horey et al. [67] explore how global citizenship is understood and enacted. They thus contribute to conceptual clarity for educators developing curricula and for higher education researchers seeking to explore and evaluate the outcomes of GCED. Similarly, Daniels [68] has identified ways to elucidate international requirements for human rights education by analyzing Scottish educational policy documents. The results of this analysis indicate a number of major limitations in the current approach favored by the Scottish government. This approach assumes that GCED is a cross-curricular subject capable of fulfilling rights-related obligations in excellence curricula. Akkari and Maleq [1] have analyzed how GCED has become a focus in educational, political, and intellectual discourse. They address the lack of conceptual clarity as well as the conceptual divides associated with it, and they describe the possibilities for implementing global citizenship in educational landscapes.

Recently, Estellés and Fischman [69] identified patterns in how GCED for teacher education was described and defended. They argue that teacher education contributes to the configuration of a discourse that ignores the neoliberal context in which both GCED and teacher education occur today. Recently, Pashby et al. [70] applied a heuristic of three main discursive orientations reflected in much of the literature on GCED—neoliberal, liberal, and critical—and their interfaces; creating social cartography of how nine journal articles categorized GCED. He found the greatest confluence in the neoliberal, the greatest number in the liberal, and a conflation of different types of GCED within the critical orientation. Similarly, Pais and Costa [71] have analyzed GCED as an ideology, revealing not only its hidden (discursive) content but also the role played by non-discursive elements in guaranteeing the coexistence of antagonistic discourses. They argue that not only does the critical democratic discourse offer no resistance or threat to the neoliberal structuring of higher education, but it also functions as an apologetic narrative exculpating those who still work in universities, notwithstanding our dissatisfaction with their current commodification.

6. Method

6.1. Qualitative Study

In order to develop tools for analysis, three key documents were selected as the basis for this analysis. They covered different aspects relevant to understanding what GCED is and how it fits into the Omani education system more broadly. The specific focus of analysis was three national policy documents: Philosophy of Education (published in 2017), Basic Law of State (published in 2021), and Oman Vision 2040 (published in 2020). These documents were selected as being the overarching policies in Oman that frame education policy-making in Oman. They are used by the government authorities and education institutions not only in making policies but also as guidance in creating programs and activities.

6.2. Document Analysis

Qualitative Document Analysis (QDA) was employed in order to establish the strength of support in realizing the key requirements of GCED in the three national policy documents. This type of analysis was found the most suitable for this study to investigate how Omani policies are including GCED. As prescribed by this method, the authors stared by collecting the related policy documents, then creating the codes and themes based on the GCED literature. Also, we used the UNESCO themes and topics on GCED [45]. This coding was done by the four authors of this paper together. Reliability of data coding was assured through the agreement on the final codes by the four researchers. Whenever there was no agreement, the code was not included.

This QDA review used the Basic International Requirements for GCED as an analytical framework to assess whether Omani national polices on GCED met UN aims on the topic. The strength of support demonstrated in each document, in relation to the areas

identified through the framework tool, was categorized using the following rating scale: 'explicit', 'implicit'. A rating of 'explicit' demonstrates very clear references to overarching policies that support a specific requirement outlined in the tool. By contrast, a rating of 'implicit' means that there is no explicit mention, or very ambiguous mentions, of policies or practices that enable the fulfilment of a particular requirement. To exemplify, the Education Philosophy document in page 17 mentioned clearly "awareness of global concerns and human rights, developing positive attitudes towards and acceptance of other people, and stressing the principles of equality and justice". This is considered as explicit code mentioned by the document. Yet, if the wording of the document uses words to mean the themes but not directly, then it is considered implicit and such kind of coding required the coders to agree up on. The primary unit of analysis was sentences themselves, and so individual sentences were selected for analysis.

6.3. Themes of Analysis

Thematic data analysis has been applied in QDA using Atlas.ti9 software. Six main themes have been identified for analyzing the inclusion of global citizenship concepts in national policies: (1) Social justice and human rights; (2) Spreading the culture of peace and tolerance; (3) Sustainable development issues; (4) Cultural and civilizational diversity; (5) Ecological balance; (6) Scientific thinking and technology. Under each theme, 8–7 sub-themes have emerged. Frequencies have been calculated for each theme and sub-theme to reflect their importance in the three national policy documents.

7. Findings and Discussion

The three policy documents included the principles of global citizenship and the foundations for building a global human being. The analysis included six dimensions: social justice and human rights, spreading a culture of peace and tolerance, sustainable development issues, cultural and civilizational diversity, environmental balance, and scientific thinking and technology.

Table 1 and Figure 1 show that attention to the principle of sustainable development issues dominated, with environmental balance second, and scientific thinking and technology third, while the principle of social justice and human rights, spreading a culture of peace and tolerance, and cultural and civilizational diversity came fourth, fifth, and sixth, respectively. The following table details each principle separately:

Table 1. The QDA results of GCED concepts' availability in three Omani national policies documents.

Themes	* Codes	Availability of GCED Concepts						Frequent	Rank
		Basic Law of State		Education Philosophy		Oman Vision 2040			
		Explicit	Implicit	Explicit	Implicit	Explicit	Implicit		
Social justice and human rights	1- Consolidating the principles of justice, equality, and equal opportunities 2- Awareness of human rights 3- Promoting gender equality 4- Strengthening democracy and political participation 5- Understanding duties, responsibilities, and the law 6- Developing awareness of the rights of women and children 7- Providing education programs for people with disabilities 8- Working to combat illiteracy	3	14	13	9	8	11	57	6

Table 1. *Cont.*

Themes	* Codes	Availability of GCED Concepts						Frequent	Rank
		Basic Law of State		Education Philosophy		Oman Vision 2040			
		Explicit	Implicit	Explicit	Implicit	Explicit	Implicit		
Spreading a culture of peace and tolerance	1- Consolidating national and global belonging 2- An appreciation of common human values 3- Promoting world peace 4- Promoting awareness of humanitarian issues 5- Eliminating the seeds of creating discord, misconceptions, and extremism among the youth 6- Solidarity with peoples' issues and their various rights 7- Respect for the principles of good neighborliness 8- Spreading the culture of a weapon-free world	5	7	12	16	9	21	70	2
Sustainable development issues	1- Awareness of sustainable development concepts 2- Awareness of citizenship values 3- Consolidation of human values 4- Inculcating the concept of national unity 5- Participation in community issues and activities 6- Consolidating work values and entrepreneurship 7- Development of positive attitudes towards humanity 8- Promoting social responsibility	6	20	23	26	20	22	115	1
Cultural and civilizational diversity	1- Inculcating the concepts of social harmony 2- Practicing the culture of dialogue and accepting the other 3- Respect the privacy of peoples and their backgrounds 4- Consolidating a sense of belonging to humanity as a whole 5- Respect for cultural differences 6- Consolidating intercultural communication 7- Dealing with conflicts 8- Fostering a sense of responsibility towards oneself and others	2	7	8	20	11	10	58	5
Ecological balance	1- Contributing to protecting the environment 2- Acting in a responsible manner towards the environment 3- Awareness of sustainability issues 4- Embracing environmental issues 5- Participation in projects that support the environment 6- Contributing to reducing pollution 7- Participating in environmental awareness campaigns	3	2	10	20	10	20	63	4
Scientific thinking and technology	1- Fostering creativity and innovation 2- Technology optimization 3- Providing critical thinking and analysis skills 4- Mastery of basic technical skills 5- Mastery of language skills 6- Awareness of technology's negatives and challenges 7- Empowering the skills of the 21st century	3	7	14	18	9	13	64	3
	Total	22	57	80	109	67	97	427	-

* The codes in each of them were arranged in descending order according to their frequency.
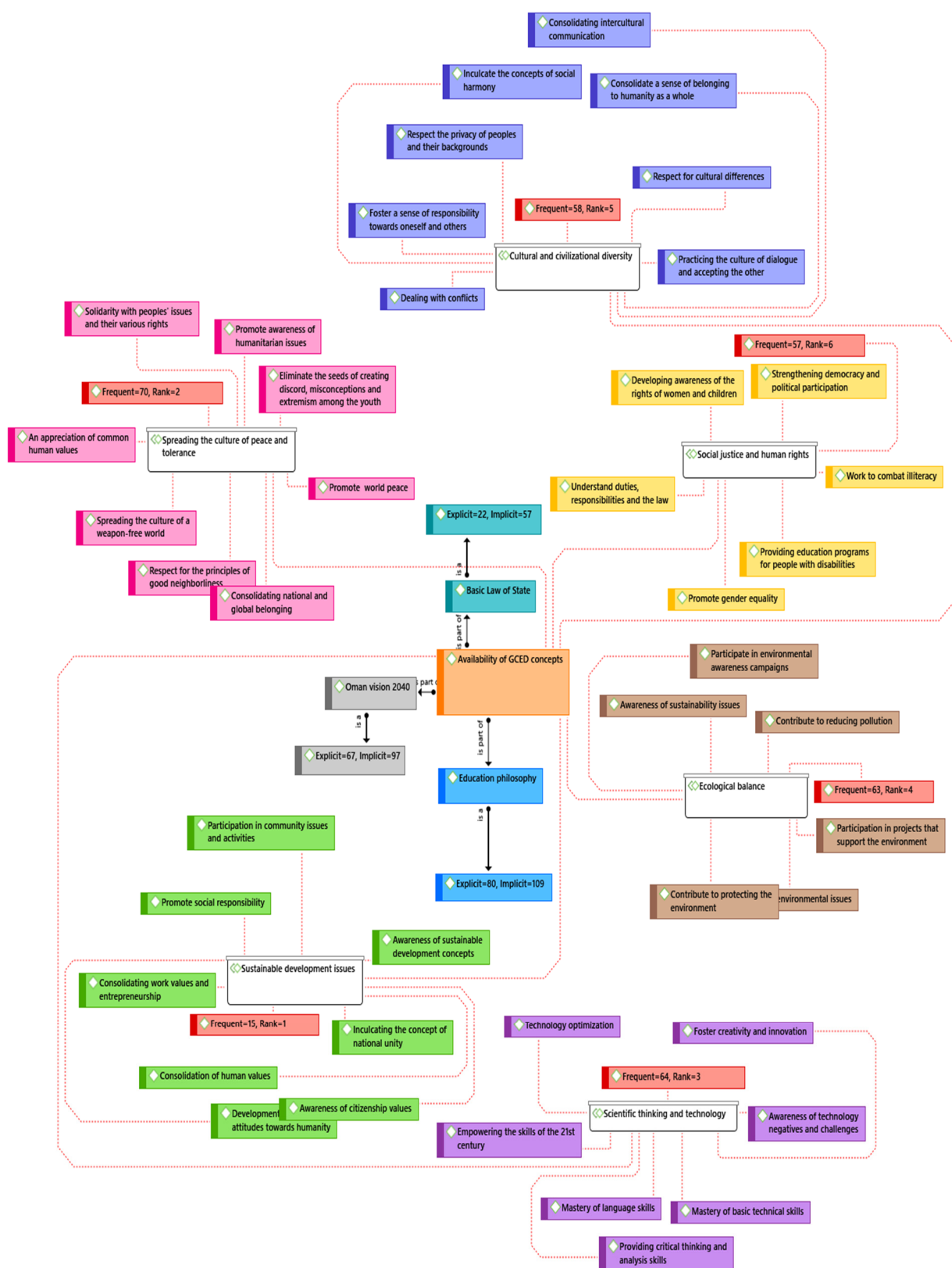
Figure 1. Network of relationships of GCED concepts' availability in three Omani national policy documents.

8. Social Justice and Human Rights

The results of the policy document analysis show that the principle of social justice and human rights was ranked fourth among other GCED principles. In the Basic Law of the State, 6/2021, there was a confirmation that Oman is prioritizing justice and the rights of citizens and raising them with an awareness of those rights and the responsibilities they entail. In the fourth chapter, in the cultural principles clause in Article 14, this justice was confirmed by a text that stated education is a right for every citizen. This text defined the right to education for all citizens without discrimination based on gender, ability level, or age. The Basic Law stipulated that education is compulsory until the end of the basic education stage, and this explicit obligation in the law was a clear message of justice and the preservation of rights, particularly this most basic human right of education. Oman is also working to combat illiteracy, and this is a directive for the education authorities and those who implement educational policies to eliminate illiteracy to increase access to education. This is confirmed by the extension of that right to higher education; in the system, education is to be equally available to all, facilitating acceptance to higher education based on competence and merit. All of these factors contribute to preparing and building a global citizen who understands and obtains his rights. The Omani leadership and public policymakers also demonstrated a clear focus on the pursuit of justice and awareness of rights, as it was stated in the third chapter of the Basic Law in the social principles clause in Article 13: "Justice, equality and equal opportunities among citizens are pillars of society". Public rights and duties are described in Article 18: "Life and dignity is a right for every human being", and Oman is obligated to respect and protect them by the law. Article 21 states: "Citizens are all equal before the law, and they are equal in rights and public duties, and there was no discrimination between them based on gender or origin. Color, language, religion, sect, domicile, or social status". According to Article 22: "A safe life is a right for every human being, and Oman shall provide security and tranquility for its citizens and every resident on its territory", while Article 23 claims: "Personal freedom is guaranteed according to the law, and others". This is one of the articles that dealt with the rights of citizens and those of residents on the land of Oman, in addition to Article 35: Freedom of opinion and its expression in speech, writing, and all other means of expression were guaranteed within the limits of the law. Article 13 promotes: "Laying down the pillars of correct Shura emanating from Islamic law and the nation's heritage and values".

By tracing the principles of GCED in the philosophy of education document, we find that it singled out human rights in one of its sixteen principles, which is the fifth principle on education on human rights and duties. It included several goals focused on promoting a culture of human rights and duties, developing awareness of humanitarian issues, developing positive attitudes towards oneself and others, consolidating principles of equality and justice by law and order, developing awareness of the rights of women and children, developing awareness of the needs of people with disabilities, respecting them and supporting positive interactions with them, and promoting the individual's right to political and societal participation. These goals represent the items required for the principle of social justice and human rights as a foundational principle of global citizenship. The philosophy in the sixth principle is focused on responsibility and accountability, which confirms the presence of justice and guides learners and individuals to awareness of their rights and duties at the national and global level. In the seventh principle, covering education on the principle of Shura, there is the suggestion of preparing according to democracy, even if it is not mentioned in a text in the context. This principle included developing awareness and strengthening electoral culture and civilized methods for the meaningful expression of opinions. This is the basis for the formation of a good citizen capable of expression and active participation in a society that guarantees him social justice and equality. As for Oman Vision 2040, it emphasized the principle of social justice and human rights by deepening the concept of partnership and active citizenship. The vision's priorities included citizenship, identity, national heritage, and culture, and its objectives included nurturing a community of responsible members who are aware of their rights and are committed to their duties.

Priorities related to welfare and social protection required the achievement of social justice, measured by the sustainability and quality of social welfare services, such as health and educational services, and social protection. Additionally, enabling the neediest groups to be self-reliant and contribute to the national economy ensures the rights of individuals. These objectives stressed the importance of a conscious, cohesive, socially and economically empowered society, especially women, children, youth, people with disabilities, and the neediest groups, and this reflects the concern of policymakers and decision-makers for supporting individuals' rights.

To conclude, the results in Table 1 and Figure 1 show the consolidation of justice, equality, and equal opportunities to be the dominant topic in the three documents, according to the analysis of the social justice and human rights principle of GCED. Awareness of human rights was second, due to the regime's assertion that citizens are equal and there is no difference between them in obtaining rights. Promoting gender equality came third, as a result of the regime's assertions of equality between citizens and equal opportunities among them, with no gender difference in these rights. Establishing the principles of justice, equality, and equal opportunities, developing awareness of the rights of women and children, and working to combat illiteracy came fourth. Supporting democracy and political participation and providing education programs for people with disabilities were among the least frequent topics in this principle. Nevertheless, it shows decision-makers in Oman's interest in the principle of social justice. Our results are in line with the results of Engel [50], which revealed that the Spanish curriculum focused on human rights, national and global citizenship, cultural diversity, and coexistence. However, our results were inconsistent with the results of Moon and Koo [53], which showed that a clear lack of support for human rights education requirements, the presence of non-political problems, and a misguided focus on responsibilities were all major obstacles to GCED in Korea. Likewise, our results were inconsistent with Carr et al. [3], which revealed ta negative, prevailing, or neutral perception of democracy in the Canadian curriculum, with respondents reporting little or no association between equality, social justice, and democracy.

9. Spreading the Culture of Peace and Tolerance

Oman is known to be a peaceful state, as it has always been immune to conflicts in the region. It has not participated in any aggression against its neighbors, which is a peace initiative. Therefore, the principle of spreading peace and tolerance has been entrenched as a way of life among the Omani people. The three policy documents reinforce this view and cement it in the hearts of young people. In part two of the Basic Law of the State, the principles guiding the policy of Oman, and in Chapter One, titled "Political Principles", in Article 13: "Strengthening cooperation and affirming the bonds of friendship with all countries and peoples based on mutual respect and common interest, non-interference in internal affairs and observance of international and regional conventions and treaties. Generally, recognized rules of international law, in a way that leads to the establishment of peace and security between states and peoples". This proves the principle that Oman adopted toward the vision of peace. Among the security principles in Article 17: "Peace is the goal of Oman … " These principles represent the political identity that Oman adopts at the local and global levels. Similarly, Oman Vision 2040 prioritized citizenship, identity, heritage, and national culture, defining the goals of a world-leading society as understanding, coexistence, and peace. This offers a roadmap for future generations in Oman, preparing them to demonstrate understanding and peace. Looking at the philosophy of education and its principles and objectives to spread the culture of peace and tolerance, it becomes evident that philosophy has adopted this dimension in reality through its fifteenth principle: education for peace and understanding. Peace is achieved by promoting the values of tolerance, understanding, acceptance of others, dialogue, and rapprochement. This principle is codified with a set of objectives, including promoting understanding and solidarity among the various groups of society; establishing positive patterns of behavior; promoting the values of peace and coexistence; promoting positive dialogue

and rapprochement between cultures; enhancing awareness of issues of international understanding; spreading cooperation and mutual respect; and other goals within this principle. This indicates an effort by policymakers to consolidate this principle in education.

To conclude, Table 1 and Figure 1 show that the consolidation of national and global belonging begins by spreading the culture of peace and tolerance. The political system endeavors to enhance and ensure loyalty and belonging to the homeland through education. The appreciation of common human values came second, followed by the promotion of peace and world peace. This confirms that these documents demonstrate an interest in human values and peace values in particular. Next was the promotion of awareness of humanitarian issues. The concern for humanitarian issues stems from the human being's position as an integral part of a cosmic and human system, interacting with its issues and sharing its concerns. These results support those of the study by Kooli [29], which analyzed the main features of the philosophy of education in Oman. An investigation into the government's educational orientation, linking features observed in its educational philosophy to the main educational approach, showed that this philosophy stands between conservatism and modernity by combining openness to universal values with the preservation of Arab-Islamic national culture and peace values.

10. Sustainable Development Issues

The Basic Law of Oman included many principles related to the human being in education, health, security, values for a decent life, sustainability of life, and a better future for all. This supports Oman's leadership and policy interest in sustainable development. In addition, Oman is a member of many international organizations, such as UNESCO, UNICEF, etc. In the Omani Basic Law, education is the right of every citizen. It is compulsory until the completion of the basic education stage. The state sought to combat illiteracy, as mentioned in Article 16: "Education is the basis for development". Therefore, it is important to provide individuals with the skills that enable them to lead a better life while ensuring the preservation of the rights of future generations to environmental resources. The focus is on preserving national identity, consolidating civilizational and spiritual values, and establishing the concepts of citizenship, tolerance, and harmony.

In the Oman Vision 2040 document, a vocational training system was developed that aims to provide graduates with high-level skills to help them enter the labor market, raise productivity levels, and improve the efficiency of the economy while also creating a national system for talented, creative, and entrepreneurial ideas. Oman Vision 2040 adopted the following issues: value-enhancing educational curricula that respect the principles of the Islamic religion, the Omani identity, inspiration from Oman's history and heritage, requirements of sustainable development, future skills, and a diversity of educational paths. The vision included a priority related to citizenship, identity, heritage, and national culture, and it set its strategic direction in conjunction with a society proud of its identity and culture and committed to its citizenship. The vision also defined among its goals a community proud of its identity, citizenship, and culture that works to preserve and document its heritage and spread it internationally. Likewise, it supports creating an integrated institutional community partnership system that enhances identity, citizenship, cohesion, and social solidarity. It envisions a society that preserves its identity, has skills and capabilities, keeps pace with knowledge developments and technical changes, which can evaluate knowledge, criticize it, employ it, produce it, and publish it. The members of this community are responsible and aware of their rights and are committed to their duties, supported by a professional media that enhances community awareness and contributes to social and economic development. In addition, sustainable investment in heritage, culture, and the arts contributes to the growth of the national economy. All of these goals are part of the framework for enhancing the skills necessary for sustainable development so that it becomes a reality in Oman and for its people.

Through the analysis of the philosophy of education, we find that it focused on sustainable development issues significantly, especially with the first principle directing the

integrated growth of the learner. Several goals were set for this: developing the integrated personality of the learner; meeting the requirements of the different stages of growth and their characteristics; providing the learner with the knowledge and skills necessary to deal with the developments of the age and its challenges; developing his abilities, tendencies, and talents; improving his skills and developing his aesthetic sense; and promoting physical and health education and moral and social aspects. In addition, it devoted a special principle under the title "Education for Sustainable Development" and defined objectives to provide learners with the knowledge, skills, and values related to sustainable development issues; contribute to the achievement of the comprehensive development goals of Omani society; and build and develop national capacities in various fields. It defined a principle under the name "identity and citizenship", aimed at promoting the values of citizenship, consolidating belonging to the Arab and Islamic nation, and developing a sense of responsibility and values of community and national participation. In addition to the principle of good values and behaviors, it seeks to appreciate common human values, inculcate good behaviors, and deepen respect for morals and public taste. In addition to its inclusion of the principle of responsibility and accountability, it aims to enhance a sense of responsibility towards oneself and others, establish the principle of the rule of law and adhere to it, and develop an awareness of the importance of social controls and public order. It also defined the principle of knowledge and work and focuses on inculcating work and production values, appreciating work of all kinds, developing basic skills for work, developing work skills for local and international competition, encouraging a culture of apprenticeship, and enhancing its effectiveness in the professional lives of individuals and the labor market. As for the fourteenth principle of philosophy, it emphasized the development of entrepreneurship by instilling the values and principles of entrepreneurship and developing entrepreneurial skills.

Overall, according to Table 1 and Figure 1, our analysis of the contents of the three documents on sustainable development issues revealed the primacy of the concepts of sustainable development. This is because sustainable development is an integral part of the overall development of the country. It is also one of the most important goals that Oman seeks, given that it is an active member of international organizations concerned with sustainability. The values of citizenship and the consolidation of human values came second. This is a strategy of states, especially Oman, to strengthen national belonging and support global citizenship, and it instills values in society and among the educated. The promotion of social responsibility came last. This may be because this responsibility may be translated through values and the individual's responsibilities towards society and towards the environment. These results support the results of [72], which show that the main source of knowledge for prospective teachers concerning the concept of sustainable development is the Omani school textbooks.

11. Cultural and Civilizational Diversity

Article 21 of the Omani Basic Law states: "All citizens are equal before the law, and they are equal in public rights and duties. There shall be no discrimination between them in this regard because of sex, origin, color, language, religion, sect, nationality, or social status". As stated in Article 23: "Personal freedom is guaranteed according to the law, and this confirms the concern for the human being, far from any difference due to any of the aforementioned reasons related to religion, language, gender or other, and taking into account diversity". Likewise, Article 35 states: "Freedom of opinion and expression thereof through speech, writing and other means of expression is guaranteed within the limits of the law". This shows a concern for cultural and civilizational diversity, respect for others regardless of their identity, and the reinforcement of these values by the regime in Oman. Likewise, the analysis of Oman Vision 2040 revealed that the principle of cultural and civilizational diversity has been included in one of the vision's objectives, which is "a conscious knowledge-based society that preserves its identity, with skills and capabilities, and keeps pace with knowledge developments and technical changes" within

the priority of citizenship, identity, heritage, and national culture. The desired society is defined as a conscious society that is aware of the various issues around it. As for the educational philosophy document, the principle of cultural and civilizational diversity has been included in the fifth principle on human rights and duties education, which aims to develop positive attitudes towards the self and others. In the sixth principle of responsibility and accountability, it states: "Promote a sense of responsibility towards oneself and others". As for the seventh principle on education based on the principle of Shura, a goal related to encouraging diversity and balanced expression has been identified. In the fifteenth principle, "Education for peace and understanding", the following goals are stated: the development of respect for balanced intellectual difference and cultural pluralism; the promotion of understanding and solidarity between the various groups of society; the promotion of positive dialogue and rapprochement between cultures; the development of a culture of respect for other opinions; and the promotion of awareness of issues of international understanding, cooperation, and mutual respect.

As shown in Table 1 and Figure 1, the analysis of the cultural and civilizational diversity issues included in the three documents showed the dominance of the concepts of social cohesion. This is a result of the interest in promoting this aspect in individuals, and the approach that Oman applies as a way of life. The practice of a culture of dialogue and acceptance of others, and respect for the particularities of peoples and their backgrounds, follows the importance of these aspects in societal and global harmony. Our results were consistent with Engel [50], which revealed that the Spanish curriculum focused on human rights, national and global citizenship, cultural diversity, and coexistence. In addition, our results are consistent with Kooli [29], which showed the extent of achieving the educational orientations of the government, linking the various features observed in its educational philosophy to the main educational curricula and demonstrating that this philosophy stands between conservatism and modernity by combining openness to universal values and preserving the national Arab and Islamic culture and values.

12. Environmental Balance

The document analysis showed that Omani Basic Law includes many principles related to environmental balance. Article 15 of the social principles states: "Oman works to protect the environment and its natural balance, in order to achieve comprehensive and sustainable development for all generations. Citizens and residents must preserve it and not harm it". Likewise, the Oman Vision 2040 document also included the principle of environmental balance within the priority related to the environment and natural resources. The priority included a strategic direction that stipulated "effective, balanced and resilient ecosystems to protect the environment and sustain its natural resources in support of the national economy". It set the following goals: an environment that achieves a balance between environmental, economic, and social requirements; is high quality and free of pollution; allows sustainable use of natural resources; ensures high added value through wealth and investment; achieves energy security through renewable energy and rational consumption; supports a green and circular economy; responds to national needs, such as food and water security based on renewable resources and advanced technologies; optimizes the Oman's strategic location and biodiversity; and effectively implements sustainable consumption and production. Due to the global problems it faces, a concern for the environment in Omani policies is evident, as is the desire for Oman to enjoy a sustainable and healthy environment. Additionally, analysis of the education philosophy document revealed that environmental balance was included among its chapters, especially in the eighth principle "education for sustainable development". A set of goals related to the environment, its protection, and the promotion of interest in it were mentioned. For example, the following objectives appear: contributing to protecting the environment and preserving its natural components; developing knowledge and skills related to water and food security; confronting natural disasters; developing awareness of the rational use of natural resources and wealth; promoting sustainable, healthy lifestyles among learners;

developing understanding of the natural, especially green, environment; and promoting a culture of rational consumer behavior.

In general, the analysis demonstrated that the three documents share a concern for environmental balance issues (as shown in Table 1 and Figure 1); concern for environmental protection, acting in a responsible manner towards the environment, and awareness of sustainability issues which were the most important topics. This is due to the desire to create a healthy and sustainable environment in a way that preserves continuity for generations and conserves resources. Robinson et al. [73] stress that environmental problems must be addressed soon by all countries, or the ability of the earth to sustain life as we know it may be reduced. However, Oman supports a range of international initiatives in the environmental and cultural fields in order to support peace and mutual understanding in the world. The Sultan Qaboos Award for Environmental Protection, the first Arab prize awarded in the field of the environment, is considered clear evidence of Oman's interest in this principle [9].

13. Scientific Thinking and Technology

The analysis of the documents shows that the Basic Law of Oman focused on the beginning of scientific thinking and technology as a principle of global citizenship. It emphasized the consolidation of the scientific method of thinking, developing talents, and encouraging innovation. Article 16 states: "Oman shall guarantee freedom of scientific research and work to encourage it, and sponsor researchers and innovators, in addition to Oman guaranteeing means of effective participation for the private and civil sectors in the renaissance of practical research. Oman guarantees freedom of intellectual creativity and patronage of creative people and encourages the advancement of arts and literature". Likewise, the analysis of the Oman 2040 document revealed that it focused on creating a system that enables human capabilities in the education sector and searching for diversified and sustainable funding sources for education, scientific research, and innovation. The educational philosophy document adopted a special principle under the name of "scientific research and innovation" in which five objectives were related to developing higher thinking skills, providing learning environments that stimulate thinking, exploration, scientific research, and innovation, developing scientific research skills, and encouraging and appreciating researchers and innovators. In addition, in the twelfth principle, under the heading of "knowledge and technology society", the following objectives are set: enhancing the ability to handle contemporary and modern technology, localizing knowledge, and promoting knowledge production and dissemination as well as employment awareness of the importance of a knowledge-based economy.

To conclude, analysis of the topic of scientific thinking and technology combined in the three documents showed a clear focus on consolidating innovation, employing technology, and investing in the correct manner. However, the documents lack reference to the skills of the 21st century. This does not mean that they overlook those skills, as all the skills contained in these documents are a part of the framework of the skills of the 21st century, whether at the level of life skills—such as the consolidation of various values, concepts of work, or the like—or those associated with technology, creativity, innovation, health or environmental skills, and communication. The strong influence of UNESCO on Omani education policy is evidenced by the introduction of the basic education system, in which English and computer languages are taught from the first grade. The focus on teaching mathematics and science aligns with the requirements of global education policy and the needs of global citizenship [28]. It is very important to mention that one of the limitations of the current study was relying merely on what is written in these analyzed documents which is not necessarily reflecting teachers' practices. What is planned is not always what is practiced. Therefore, it is recommended that researchers in future studies observe teachers while teaching to make a real conclusion about how GCED exists in Omani Educational System.

14. Conclusions and Implications

Although educational policies have emerged as a response from governments and educational systems around the world to address the issues resulting from globalization in contemporary society, some of these issues include lack of social cohesion, parallel coexistence, and religious intolerance. Many educational policies are a means of developing students to be compassionate and caring global citizens; however, the effective implementation of GCED programs remains a challenge, despite major shifts in educational policies and practices for addressing education to respond to the conditions of globalization [42].

Our analysis of the three Omani national documents in terms of the concepts and principles of global citizenship they contain revealed that in Oman, there is a clear interest in incorporating global citizenship concepts in policy documents to build a global citizen. These documents reflect the interest of the Omani leadership and decision-makers in the principles of global citizenship. In addition, these documents continue their role in developing guidelines for the application of global citizenship in order to create ambitious and creative global citizens who are able to engage with global society while preserving their national identity and originality. It is clear that the statements in these documents are considered a general directive for implementing educational policy in institutions of all kinds to achieve the desired outcome of creating a global citizen. Additionally, Oman Vision 2040 keeps pace with the requirements of sustainable development, its goals, and its dimensions, and it is keen to meet the requirements of the global citizen. The philosophy of education is one of the most comprehensive documents on the concepts, principles, and requirements of global citizenship, and it is the best example of the necessary principles and goals. The issues of sustainable development are among the most important principles contained in the national documents that have been analyzed. Next are the principles related to environmental balance and to scientific thinking and technology, with great attention to other principles as well.

However, there is still no clear vision of how GCED will be taught in schools. Moreover, curriculum reforms inevitably encounter the issue of adapting these policies to accommodate alternative, democratic visions of schooling. There is an argument that for global citizenship to reach maturity, a research agenda is needed to address the complex dynamics that globalization has brought into education, particularly the challenges of helping young people understand the world through teaching and learning [47]. In this regard, there is an urgent need to train teachers in how to use appropriate teaching and learning strategies that can be used to understand the world and hence develop students understanding of GCED.However, recent studies conducted by the Carnegie Middle East Center have shown that while Arab countries praise the goals of education reform and citizenship education, they have taken very few steps to make these goals a reality and to prepare young people to achieve their goals. A review of civic education programs in public schools from kindergarten to twelfth grade in eleven major Arab countries reveals a wide gap between the stated goals of national education programs and their implementation [74].

Despite considerable diversity in GCED orientations, we argue that GCED typologies remain largely confined to a limited range of possibilities. Investigation of GCED in Omani education is timely because of the impacts of globalization and profound national changes. Although there are currently some practices being developed in education for sustainable development and global citizenship, today there is an urgent need to define an approach used by every school in the development of global citizenship and to evaluate the effectiveness of participating in international projects related to GCED. We also argue that practicing democracy within the school such as listening to students, sharing thoughts and ideas with them, and discussing global issues will help the education system to emphasize GCED.

To conclude, we believe that the current study is only the start of several studies that should be done in GCED in Oman. Future studies should focus on the real practice of GCED inside the classroom specifically and school in general. In addition, future studies

are needed to study other aspects of GCED that are not included in this study such as working with others, living in a diverse society, and so on.

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