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# GLOBAL CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION IN HOMESCHOOLING

## GLOBAL CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION IN HOMESCHOOLING PRACTICES AND EXPERIENCES IN CONNECTICUT, NEW JERSEY, NEW YORK, AND PENNSYLVANIA

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PIM 78 IELR

A Capstone Paper submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for a Master of the Arts in  
International Education at SIT Graduate Institute in Brattleboro, Vermont, USA.

Capstone Seminar May 4, 2020

Advisor: Dr. Alla Korzh

## GLOBAL CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION IN HOMESCHOOLING

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# GLOBAL CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION IN HOMESCHOOLING

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GCED: Global Citizenship Education

NCES: National Center for Education Statistics

UNESCO: United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

UN: United Nations

## ABSTRACT

Global citizenship education (GCED) has moved to the forefront of U.S. education policy. The core tenets of GCED are knowledge, skills, behaviors, actions, attitudes, and values. Through these tenets, GCED strives to prepare students to be contributing members of society through making positive change. In this study, I examined the extent to which GCED was integrated in homeschooling education in eight families located in four Northeastern states, Connecticut, New Jersey, New York, and Pennsylvania.

The findings derived from individual interviews and surveys with homeschooling parents and their adult children as well as document analysis demonstrate that seven of the eight homeschooling families who participated in this study favored GCED as an educational approach, with the primary focus on attaining GCED knowledge, skills, values, and attitudes. The one family, who did not favor the GCED educational approach, indicated that their educational focus was more on national citizenship not global citizenship. These findings have the potential to contribute to better understanding homeschooling as an educational approach and to broaden the research of GCED to include families who choose to homeschool their children. Further research can explore variances in socio-economic, racial, or linguistic differences in homeschooling families as well as how travel experiences or lack thereof can impact their approach to educating their children.

*Keywords: homeschooling, global citizenship education, curriculum*

## Introduction

There are many approaches to education and how to prepare youth to become contributing members of society (Arai, 1999; Clabaugh & Rozycki, 1990). In each approach, parents' involvement is integral to shaping their child's education. One approach in the United States is homeschooling, loosely defined as education that is administered in the home with parents as the primary instructors (Lines, 1999; Lips & Feinberg, 2008; Murphy, 2012).

Homeschooling has rapidly grown in the United States. In 2016, an estimated 3.3%, or 1.7 million, of the school-age population were homeschooled (McQuiggan et al., 2017; NCES, 2019). Compared to research conducted in 1988 when an estimated 0.3% to 0.7%, or 150,000 to 300,000, of children were homeschooled children, the increase is significant (Federal Interagency Forum on Child and Family Statistics, n.d., Van Galen & Pitman, 1991; Zeise, 2018). These wide variances between 1988 and 2016 may be influenced by the limited data available, as not all states require parents to report their intent to homeschool. Moreover, through expanded school choice, these laws have changed drastically over the past 40 years with many states adopting laws which legalize and regulate homeschooling (CRHE, 2019; HSLDA, 2019; Jolly & Matthews, 2018).

Motivations to homeschool vary. While many families opt to homeschool for religious reasons, there has been an emergence of families who homeschool because they are dissatisfied with the pedagogical approach used in public schools (Redford, Battle & Bielick, 2017). A central theme in these reasons is a belief that the public and private school education available is not meeting the educational needs families determine are important for their children.

The debate about how students are being prepared to contribute and compete in society is at the forefront of the U.S. education policy and reform with initiatives such as 21<sup>st</sup> century skills

and global citizenship education (GCED). The core tenets of GCED are knowledge, skills, actions, behaviors, values, and attitudes, some of which include empathy, diversity, and helping others (Lockhart, 2016; Measuring Global Citizenship Education, 2017; Oxfam, 2019; Reysen et al., 2013; UNESCO, n.d; Womack-Wynee, 2018).

Knowledge and skills in GCED cover a cognitive learning outcome focused on understanding the interconnectedness of issues at the local, state, and global levels. Through action and behaviors, global citizens are motivated to take responsibility in finding effective and sustainable solutions to challenges and to build on opportunities. Values and attitudes are improved upon through the attainment of knowledge, skills, and actions which lead to a sense of belonging in the local, national, and global community.

Ample research has been conducted regarding the motivations and impacts of homeschooling both at individual and societal levels. However, there is little understanding on prevalence of a global perspective in approaches families take to homeschool. Beck (2018) explored global awareness in homeschool communities but the scope was limited to an aspect of global citizenship education and to a Christian homeschool cooperative in Pennsylvania. Another example is the research by Arai (1999) and Cheng (2014) that focused on national citizenship and domestic affairs in the United States without extending the research to the realm of global perspective and citizenship as found in global citizenship education.

To better understand how GCED is integrated in homeschool instruction and curriculum, this study focused on homeschooling in four states on opposite ends of the regulation spectrum: Connecticut and New Jersey on one end and New York and Pennsylvania on the other. The research questions that guided this study were as follows: To what extent were homeschooling curriculum models and instruction methods used by families in Connecticut, New Jersey, New

York, and Pennsylvania including tenets of GCED? From the parents' perspective, how important was it to incorporate GCED in their instructional approach? Moreover, to what extent did parents impart tenets of GCED in the curriculum and instructional methods? Finally, from the homeschooled alumni perspective, what was their educational experience regarding GCED?

The findings of this study shed light on how global targets of education have resonated within communities in Connecticut, New Jersey, New York, and Pennsylvania that chose homeschooling as the educational path for their children. The findings can be useful for members of the homeschool community as they consider and develop their instructional methods and curriculum for each child. Homeschooling families will be able to analyze the merits and complications of incorporating GCED in their homeschooling approach. Education policy makers at the local, state, national, and global levels may also benefit from the findings as they develop education policies that are inclusive of the variety of educational approaches while ensuring adequate preparedness for today's youth.

In what follows, I discuss the existing research on homeschooling and demonstrate the missing link with GCED in homeschooling. In the literature review section, I briefly situate the background and the current homeschooling practices in the United States. Following this, the conceptual framework draws on the current research on GCED, demonstrating the lack of GCED in homeschooling education. Then I discuss the research design and methodology of this study, followed by the findings and conclusions. The findings and conclusions reveal how homeschooling families have engaged with GCED and offer insights on how this research can be applied in the field of international and comparative education.

### **Literature Review**

Many scholars have classified homeschooling within alternative education (Aron, 2006; Kraftl, 2013; Mills & McGregor, 2017). Although the term *alternative* is contested as being *alternative to what*, it serves as a commonly recognized term to categorize educational approaches that are outside of formal education as provided through public and private schools. Alternative education is defined by the U.S. Department of Education as “a public elementary/secondary school that: 1) addresses the needs of students that typically cannot be met in a regular school; 2) provides nontraditional education; 3) serves as an adjunct to a regular school; and 4) falls outside of the categories of regular, special education, or vocational education” (NCES, 2002, Table 2, p. 14; Sable, Plotts, & Mitchell, 2010). Formal education, in contrast to alternative education, uses a credential system, is structured in an institution, and is often standardized and teacher-centered (Clabaugh & Rozycki, 1990; Fordham, 1993; UNESCO, n.d.). Homeschool fits within the definition of alternative education as it serves to meet the nontraditional educational needs of families that are not met in regular school.

### **History and Motivations to Homeschool in the United States**

Homeschooling has been practiced in the United States for over a century. The emergence of modern-day homeschooling arose with movements such as deschooling and unschooling during the 1960s and 1970s (Collom, 2005; Holt, 1976; Illich, 1971; Miller, 2004; Reich, 2002; Rolstad & Kesson, 2013). The 1980s saw a new profile of homeschooling families, consisting primarily of conservative Christians who disapproved of the secular instruction in public schools (Collom, 2005). Parents desired to have more control over their children’s education, and they valued individual autonomy and independence over social participation and social responsibility (Van Galen & Pitman, 1991). Throughout the 1970s and 1980s,

homeschooling experienced a surge due to its legalization nationwide and the growth of the Internet and education reform (Jolly & Matthews, 2018).

The homeschooling approach in the United States is individualized per family. With varying levels of state regulation, families take different approaches to stay in compliance with state laws (CRHE, 2019; HSLDA, 2019). The common factor is that homeschooling takes place primarily in the home and with the parent(s) as the primary instructor(s) (Lines, 1999; Lips & Feinberg, 2008; Van Galen & Pitman, 1991). In 2012, Murphy developed nine definitions which all include parental control of education and the home as the learning environment. Ultimately, homeschooling is “not administered, controlled and/or predominantly funded through state-sanctioned educational programmes assumed to be the ‘mainstream’ in countries where education is an assumed, universal right for children” (Kraftl, 2013, p. 2).

Motivations to homeschool vary as widely as the approaches taken. Van Galen and Pitman (1991) categorized motivations for homeschooling into binary categories: ideologues and pedagogues. Ideologues disagreed with the secular education provided in institutional schools with religion being a primary motivation. Pedagogues were more concerned with the delivery of education in schools rather than the content of the curriculum (Jolly & Matthews, 2018). However, these binary categorizations are no longer sufficient in describing the diverse range of homeschoolers today. Kunzman (2009) and Myers (2015) assert that the idea of a typical homeschooler is non-existent as the homeschooling landscape is too diverse and complex.

In the past 30 years, the United States has seen a shift in the motivations and ways of homeschooling (Jolly & Matthews, 2018). Standards-based curriculum and assessment measures are now prevalent and school choice provides a means for families to choose to homeschool (Jolly & Matthews, 2018). In a study by the Institute of Education Sciences (NCES, 2008),

motivations to homeschool included concerns about the school environment, disapproval of the removal of religious or moral instruction, and disapproval of the academic instruction and pedagogy in institutional schools (Bauman, 2001; Kendall & Taylor, 2016; Noel et al., 2013; Redford, et al., 2017; Smith, 2013). Further research has demonstrated how social pressures and social issues, such as systemic institutional racism found in schools, have influenced families' decisions when it comes to homeschooling (Fields-Smith & Kisura, 2013; Puga, 2019).

Family lifestyles and an ethos of learning through everyday life are other motivating factors for homeschooling families. Studies by Cheng et al. (2016) and Jolly and Matthews (2018) demonstrated that parents homeschooled in order to accommodate their children's special needs. Families who relied on John Holt's unschooling approach found that homeschooling allowed them the freedom to dictate education for their children (Thomas and Pattison, 2013). Within the freedom to pursue the educational approach parents deem most appropriate for their children is a motivation to be more mobile and not tied to one locality (Kraftl, 2013).

Despite a long history of homeschooling in the United States, there are stereotypes about this form of education. Some assumptions are that homeschoolers are not socialized, are isolated, are unable to integrate into mainstream society, and have limited awareness about world events (Arai, 1999; Romanowski, 2006). Skeptics have expressed concerns that homeschooling denies children exposure to the social interaction to which their peers in traditional schools have access, putting them at a competitive disadvantage for opportunities in higher education and employment (Arai, 1999; Kantrowitz & Wingert, 1998; Lubienski, 2003; Murray, 1996; Romanoski, 2006; Stevens, 2003).

In an additional critique of the homeschooling movement, scholars have argued that homeschooling exacerbates inequalities since homeschooling is a choice that many do not have

access to because they are disadvantaged socially, culturally, and economically (Apple, 2000; Lubienski, 2003; Puga, 2019). Moreover, Reich (2002) argues against homeschooling, citing the customization of the education as limiting the children's exposure to diverse people and ideas.

Proponents of homeschooling argue that homeschooled children are not unsocialized and instead point to the socialization children are exposed to through actively and regularly participating in society via extra-curricular activities (Arai, 1999, p. 8; Fogelman, 1991; Gathercole, 2007; Lebeda, 2007; Smith & Sikkink, 1999; Stevens, 2003). Atkinson et al. (2007) and Medlin (2013) point out how parents prioritize socialization for their homeschooled children, particularly emphasizing the intention of instilling values such as respect of others of different backgrounds. Homeschooling families point to the value of the home environment and family influence as a means to strengthen confidence in children to use critical thinking (Arai, 1999; Knowles, 1991; Mayberry, 1988; Mayberry & Knowles, 1989; Medlin & Butler, 2018; Taylor, 1986; Thomas, 1998). Advocates contend that the standardized environment can actually prevent "children's intellectual development by stifling creativity, curiosity, and self-determination" (Gatto, 2010; Holt & Farenga, 2003; (Medlin & Butler, 2018).

Arguing that homeschooled children are in fact active in civic life, scholars demonstrate how children are involved in community life such as church, community groups, homeschooling groups, and athletic groups (Guterman & Neuman, 2017; Mitchell, 2003; Smith & Sikkink, 1999). Furthermore, families argue that children are socializing not just in their segmented peer groups but also with adults (Lebeda, 2007). Each of these arguments demonstrates how homeschooling has served to satisfy family desires to educate their children in the manner most fitting for their family.

### **Homeschooling Regulations in Connecticut, New Jersey, New York, and Pennsylvania**

To better understand the needs of families who choose this educational approach as the most fitting for their families, this study focuses on four states in the Northeastern area of the United States. With the high level of interest to participate by homeschooling families, I expanded the geographic range to include participants from four Northeastern states instead of the two originally proposed, New York and Connecticut. These four states fall on opposite ends of the regulation spectrum (CRHE, 2019; HSLDA, 2019). Nationally, there are five states that are considered to be highly regulated and eleven that do not have any state mandated regulations. The remaining 34 fall in between these two spectrums. Two of the states, New York and Pennsylvania, have more rigorous regulations and the other two, Connecticut and New Jersey, do not require families to file a notice of intent to homeschool and there are no reporting regulations. In 2017, Connecticut and New Jersey reported a combined 3.9% of the nation's school-age population, while New York and Pennsylvania had a combined 9.3% of the nation's school-age population (NCES, n.d.).

Connecticut's General Statute 10-184 simply mandates that "parents are responsible for ensuring that their children receive instruction" in the required subjects of reading and writing, geography, math, U.S. history, and citizenship (CHN, 2019; HSLDA, 2019a). Families are not required to notify the school district of their intent to homeschool nor meet any teaching qualifications. There are no required number of days of instruction per year nor testing requirements, but Connecticut does require providing education for ages seven to seventeen. Despite less regulation, the CT Board of Education recommends families file a notice of intent and maintain a log of instruction (CT. Gov, 2019; Homeschool State Laws, 2017). With limited regulation, families have more freedom to design and deliver the education as they see fit.

New Jersey's law simply states that parents must provide an academically equivalent education to what the child would receive in school (HSLDA, 2019). However, this mandate is left up to interpretation by the parent and school district. While not state mandated, some school districts ask families to file a notice of intent or to obtain approval from the school district.

In contrast, homeschooling families in New York are required to submit an annual Statement of Intent and Individualized Home Instruction Plan (IHIP) as well as quarterly reports to their local district (HSLDA, 2019; NYC Department of Education, 2019; NYSED, 2019). Families must comply with minimum attendance requirements and annual assessments by a New York State-certified teacher or other qualified person. In order to stay in compliance with homeschooling regulations, families must adjust their approach accordingly.

In Pennsylvania, homeschooling families have four options to comply with the law (HSLDA, 2019). In the first option, the homeschooling parents must have at least a high school diploma or equivalent, they must file a notarized affidavit prior to beginning homeschooling, provide instruction for required subjects for the required number of days and hours, maintain a portfolio of instruction and the required testing, and participate in regular evaluations by qualified evaluators. The second option allows homeschooling families to use a qualified private tutor to instruct in the required subjects. The third option involves enrolling in a religious school's extension or satellite program. The final option is enrolling in a state accredited or boarding school's extension or satellite program. In studying homeschooling approaches in states that vary widely in the regulations, this study allows for a broad understanding of the approaches families take while adhering to state regulations.

### **Lack of Global Perspective in the Current Research on Homeschooling**

While the current research is robust in uncovering the motivations, approaches, and impacts of homeschooling in the United States, there is minimal research on the incorporation of aspects of global perspective in the education. Many of these studies and resources focus on the educational aspect and impact on the student in their local community; less focus has been on the discussion of global awareness and education in homeschooling. In a doctoral dissertation, Beck (2018) sought to uncover the prevalence of global awareness within the homeschooling community. However, his focus was on global awareness among Christian homeschooling families participating in one co-op in Pennsylvania, leaving room to explore global awareness in multiple approaches to homeschooling.

The influence of a global perspective within homeschooling education can be found more online. Organizations such as Global Village School and Homeschool Global offer programming and resources for homeschooling families. Yet, there remains little research on their prevalence and usage within the homeschooling community. With a deeper understanding of the homeschooling movement, this study requires a further understanding of how and why global perspective is of importance in education youth.

### **Conceptual Framework: Global Citizenship Education**

Before this study can begin to examine the prevalence and integration of global citizenship education (GCED) in homeschooling approaches and the lived experiences of homeschooled alumni in the eight families, it is important to define GCED. The term ‘global citizenship’ has grabbed the attention of many, including education providers and researchers.

In today’s interconnected world, the aim of GCED is commonly considered to be about helping and guiding today’s youth to prosper and contribute to bettering society in their nation-states and globally. Moreover, GCED acknowledges the influence of an individual’s

environment and experiences in how they identify as globally aware. In 2015, the United Nations (UN) included global citizenship as a key element in the sustainable development goals. The fourth goal addresses education and includes a target that states:

By 2030, ensure that all learners acquire the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, including, among others, through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship and appreciation of cultural diversity and of culture's contribution to sustainable development. (United Nations, n.d.)

Drawing on this directive, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) defines GCED as a means to support the knowledge, skills, and values in core tenets of human rights, social justice, diversity, gender equality, and environmentally sustainable development in GCED (Lockhart, 2016; UNESCO, n.d.).

Similar to this definition, Oxfam defines GCED as a means to prepare learners for active engagement in an interconnected world (Oxfam, 2019). Accordingly, a global citizen is one who is globally aware, is respectful of varying perspectives and values, understands the way the world works, is committed to social justice, and actively engages in contributing to improving society. Drawing on these definitions, a framework of GCED was developed in collaboration by UNESCO, UN, and Brookings Institute, among others. In this framework, GCED has three goals: "(1) fostering the values/attitudes of being an agent of positive change; (2) building knowledge of where, why, and how to take action toward positive change; and (3) developing self-efficacy for taking effective actions toward positive change" (Measuring Global Citizenship Education, 2017, p. ix).

GCED does not come without critiques. The reality of being a global citizen is brought into question as the concept of being a citizen of the world and a citizen of a nation can appear to be contradictory (Davies, 2006; Lockhart, 2016). In response to this concern, proponents argue that the tenets of global citizenship are in fact complementary in nature to how one is a citizen of their nation. For example, the core tenets include awareness, respecting various perspectives, and considering how one acts and contributes as a citizen of their nation and of the world.

While a major goal of GCED is to guide youth to better understand and contribute to their society nationally and globally, research by Hughes (2004), Lockhart (2016), and Tully (2014) suggest that some believe GCED unfairly spreads Western values that are intent on social control without full acknowledgement of negative impacts of globalization. Research on ways that different homeschooling approaches incorporate GCED may help further illuminate this issue.

### **GCED in Homeschooling**

A review of the current research on GCED and homeschooling unveils extensive research on these topics separately but not together. Arai (1999) explores the connection of citizenship education and homeschooling. While this work is related to citizenship and homeschooling, the scope is on national citizenship. In 2014, Cheng released a study on homeschooling within an intercultural world that seeks to understand perspectives and experiences of homeschoolers. While this study explores aspects of GCED, the scope is more narrowly centered on the political tolerance level of homeschoolers compared to those in traditional schools. This study intended to expand the research to the connection between GCED and homeschooling.

In alternative education approaches, global education is a key factor in International Baccalaureate core curriculum (IBO, 2019). Yet, homeschooling, with its wide variances, does not have a centralized instructional approach and curriculum that draws on GCED core

competencies. Instead, each family takes their own approach to educating their children based on the values and attitudes, knowledges and skills, and behaviors deemed important. Given the aforementioned lack of knowledge about the tenets of GCED in homeschooling education, this study served to expand awareness of homeschooling approaches in the United States, particularly in Connecticut, New Jersey, New York, and Pennsylvania and added to the limited research on homeschooling in academia. Understanding the prevalence of GCED in homeschooling in the United States will help to shed light on how initiatives that prepare youth in the GCED tenets, knowledge, skills, behaviors, and values, impact a family's approach to homeschooling.

### **Research Design and Methodology**

In order to better understand the perspectives and lived experiences of homeschooling parents and adults who were homeschooled for all or part of their state required years of education, this study employed qualitative methodology. Qualitative methodology draws on multiple methods of research to study social phenomena in natural settings (Flick, 2014; Patton, 2015; Silverman, 2010). While many qualitative studies explored homeschooling motivations and social impacts, this study explored practices and impacts in relation to GCED (Collom & Mitchell, 2005; Després, 2013; DiPerna et al., 2017; Green & Hoover-Dempsey, 2007; Jolly & Matthews, 2018; Romanowski, 2006; Van Galen & Pitman, 1991). This study is about personal experiences and not generalizable to all homeschooling communities and practices.

### **Sampling Methods**

This study used mixed non-probability sampling which better enabled me to uncover the perspectives and lived experiences of homeschooling families (Patton, 2015). Non-probability sampling is useful in qualitative research as it seeks to uncover social phenomena which are not

always generalizable (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015). I employed purposive or criterion sampling, maximum variation sampling, and snowball sampling (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015; Patton, 2015).

In purposive sampling, the intention is to gain insight from a sample that can best address the questions being studied (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015). For this study, I employed purposive sampling by surveying a select population of homeschooling parents and homeschooled alumni, or adults who were homeschooled for all or part of their state mandated education. Additionally, I relied on maximum variation sampling when surveying homeschooling parents and homeschooled alumni in highly regulated New York and Pennsylvania and lowly regulated Connecticut and New Jersey (HSLDA, 2019). Maximum variation sampling ensures a more useful study through a wide variation of the social phenomena (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015; Patton, 2015). By narrowing the sampling to these four states, the study presented a more diverse perspective of the varying experiences with homeschooling (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015). Finally, I employed snowball sampling by asking participants to identify other homeschooling parents and homeschooled alumni whom I invited to participate in my study.

**Family introductions per state.** The eight families who participated in this study were motivated to homeschool for varying reasons. For each of these families, how they approached homeschooling was influenced by the state regulations. An overview of the participating families by state can be found in Table 1.

**Table 1: Family Profiles by State**

Homeschool Regulation Level	State Homeschooled	Homeschooling Families	Homeschooling Parent(s)	Homeschooled Alumni
No Notice Required	Connecticut	Brown	Mary Beth* (Mother)	Ariella (Daughter)
		Khoury	Genevieve (Mother)	Ethan* (Son)
		Martin	Roger* (Father) Sara (Mother)	Juliette* (Daughter)
		Robinson	Jamie* (Mother)	Serena* (Daughter)
	New Jersey	Hargrave	Irene* (Mother)	Olivia (Daughter)

High Regulation	New York	Davis	Tracy* (Mother)	Harry* (Son) Peter (Son)
		Wilson	Laurie* (Mother)	Solo* (Son)
	Pennsylvania	Hall	Gerald* (Father) Jeralynn (Mother)	Elise* (Daughter) Annie (Daughter)

*Note: All of these members completed an online survey about their homeschooling experiences. The asterisks (\*) next to a participant's name, indicates those who participated in an interview. All names in the survey are pseudonyms either selected by the participants or given to them in order to protect their identity.*

***Families in less regulated states.*** Five of the families, Martin, Khoury, Brown, Hargrave, and Robinson homeschooled in states without any regulations with four families in Connecticut and one in New Jersey. These families were not required to file a notice of intent, submit progress reports, or take standardized tests (CHN, 2019; HSLDA, 2019a, HSLDA, 2019). The Hargrave and Robinson families liked that they were not required to adhere to any state homeschooling guidelines, which they felt gave them the freedom to educate in the way they thought best for their children.

***Brown family.*** Of the five Brown family members, the mother, Mary Beth and her middle daughter, Ariella, participated in the study. The family identified as White/Caucasian. The primary home language was English. Mary Beth, who was not homeschooled herself, homeschooled her three children at various times during the 2000s and 2010s in Illinois, Connecticut, and while living a year in India. After having been enrolled in public schools, Ariella was homeschooled in sixth grade while living in India. Upon return to the United States she returned to public school, however, left the public school in tenth grade and finished her education homeschooled in a homeschool center where her mother was a director. Mary Beth had a master's degree and Ariella was earning her bachelor's degree at the time of this study.

***Hargrave family.*** As a mother of five, Irene, and her oldest daughter, Olivia, participated in the study. While neither parent was homeschooled, Olivia was homeschooled starting in the second grade after being pulled out of public school in the 2000s. The mixed-race family

identified as White/Caucasian and Asian/Pacific Islander with a primary home language of English. At the time of participating in the study, Irene had a master's degree and Olivia had a bachelor's degree. Irene was the head of a local Catholic school she founded in the early 2010s.

*Khoury family.* As a mother of three, Genevieve and her eldest son, Ethan, participated in the study as the youngest two children were still being homeschooled. The family identified as mixed race/ethnicity, White/Caucasian and Arab/American, with English as the primary home language. Ethan was homeschooled for his entire primary and secondary education in Connecticut during the 2000s and 2010s. Neither parent was homeschooled for their education. At the time of participating in the study, Genevieve was in the process of completing her doctorate and Ethan was in college pursuing a bachelor's degree.

*Martin family.* The Martin parents, Roger and Sara, were not homeschooled themselves and chose to homeschool their youngest of two children, Juliette, when she was in third grade. As a White/Caucasian family living in Connecticut in the early 1980s, the primary home language was English. During Juliette's fourth and fifth grades, the family moved to Haiti. Upon return to the United States, the family moved to another state where Juliette continued her education in public schools. Roger and Juliette had master's degrees at the time of participating in the study and Sara had completed some graduate courses.

*Robinson family.* The Robinson family of four was based in Connecticut and identified as White/Caucasian with English as the primary home language. The mother, Jamie, who was not homeschooled, and her oldest daughter, Serena, participated in the study. Both Robinson children were homeschooled during the 2000s and 2010s. Serena was enrolled in a public school until third grade when she began her homeschooling education. Serena was pursuing her bachelor's degree and Jamie had a bachelor's degree when they participated in the study.

*Families in more regulated states.* Three of the families, Davis, Wilson, and Hall, homeschooled their children in states with more rigorous homeschooling regulations. Two of the families homeschooled in New York and one family in Pennsylvania (HSLDA, 2019). Families were required to file a notice of intent to homeschool, submit regular progress reports, and the children were required to take the state-mandated standardized tests or some equivalent.

*Davis family.* Three of the five Davis family members participated in the study, Tracy and two of her three children, Harry and Peter. Identifying as White/Caucasian in New York, their primary home language was English. Tracy, who was not homeschooled herself, decided to homeschool the eldest child, Harry, when he was in pre-school. As Tracy was already established in homeschooling her eldest, she continued homeschooling her next two children for their entire K-12 education in 1990s through the 2010s. At the time of participating in the survey, both Tracy and Harry had a bachelor's degree and Peter was in college pursuing a bachelor's degree. Tracy, a strong advocate for the homeschooling community, was active in various homeschooling associations and continued to counsel families as they explored homeschooling.

*Hall family.* In the Hall family, the four children were homeschooled at varying ages during the 1980s through the late 1990s. Four of the six family members participated in the study, Gerald and Jeralynn and their two middle children, Annie and Elise. The Pennsylvanian family identified as White/Caucasian with the primary home language as English. Elise shared that the secondary home language was Romanian. All of the Hall children were homeschooled for primary school, grades K-5. Annie was homeschooled until fifth grade and then followed her older sibling to public middle school, although in seventh grade she chose to be homeschooled again. After completing middle school, she continued her education at the private high school. Differently than her older siblings, Elise chose to only attend one semester at the public high

school in tenth grade for the purpose of widening her social circle. Neither Gerald nor Jeralynn were homeschooled. Regarding their educational level, Gerald had a bachelor's degree, Jeralynn did not have a college degree while homeschooling but returned later to earn her master's degree. Both Annie and Elise had master's degrees.

*Wilson family.* Of the four Wilson family members, two participated in the study, Laurie and her youngest son Solo. As a White/Caucasian family in New York, the primary home language was English. Both Wilson boys were homeschooled from third and fourth grades through high school during the late 1990s and early 2000s. Laurie described her educational level as having some college courses and Solo had a bachelor's degree. Laurie was a homeschooling advocate and she maintained an online resource platform for families as well as teach homeschooling classes and give lectures about the homeschooling education practice.

### **Methods of Data Collection**

In order to understand the extent to which homeschooling curriculum models and instruction methods used by families in Connecticut, New Jersey, New York, and Pennsylvania included tenets of GCED, I employed survey, interviews, and document analysis methods.

**Survey.** The questionnaires included open-ended as well as close-ended questions. Distinct questionnaires were developed for homeschooling parents and homeschooled alumni that contained a different set of questions. The questionnaires were developed through Microsoft Suite Forms, an online survey tool, and distributed to 45 members of the homeschooling community through 40 homeschooling associations, groups, and cooperatives (co-ops). The responses to the questionnaires were not anonymous as the survey was used to collect informed consent and to identify participants who wished to receive more information about participating in an interview. Of the 45 families that I directly contacted, eight participated in the study

equating to a 20% completion rate. Two of the eight participating families heard about the study through word of mouth where I employed the snowball sampling method. In total, 21 participants responded to the survey, more specifically 11 homeschooling parents and 10 homeschooled alumni, being part of eight focal families.

The questionnaires generated information from homeschooling parents and homeschooled alumni regarding their thoughts, beliefs, opinions, perceptions, experiences, and knowledge as it relates to homeschooling and GCED. The questionnaires also included background and demographic information. By participating in questionnaires, participants were able to reflect on their perspectives and experiences prior to engaging in an interview.

**Interviews.** Interviews served to generate new insights about the individual perspectives and lived experiences of homeschooled alumni. Eight homeschooling families in the four Northeastern states participated in the interviews. Of the eight families, I individually interviewed seven parents and six homeschooled alumni, separately, using semi-structured interviews. This format allowed me to employ probing questions to go deeper into capturing the lived experiences of my participants. In my original research I had proposed interviewing six families in total, three from each state, New York and Connecticut. However, with high interest I expanded the study to include all eight families who wanted to participate. By using a list of topical themes for the questions, I was able to respond to situations with flexibility. The interview included questions regarding experience and behavior; opinions to understand what the interviewees were thinking; their intentions, and values; feelings to understand emotional responses; knowledge; and background such as age, education, race, affiliations, and residence.

Given my close connection with the homeschooling community, I anticipated that I would be able to build rapport with the participants based on shared experiences. However, with

this close connection, I employed efforts to bracket my own assumptions during data collection, particularly during the interviews, and during the data analysis stage of the research. Several methods were used to bracket my personal assumptions and bias, since I was myself homeschooled. I endeavored to approach interviews with a lens of someone not familiar with homeschooling. I asked probing questions that asked for clarifications of statements. During the data analysis, I maintained a journal to reflect on my own experiences so as to not impose my own assumptions and experiences on what was shared with me during the interviews.

Of the eight participating families, five families participated in both the online survey and an interview. For three of the families, both the homeschooling parent and homeschooled alumni participated in the surveys, but only one member from each family participated in the interview. For one family, only one parent completed the survey and neither homeschooling parent nor homeschooled alumni participated in an interview. Before embarking on this study, I had intended to survey and interview six families in total, one parent and one alum from each family.

**Document analysis.** The secondary method of data collection was analyzing curriculum models and instructional approaches presented in public forums, websites, blogs, and homeschool associations shared by the eight participating families. I reviewed the publicly available content of the 21 resources shared by participants. These resources were categorized by type: blogs/websites, of which there were three mentioned; homeschool associations, of which one was mentioned; there were two mentions of homeschool centers; three mentions of local community resource sites; and 12 types of curriculum.

### **Researcher's Positionality**

As a member of the homeschooling community in Washington state, I was homeschooled primarily by my mother for the first six years of my state required education. My secondary

education was completed in private and public schools. My older siblings completed their education similarly with the exception of one who opted to be homeschooled for a year of high school before returning to public school. My younger siblings participated in a homeschool co-op where they completed high school. My parents chose to homeschool primarily because of a disapproval of the curriculum in public schools. Using the categories above, my family would most likely fall under Van Galen and Pitman's category of ideologues. However, in further discussions with my parents, the motivations were much more nuanced with reasons being the perceived school environment as well as educational content.

My understanding of global awareness as a component of GCED stems from my personal experience. Throughout my homeschooling education, my siblings and I learned about various cultures and languages through the lens of a Christian faith-based education. The global awareness in my homeschooling experience are primarily from Christian missionary perspectives of other countries. With experiences such as hosting exchange students and language learning throughout my childhood, I was encouraged to cultivate cultural respect and sensitivity.

Since graduating from high school, I have had multiple opportunities to travel and work in many different countries in three world regions, Latin America and the Caribbean, West Africa, and Western Europe. These experiences have broadened my worldview and perspective and have challenged me to lead a life that aligns with the definitions of a global citizen. As such my knowledge, skills, behaviors, actions, values, and attitudes are sensitized to the importance of diversity, global awareness, and global responsibility.

With my personal connection to homeschooling, I was conscious of potential researcher bias. During data collection, I disclosed my connection in the invitation to participate and in the findings. I practiced critical reflexivity by journaling while conducting research. Furthermore, I

employed bracketing throughout the study in order to separate my own perspectives and biases from the results of my study (Tufford & Newman, 2010).

### **Credibility and Trustworthiness of Findings**

Triangulation, member checking, searching for disconfirming evidence, and an audit trail were employed to ensure the findings of this study were credible (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Rossman & Rallis, 2017). By drawing on three different sources of data in the surveys, interviews, and document analysis I was able to triangulate the data. The survey and interview responses the parents and the homeschooled children were used to corroborate the findings and to add depth to the analysis in order to further ensure credibility (Denzin, 2009, 2012; Fusch, Fusch, & Ness, 2018). The survey and interview responses as well as the 21 curriculum and educational resources were compared to the GCED literature on GCED tenets as defined by UNESCO (n.d.) and United Nations (n.d.) to ensure accuracy in interpreting the concept of GCED. By surveying and interviewing both parents and their homeschooled children as well as reviewing the curriculum and education resources referenced by participating families, I was able to apply triangulation methods to source out disconfirming evidence. For example, when family referenced a curriculum in the survey and interview responses as means to how they incorporated GCED tenets, I investigated the source on my own to ensure that the curriculum incorporated GCED tenets.

An audit trail was employed when analyzing data and included a documented record of processes to collect raw data, generate codes and apply categories and themes to survey and interview results. Progress was tracked from data collection, analysis, code application, and generation of themes using multiple spreadsheets and a computer software, Dedoose. This systematic maintenance of data analysis method reinforced the trustworthiness of the inquiry

process as found by Lincoln and Guba (1985) and Schwandt (2001). Additionally, I relied on my community of practice by seeking peer review from those in my advising group and the advisor. Other approaches were drawn from indigenous methodologies such as respect and reciprocity, relational methods, and alternative methods such as allowing for the interviews to be conversational in nature (Battiste, 2008). At the conclusion of this study, I shared results and findings with the homeschool community members involved in the study.

### **Data Management and Analysis**

The collected surveys and interview responses were securely stored on my personal university drive with pseudonyms assigned to each participant's survey and/or interview notes. The interview notes were recorded, transcribed and coded with online tools such as voice recorder apps, Microsoft 365 Office, and Dedoose. Given the limited research on the topic of homeschooling and GCED, I let the data collection guide the development of codes using inductive and deductive methods. As an approach to analysis, inductive reasoning is when the researcher has not anticipated the results whereas in deductive reasoning signifies the researcher has a sense of what the data will reveal (Rossman & Rallis, 2017). After data collection was completed, I analyzed the data to draw out themes and categorize them into groupings using codes. These codes were then applied to the questionnaire responses, interview transcripts, and document analysis. In analyzing the data, two main themes emerged. The first related to motivations parents had to homeschool and to provide GCED in the homeschooling education. Within the second theme the three subthemes of perceptions of GCED, intentionality to include GCED, and ways of imparting GCED addressed the four research questions of this study.

### **Ethical Considerations**

This study was conducted ethically, adhering to the IRB regulations. To recruit my participants, I used an informed consent form to provide necessary information to ensure participants were fully informed of the nature and purpose of the study. It addressed voluntary participation, the protection of participant identities and privacy, disclosure of any potential risks and/or benefits, and the right to withdraw from the study.

While this study did not pose overt risks or concerns related to respect for persons, there were ethical considerations that I remained mindful of as I conducted the research. Perceptions of homeschooling outside the community can be misleading, causing some members of the community to be wary of disclosing their education choice (Arai, 1999; Kantrowitz & Wingert, 1998; Murray, 1996; Romanoweski, 2006). Fully aware of this concern, I made efforts to build trust and confidence within the community. I interviewed adults, both parents and those who are 18 years old and older. As this study was conducted with homeschooling families using the national language of English, I did not encounter ethical issues arising from consent with non-proficient English speakers. Moreover, this study did not include compensation for participation, reducing concern about undue inducement.

This study did not cause participants physical or mental risk but there were concerns of emotional, reputational, or legal risk. The presentation of findings had the potential to cause emotional or reputational harm if I did not remain aware and unbiased in my collection of data and presentation of findings. An example might have been that a parent divulged a practice that they used in homeschooling that might be perceived by some as not adequately educating their children. Regarding legal risk, a participant could have disclosed that they had not been or are currently not in compliance with state regulations. As the researcher, I took measures to ensure confidentiality through use of pseudonyms to reduce risk of linking the collected data to the

participant. Indirect benefits to participants included the possibility that participation in the study might have stimulated reflections on homeschooling experience, specifically the integration of GCED in designing curriculum. Parents might have chosen to alter their approach for younger children from their reflections if they felt that GCED would be beneficial for their children.

### **Limitations**

While the study drew from a smaller sample size in four states, the intention was to understand the lived experiences of participants and not intended to generalize the findings to the wider population. Further iterations of this study could be conducted with more resources and time to understand the lived experiences of participants across the United States.

### **Findings**

Before discussing the findings related to GCED, this section first provides an overview of the eight families' motivations to begin homeschooling. The family profiles (Table 1) and their motivations contextualize their homeschooling approaches in relation to GCED.

#### **Families' Motivations to Homeschool**

The motivations to homeschool varied between the eight families in this study. For each of these families, how they approached homeschooling was influenced by the state regulations. The eight families were asked to rate four common reasons to homeschool as either very relevant, relevant, somewhat relevant, or not relevant in the survey. The reasons were derived from commonly expressed motivations in research by Bauman (2001), Cheng et al. (2016), Jolly & Matthews (2018), Kendall & Taylor (2016), Kraftl (2013), and Noel et al. (2013). Seven families indicated a very relevant or relevant reason to homeschool was a preference to deliver educational content that was different than what was delivered in public or private schools. Six

families indicated a preference to deliver instruction in a different way than in public or private schools as very relevant or relevant. Five families indicated safety and security (both physical and emotional), out of concern for the public or private school environment as very relevant or relevant. Only three families indicated that attending public or private school for a set number of hours per day was not conducive to the family needs and was noted as a very relevant or relevant reason. However, the rankings in the survey responses did not prove as useful in analyzing the families' motivations. The open-ended responses in the interviews provided richer detail that contextualized the families' motivations to homeschool.

The Hargrave, Khoury, Martin, Robinson, Davis, Hall, and Wilson families' concerns were with what the children were learning and how they were learning. The Hargrave family chose to homeschool because they did not feel there was "a school either truly religious or truly academic (concerned with intellectual formation)" (personal communication, February 24, 2020). The motivation of religion was also reflected in what scholars Collom (2005), Jolly and Matthews (2018), and Redford, Battle, and Bielick (2017) found as a common reason to homeschool. In addition, a study by the National Center for Education Statistics (2017) found that 51% of homeschooling families cited religion as an important reason to homeschool, although only 16% cited it as the most important reason.

The Khourys did not specify any additional motivations to homeschool outside of what was provided in the closed-ended survey question. Educational content and pedagogy, concerns for safety and security in the school environment, and the set school schedule were equally important reasons to homeschool for the Khoury family. The Martins' decision was partly due to the content delivered in public and private schools. Sara Martin felt that their "choices were either a mediocre public school or elitist and expensive private schools" (personal

communication, January 26, 2020). The family was also preparing to live in Haiti, and they were not sure that the schools in Haiti would provide the academic instruction that they wanted for their daughter. The family homeschooled their daughter the year before going to Haiti so they would be prepared to homeschool in another country. The Martins' motivation reflected what Kraftl (2013) discovered, that the ability to be mobile was an important factor in the decision to homeschool. The motivation to be more mobile is similar to what NCES (2017) found in which 22% of families cited other reasons such as "family time, finances, travel, and a more flexible schedule" as an important reason to homeschool during the 2015/2016 academic year, and 11% cited this motivation as the most important reason (NCES, 2017, Table 8, p. 19).

The Robinsons realized that they could customize the learning for their children in a way that was not offered in the school system. Their daughter, Serena, believed that because of the flexibility in a homeschool environment, she was able to learn at her own pace. For the Davis family, Tracy emphasized that "following a curriculum in school is doing what other people think you should be learning and it's not necessarily what's interesting or relevant or engaging to you" (personal communication, January 25, 2020). Reiterating this, Harry shared that the way education was delivered in institutionalized schools was not conducive to his learning style. When Harry was in pre-school, Tracy realized that he was a highly focused child and felt that the structured schedule in the school environment would not be suitable to his learning style.

Gerald and Jeralynn Hall decided to homeschool because they were concerned with the content their children would learn in institutionalized schools as well as the method of delivery. They did not agree with "the regimentation that went on in school," "the nationalism and the militarism that went along in the public schools," and "that kids were sort of segregating themselves also in two cliques" and so they "wanted to guide them into a good moral and ethical

system” (Jeralyn and Gerald, personal communication, January 31 and February 5, 2020). This appeared to suggest that their choice to homeschool was influenced by their values.

The Wilson family disapproved of the way education was delivered in schools. For Solo, the decision to homeschool came after public school administrators told his parents that he would have to choose between ballet and school because he missed too many days of school while rehearsing for the ballet. Moreover, Laurie expressed her concern with the standards-based curriculum in school education. Jolly and Matthews (2018) also found that the standards-based curriculum in schools was a motivation to homeschool. While Laurie felt the school did not provide the academic rigor she sought for her children, she considered it as the primary environment for the social education she wanted. Upon moving to New York, Laurie did not approve of the public school in her district because of its reputation “for bullying and violence” (personal communication, January 27, 2020). Solo shared that homeschooling was a better option for his older brother because “he got kicked out of school at a young age and he tried going back for high school and he got bullied” (personal communication, February 16, 2020).

The Browns’ decision to homeschool differed for each child. The family decided to homeschool their oldest child when he was in eighth grade because they moved to a new city and did not want to put him in a new school for one year, only to have him adjust to a whole new school the following year when he entered public high school. For their younger two daughters, the family decided to homeschool while living in India for a year because they did not want to put the children in school in India for only one year. Upon returning to the United States, the children were again enrolled in public school. Later, when their middle child was in public high school, they decided to homeschool her again because of emotional and social problems she experienced in the public school. Reiterating what her mother shared, Ariella believed that her

homeschooling education was “very helpful emotionally, to the extent that [she] is a healthier and more well-adjusted person” (personal communication, January 26, 2020). The Wilsons’ and Browns’ concerns for the negative pressures in the school environment was a common concern among homeschooling families as found by NCES (2017). The findings from NCES (2017) found that 80% cited concern for the “school environment, such as safety, drugs, or negative peer pressure” as an important reason to homeschool, and 34% cited this motivation as the most important reason during the 2015/2016 academic year (Table 8, p. 19).

Six of the eight families, the Brown, Martin, Robinson, Hargrave, Davis, and Wilson families started with public schools, but for various reasons pulled their children out of institutionalized schools and began homeschooling them. For all eight families, the ability to adapt the education to each child’s learning styles and interests allowed them to focus the learning on what really interested the children. For example, the Davis family mentioned that due to the high attention span of their oldest child, the less structured environment in the homeschool environment allowed them to allocate more time to the learning. Additionally, the Browns found that due to the negative social pressures in the school environment, their child learned better in the less structured learning environment at the homeschool center. These motivations reflect what scholars Thomas and Pattison (2013) found where parents chose to homeschool because it allowed them the freedom to dictate the education for their children.

### **Families Understanding and Integration of GCED**

With a clearer picture of the eight families in Connecticut, New Jersey, New York, and Pennsylvania and their motivations to homeschool, this next section addresses the families’ understanding and integration of GCED into homeschooling education. Additionally, this section

uncovers the extent to which families integrated GCED tenets of knowledge, skills, behaviors, actions, values, and attitudes in their homeschooling and curriculum.

**Perceptions of GCED.** In both the surveys and interviews, I asked participants to share their knowledge and perceptions of GCED as an educational approach. The survey included the following definition,

Global citizenship education is about incorporating a global perspective and global awareness. It includes learning about other cultures, other ways of life and perspectives. It promotes openness and tolerance of differences. Global citizenship education includes values such as knowledge, skills, actions, behaviors, and attitudes like empathy, diversity, and helping others. Some examples of this include the knowledge to understand the interconnectedness of local, state, and global issues and current events and behaviors such as motivation to find effective and sustainable solutions to some of the challenges facing our communities and the world.

After reviewing the provided definition in the survey, six of the eight families readily approved of the concept of GCED. In the survey responses, the Khoury family expressed concerns with GCED as a formalized educational approach, but they shared in the open-ended questions that the concepts of GCED are important to learn. For the Wilson family, “global awareness is a central part of education at all ages” and that “awareness and respect are very important, both local and global” (Laurie and Solo Wilson, personal communication, January 9 and 26, 2020). The Hall family shared that “tolerance and a celebration of diversity and other cultures were very important” (Jeralynn Hall, personal communication, January 31, 2020). Reiterating her mother’s viewpoint, Elise expressed the importance of making “sure that the kids recognize that they are living in one small part, that their actions can impact everything” opining

that “we all have responsibilities to be good humans because it impacts the whole world” (personal communication, January 31, 2020). The opinions expressed by the seven families were in line with the views of Oxfam (2019), UNESCO (n.d.), and United Nations (n.d.) which stated that the value of learning to be a global citizen is contributing to improving society.

While two families approved of the concepts of GCED, they also had concerns about GCED as an educational approach. Harry Davis and the Khoury family cautioned the potential negative impacts when discussing GCED, which resonated with what scholars Hughes (2004) and Lockhart (2016) cautioned when they criticized GCED as a potential means of spreading Western values.

One of the eight families’ interpretation of GCED differed from the other seven families. When asked about their thoughts about GCED, Irene Hargrave expressed that knowing one’s own culture and background were paramount in the education. Likewise, her daughter, Olivia, shared that, “a person is FIRST and FOREMOST a citizen of one's own country and it is one's duty to be a good citizen of that country. Global citizenship has its place...but its place is possibly in a more advanced area of education and therefore of life” (personal communication, February 24, 2020). The Hargraves’ opinions of GCED were similar to Davies’ (2006) and Lockhart’s (2016) questioning of the ability to be a global citizen since the concept of being both a global and national citizen seem contradictory. Summarizing these findings, seven of the eight families felt that the concepts of GCED were beneficial to incorporate in education, but two of the seven families cautioned that it is important that global citizenship is not promoted over national ones.

**Incorporation of GCED in homeschooling.** Through my research, I aimed to uncover if parents thought incorporating GCED was important to include in homeschooling education. The

families were asked if GCED was included in their homeschooling education in the survey. In five families, the Browns, Khourys, Halls, Robinsons, and Wilsons, both the parents and the homeschooled alumni said GCED was included. In three families, the Martins, Davis, and Hargraves, not all parents or homeschooled alumni said it was included. For the Martins, the mother and daughter said it was included while the father said it was not included. In the Davis family, the mother and oldest son said it was included, while the youngest child said that it was not included. In the Hargrave family, the mother said GCED was included but her daughter did not think that it was included.

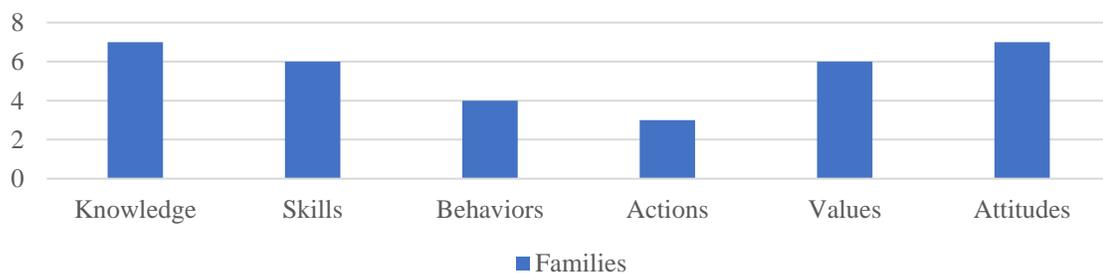
To better understand whether GCED was included, I referenced the GCED core tenets of knowledge, skills, actions, behaviors, values, and attitudes when analyzing the participants' closed-ended and open-ended responses in the surveys and interviews. For the purposes of this study the GCED tenets were defined individually by drawing on the extensive research on GCED by Lockhart (2016), *Measuring Global Citizenship Education* (2017), Oxfam (2019), Reysen et al. (2013), UNESCO (n.d.), United Nations (n.d.), and Womack-Wynne (2018).

Knowledge in GCED signifies possessing the knowledge, understanding, and awareness of the complexities of the world and the interconnectedness of local, state, and global issues and events. Skills are the ability to apply acquired knowledge in global awareness and understanding in thinking critically and creatively to take the steps necessary for a positive change, such as transcending linguistic differences by learning a new language. Behaviors are demonstrated through the motivation to collaboratively find effective and sustainable solutions to some of the challenges facing our communities and the world, such as encouraging respect of differences. Actions are acting on attained knowledge, skills, and behaviors to make a positive change, such as aiding in ways that promote sustainable development. Values include empathy, understanding,

ethics, human morality, solidarity, and respect for differences. Attitudes instill a sense of belonging in the local, national, and global community through appreciation of cultural diversity and the collective contribution to sustainable development.

This study revealed that these core tenets were prevalent for seven of the eight families (Figure 1). The responses showed that the most common GCED tenets included in the homeschooling education were knowledge, skills, values, and attitudes. The Browns, Martins, and Robinsons gained GCED knowledge by living in diverse environments, which allowed their children to learn about other cultures and perspectives. The Martin parents chose to homeschool to prepare for living in another country, which they wanted to do in order to broaden both their and their daughter's worldview as part of GCED knowledge and attitudes.

**Figure 1: GCED Tenets that were Included in the Homeschooling Education**



The primary aspects that the Davis and Wilson families tried to instill through the homeschooling education reflected GCED values and attitudes that encourage respect and empathy when instilling a sense of belonging in the local and global community. The Davis family fostered GCED values by encouraging their children to be “endlessly curious, kind, responsible, self-reliant, respectful of self and others, resourceful” (personal communication, January 11, 2020). Harry Davis recalled respect and understanding as some of the core family values that “were reflected through [his] education” (personal communication, January 27,

2020). Laurie Wilson wanted her children “to become citizens of the world, attain confidence and skill in all areas” which are core GCED values and attitudes (personal communication, January 9, 2020).

The Hall family exemplified GCED behaviors and attitudes when wanting their children “...to think of learning as something that enriched their lives and the lives of others, rather than a means to an end” (Jeralynn Hall, personal communication, January 31, 2020). Cultivating a love of learning and contributing to society were important for the Hall family, which is a motivation homeschooling scholars have found in previous research (Gatto, 2010, Guterman & Neuman, 2017; Holt & Farenga, 2003; Medlin & Butler, 2018; Mitchell, 2003; Smith & Sikkink, 1999).

The survey and interview responses of Hargrave indicated that the GCED tenets, as defined for this study, were not included in their homeschooling education. In addition to the discrepancy between the mother’s and daughter’s opinions of whether GCED was included, the open-ended responses showed that the emphasis in the homeschooling education was placed on knowing their own culture and background. Irene’s definition of GCED differed from that provided in the study. In Irene’s definition of GCED, she felt that since “Western Civilization still drives the world...[and]...the United States economically and culturally drives...the world cultural society...things are just open to us because of the Internet, because of the influx of immigrants...by default [we] become global citizens (personal communication, February 24, 2020). Irene’s daughter, Olivia, learned primarily about Western Civilization in her homeschooling education, which she did not feel was part of GCED. Irene shared that the family decided to live in Austria for a couple of years because they were frustrated with the “material kind of joy” found in their home community. In Austria, Irene shared that the family was primarily in an insular community with like-minded individuals who held similar beliefs and

values. Given their responses, the Hargraves were not found to have included GCED in their homeschooling education.

According to the eight families' survey responses to a closed-ended question, in five of the eight families, both the parents and the homeschooled alumni stated that GCED was included and that the homeschooled children experienced it in their learning. In three families' survey responses to the same closed-ended question, not all participating family members felt GCED was included. In analyzing the open-ended questions in the survey and interview responses of two of these three families, GCED tenets were found to be prevalent in the homeschooling education. The survey and interview responses indicate that seven of the eight families thought incorporating GCED was important to include in homeschooling education, although not all of the GCED tenets were prevalent in all eight families' homeschooling.

**GCED tenets imparted through homeschooling education.** The following sections demonstrate the extent to which each of the GCED tenets, knowledge, skills, behaviors, actions, values, and attitudes were included in the homeschooling education. The participants' survey and interview responses were analyzed to determine if any of the GCED tenets, as previously defined for purposes of this study, were present in the homeschooling. The most prevalent GCED tenets imparted in the homeschooling education were knowledge, skills, values, and attitudes (Figure 1). Seven families included GCED knowledge and attitudes; six families included GCED skills and values; four families included behaviors; and three families included actions.

The extent to which the seven families included the GCED tenets in homeschooling education are categorized into multiple methods of instruction: world history, primary sources, reading, music, a multi-cultural background, travel, language learning, cultural immersion, community involvement, modeling, and conversations (Table 2). The following section

elaborates on how these seven families included GCED and which of the GCED tenets were incorporated in their instruction.

**Table 2: GCED Tenets That Were Included in the Homeschooling Education Per Family**

GCED Tenets						
Less Homeschool Regulation						
Family	Knowledge	Skills	Behaviors	Actions	Values	Attitudes
Brown	World History Travel	Language learning	Community Involvement	Community Involvement	Modeling	Community Involvement
		Cultural Immersion				Modeling
Khoury	World History Travel	Language learning	Community Involvement	Community Involvement	Modeling	Multi-cultural background
		Cultural Immersion				Modeling
Martin*	Travel	Language learning	Community Involvement	Community Involvement	Modeling	Community Involvement
		Cultural Immersion	Modeling	Modeling		Conversations
Robinson*	World History Reading Music Travel Conversations			Community Involvement	Reading Modeling	Community Involvement
				Modeling		Modeling
More Homeschool Regulation						
Davis*	World History Primary Sources	Modeling	Conversations	Modeling	Modeling	Community Involvement
						Conversations
Hall*	Reading Music Conversations	Modeling	Conversations	Community Involvement	Modeling	Community Involvement
				Conversations		Conversations
Wilson*	World History Primary Sources Conversations	Language learning	Cultural	Immersion	Modeling	World History
						Community Involvement

*Note: All of these members completed an online survey about their homeschooling experiences. The asterisks (\*) next to a participant's name, indicates those who participated in an interview. All names in the survey are pseudonyms either selected by the participants or given to them in order to protect their identity.*

**GCED knowledge.** Knowledge in GCED encompasses possessing the knowledge, understanding, and awareness of the complexities of the world and the interconnectedness of local, state, and global issues and events. Six families inculcated GCED knowledge through

world history, primary sources, music, reading curriculum that included multi-cultural perspectives (Table 2). The Browns used a world history curriculum called *The Story of the World Series* (n.d.) that covers “human history from ancient times until the present” in Africa, China, Europe, and the Americas. Additionally, the Brown family relied on the *Oak Meadows* (n.d.) curriculum, which guides students through an exploration of the world to understanding the interconnectedness and relationships in the world to how students can make a difference. The Khoury family cited history as a way to build GCED knowledge through history lessons that had an international focus that “showcased...the understanding of how nations get to where they are, understanding the context of how nations are interacting with one and other” (Ethan Khoury, personal communication, January 27, 2020). The learning Ethan gained through his history lessons allowed him to understand the complexities of our global world as demonstrated in Oxfam’s definition of GCED (2019).

With a passion for history, Serena Robinson recalled taking a class on Nazi Germany using *The Great Courses* (n.d.) curriculum, which offers a multitude of courses online that are taught by college professors from many different universities. This course was “specifically about the rise of Hitler and how he became so powerful, how lay-person German kind of let that happen” (Serena Robinson, personal communication, February 23, 2020). Another example of how knowledge was instilled in the Robinson family was through reading books about other cultures and perspectives, such as *Five in a Row* (2020), which covers social studies, geography, and language arts. The Robinson children also learned about other cultures through packed suitcases full of items from different countries lent out by local library. In another example, Serena learned about other cultures through the *Putumayo World Music CDs* (2020), which promoted learning about music and culture from around the world. These experiences expanded

the Robinsons' knowledge by learning about cultures and perspectives different from their own as represented in United Nation's (2019) definition of GCED.

Tracy Davis, who also used the Great Courses (n.d.) curriculum, found using primary sources valuable "because they are moments in time and because they are from one person's perspective whether it's Lincoln's speech or FDR's or a foreign leader's" (personal communication, January 25, 2020). The Hall family cited publications that promoted GCED tenets such as National Geographic (n.d.), the Southern Poverty Law Center (n.d.), and Greenpeace (n.d.) to educate the children. Additionally, the homeschooled children took music classes with fellow homeschoolers where the teacher would bring in speakers and instruments from other cultures to share about their music. Elise recounted that one way by which she learned global awareness was through writing a story about a little girl who traveled the world. In each place the little girl visited, Elise would learn about that country's culture and history.

The Wilsons used curricula that included "primary sources [with] a lot of contrasting views [and] discussion" (Laurie Wilson, personal communication, January 27, 2020). One of the resources Laurie relied on was Teaching for Change (2020), which provides resources that "encourages teachers and students to question and re-think the world inside and outside their classrooms, build a more equitable, multicultural society, and become active global citizens." Laurie also maintained a homeschool website offering resources that taught global understanding through folklore and geography. As a homeschool high school student, Solo helped his mom teach a world art history class to young homeschool students. In one of the classes, Solo recalled an activity using strings to demonstrate the shortness of human life span. Laurie's and Solo's reflections demonstrate ways that GCED knowledge was included in their homeschooling education.

Four families fostered GCED knowledge through travel. The Browns, Khourys, Martins, and Robinsons shared how living and traveling in another country broadened their worldview, helping them become more aware of the interconnectedness of the world. The Browns felt that living in India was education in and of itself because everything was new, such as the culture, the language, and the food. The Khourys shared how being in Lebanon when the protest movement began expanded their awareness. The Robinsons lived in Quebec for a period of time which allowed them to learn about the culture, history, and the language.

The primary reason to move to another country for the Martin family was to broaden their perspectives. In reflecting on her family's decision to travel, Sara Martin shared that homeschooling allowed them the opportunity to travel and "expose [their] kids to different cultures." Spending two years in Haiti "gave [her] daughter a far broader perspective on life than her peers because she had learned to be at ease with different people and to take responsibility for her own education" (personal communication, January 26, 2020). One particular experience that expanded Juliette's knowledge was when she was on a beach in Haiti and saw all the medical waste that had been washed up on the shore. When she learned that it was from American companies, she "suddenly [had] this perspective of seeing my country from the outside" (personal communication, January 25, 2020). The above accounts illustrate how homeschooling allowed the children to learn more about other perspectives and cultures through travel, which helped them gain knowledge and understanding about cultural differences as defined in GCED by the United Nations (n.d.).

Three families cultivated GCED knowledge through conversations. Conversations were an important way that the Robinsons, Halls, and Wilsons educated their children about understanding the complexities of the world. Serena Robinson recalled learning about other

countries through conversations she had with her father after he would return from trips to India and South Africa. The Halls relied on current events such as a proposed whaling ban to educate their children about the interconnectedness and sustainability of the world. According to Gerald Hall, the parents would point “out instances in the news and stories and everyday life” to instill a global perspective (personal communication, February 5, 2020). In contrast, Annie recalled how they learned about diversity but that having grown up in a rural area, the learning was “all theory” whereas when she interacted with diverse groups later in life through real interactions, “it felt different” than just learning about it.

Through the Wilson’s Native American art gallery, Solo learned about Native American art and different tribes in interacting with the artists. One eye-opening example Solo shared was when he learned about the violence and poverty in a Native American reservation in Arizona. In an interaction had with a Native American woman, Solo learned about a loss she experienced due to violence on the reservation. Although he knew about violence and poverty in his native New York, he was surprised to learn that it was prevalent “halfway across the country...in the middle of the desert” (personal communication, February 16, 2020). All of these examples demonstrate building “knowledge of where, why, and how to take action toward positive change” (Measuring Global Citizenship Education, 2017, p. ix).

***GCED skills.*** Skills in GCED signify the ability to apply acquired knowledge in global awareness and understanding in thinking critically and creatively in taking the steps necessary for a positive change, such as learning a new language. Six of the eight families demonstrated that GCED skills were inculcated through language learning and cultural immersion methods, modeling, and conversations (Table 2).

In the survey responses and interviews, four families expressed that GCED intercultural communication skills were incorporated and experienced through language learning and cultural immersion methods. The Browns, Khourys, Martins, and Wilsons shared the value in learning world languages in the homeschooling education. When talking about her oldest son's homeschooling experience, Mary Beth Brown, shared that her son's goal for learning Spanish and Chinese was to be able to speak "to 90% of the people in this world" (personal communication, January 24, 2020). Since the Khourys had family in the Middle East who spoke Arabic, Ethan took Arabic during his high school years. The Martins began learning French prior to moving to Haiti. The Wilsons learned about French culture and customs by learning French and by spending a month in France. Solo learned Japanese and later traveled to Japan. Learning languages was a way that these families instilled GCED intercultural communication skills as it allowed them to transcend linguistic differences to become more culturally aware of the interconnectedness in the world as demonstrated in Oxfam's (2019) definition of GCED.

Two families integrated GCED critical thinking skills through modeling and conversations. Through modeling, the Davis' taught their children not only how to "read and write clearly and effectively," but also to "think critically and ask penetrating questions," to "conduct research and use various tools of analysis," "reflect on and appreciate human endeavor across cultures and eras," and to "consider, both historically and comparatively, human behavior, ethical behavior and social institutions" (personal communication, January 11, 2020). In another example, the Halls modeled the importance of GCED skills when incorporating "critical thinking skills," so as to "not just parrot information" and encouraging a sense of being "self-motivated in learning." They wanted their children to be ready for college and not only by learning facts "but with the ability to analyze, apply, and transfer that knowledge to real-world problems" (Gerald

and Jeralynn Hall, personal communication, January 31, 2020). Elise's learning reflected what their parents tried to instill. Elise credits her homeschooling experience as the reason for her "question[ing] cultural conditioning more than most people [she] knows" and her "tend[ency] to be willing to evaluate things from different perspectives" (personal communication, January 31, 2020). The GCED critical thinking skills that the Davis and Hall children gained in their homeschooling education are examples of UNESCO's (n.d.) definition of GCED as a means to be able to make positive change in society.

***GCED behaviors.*** Behaviors in GCED are demonstrated through the motivation to collaboratively find effective and sustainable solutions to some of the challenges facing our communities and the world, such as encouraging respect of differences. Four of the eight families, the Browns, Martins, Davis, and Halls, demonstrated that GCED behaviors were fostered through community involvement, modeling, and conversations (Table 2).

In the survey responses and interviews, three families expressed that GCED behaviors were incorporated and experienced through community involvement. With the freedom to dictate the learning in the self-directed educational approach her mother took, Ariella Brown was able to get actively involved in making positive change in her community through "community organizing and justice work" (personal communication, January 26, 2020). In third grade, Juliette Martin was passionate about whales and wanting to do something to save the whales, wrote to Ronald Reagan to ask him to for help. The Halls took their homeschooled children with them to "meetings about peace marches in which different conflicts and peaceful solutions were discussed" (Jeralynn Hall, personal communication, January 31, 2020).

Three of the eight families incorporated GCED behaviors through modeling and conversations. The Martins demonstrated respect of differences through modeling behaviors. In

addressing local challenges in their community, the Martins' home served as a safe house for female victims of domestic violence and the family fostered a child for a year. Tracy Davis shared that "the rule in our home was you're here to make the world a better place. You can do that any way you want but you have a responsibility to do that" (personal communication, January 11, 2020). Living by his parent's motto, Harry shared how an interaction with a neighbor opened his eyes to racial bias in his community. Upon sharing with his neighbor that he was dating someone from a different racial background and from a neighborhood that had a negative reputation, his neighbor "gave [him] a look that was very much like 'oh is she proper?'" Harry recalled being "able to pick up on that [racial bias] and understand this is what perspective you have on this and I don't want to learn that from you" (personal communication, January 31, 2020). By encouraging GCED behaviors such as the motivation to enrich their lives and the lives of others and to respect differences, the Halls as well as the Browns, Martins, and Davis encouraged finding effective and sustainable solutions to some of the challenges in society as advocated in *Measuring Global Citizenship Education* (2017).

***GCED actions.*** Actions in GCED are acting on attained knowledge, skills, and behaviors to make a positive change, such as aiding in ways that promote sustainable development. Three families, the Browns, Martins, and Robinsons, integrated GCED actions through modeling and community involvement (Table 2).

In the survey responses and interviews, three of the eight families expressed that GCED actions were incorporated and experienced through community involvement and modeling. Sara Martin shared that bringing in "current events and social justice issues" was important for making a positive impact in society (personal communication, January 26, 2020). For example, the Martin family demonstrated making a positive change by being open to help fellow citizens,

as exemplified in the previous example of helping victims of domestic violence. As previously mentioned, Ariella Brown and Juliette Martin used their knowledge, skills, and behaviors to make a positive change when being engaged in “community organizing and justice work” for Ariella and advocating to save the whales for Juliette. With a deeper understanding of differences in the world due to homeschooling experience, Serena later educated others about homeschooling when asked about it during her college education.

***GCED values.*** Values in GCED include empathy, understanding, ethics, human morality, solidarity, and respect for differences. Six families, the Khourys, Martins, Robinsons, Davis, Halls, and Wilsons, demonstrated that GCED values were integrated through reading and modeling (Table 2).

The Martin, Robinson, Davis, and Hall families expressed instilling empathy, kindness, “good ethical standards” and “learning through travel and service,” which are the values found in GCED. A favorite book in the Robinson family was *Mrs. Katz and Touch* (Five in a Row, 2020), which was about a multi-racial, multi-generational friendship, that demonstrated morals such as empathy and understanding. Annie Hall recalled her parents incorporating GCED values of empathy, social, and emotional learning that helped broaden their perspective. Genevieve Khoury noted that “homeschooling itself helped reinforce global understanding because my children's days looked very different from those of their peers, it helped them understand that there could be a variety of modes of life, all equally valid and coming from a place of good will” (personal communication, January 31, 2020). These learned GCED values are represented in definitions by UNESCO (n.d.) and the United Nations (n.d.).

***GCED attitudes.*** Attitudes in GCED instill a sense of belonging in the local, national, and global community through appreciation of cultural diversity and the collective contribution

to sustainable development. Seven of the eight families fostered GCED attitudes through world history, community involvement, modeling, and conversations (Table 2).

In the survey responses and interviews, two families expressed that GCED attitudes were incorporated and experienced through written history lessons and oral history. The Halls instilled that people could make a difference by working toward the good of humanity. The Wilson parents had their children interview people as part of their learning to not only expand their knowledge but to learn and appreciate other people's perspectives and experiences.

One family fostered GCED attitudes through their multi-cultural background. The Khourys shared that their multi-cultural background was the foundation for living in a way that "made [their] relationship to other parts of the world and people clear" (personal communication, January 31, 2020). Genevieve Khoury shared that "living in such a way that make[s] our relationship to other parts of the world and people clear, provides a template for my kids to also think about the lives of other peoples and cultures." Through their multi-cultural background, the Khoury children were encouraged to appreciate differences. As their homeschooling education differed from the majority of their peers' education in institutionalized schooling, the children learned to appreciate differences. Learning about the interconnectedness of the world in history affected Ethan Khoury's perspective and "showcased the understanding of how nations get to where they are, understanding the context of how nations are interacting with one and other" (personal communication, January 27, 2020).

Six families cultivated GCED attitudes that foster a sense of global interconnectedness, appreciation of cultural diversity, and contribution to sustainable development through community involvement, modeling, and conversations. The Brown, Khoury, Martin, Robinson, Davis, and Hall families encouraged a sense of belonging in society through appreciation of

differences and living and learning in a manner that contributes to the improvement of humanity. The homeschool center where Mary Beth Brown works promotes GCED values and attitudes such as a culture of acceptance. The examples Juliette Martin shared about understanding the interconnectedness of the world, the potential negative impacts of pollution, and her attempt to save the whales as a young child exemplify GCED attitudes.

The Wilsons worked to dispel stereotypes and build awareness and understanding in conversations with the Native American artists who sold art to their family art gallery. Laurie shared how impactful interacting with people of different backgrounds was for her children. Her son, who was five at the time, learned that Native Americans do not always dress in “the skins and the feathers and the headdress” through conversing with a Native American artist. These encounters reinforced the Wilson’s commitment to social justice as reflected in definitions of GCED by Oxfam (2019). When Serena Robinson’s father traveled, he would share his knowledge with his children to educate them about other cultures and perspectives. Learning through conversations with her father about his travels enabled Serena “to examine those different types of life in a more enlightened way...having some sort of background about the experience, at least having read about it or heard about it from other people” (personal communication, February 23, 2020). In Serena’s experience, learning about other ways of living was eye-opening for her and allowed her to expand her global awareness.

### **Conclusions**

The aim of this study was to better understand how homeschooling families in Connecticut, New Jersey, New York, and Pennsylvania integrated GCED in the homeschooling education. Drawing on the survey and interview responses of the eight families, this study

examined how the GCED knowledge, skills, behaviors, actions, attitudes, and values were incorporated by homeschooling parents and experienced by their homeschooled children.

As demonstrated in the findings, the eight homeschooling families varied in their ways of integrating GCED tenets into their homeschooling education. This study found that seven of the eight families thought that incorporating GCED in the homeschooling education was important to prepare their children to be engaged contributors in improving their communities and society. However, how GCED is incorporated in the education is important to consider as two of these seven families expressed when they shared concern that one perspective, such as Western values, could be promoted over others. This finding reflects concerns that Hughes (2004), Lockhart (2016), and Tully (2014) expressed when cautioning that GCED could be proliferating Western values. The responses of one family indicated that GCED was not important in their homeschooling education. The family members' responses revealed that GCED was not integrated in their homeschooling education.

Of the GCED tenets, knowledge, skills, values, and attitudes were the most prevalent in the homeschooling education. For these seven families, much of the education was focused on attaining knowledge, skills, values, and attitudes and less so on behaviors and actions. The survey and interview responses revealed that seven of the eight families incorporated GCED knowledge and attitudes in the homeschooling education; six included GCED skills and values; four integrated GCED behaviors, and three included GCED actions.

These GCED tenets were integrated into the homeschooling curriculum primarily through community involvement, modeling, conversations, and world history. GCED behaviors, actions, and attitudes were present in community involvement for seven families. GCED skills, behaviors, actions, values, and attitudes were present in modeling for seven families. GCED

knowledge, skills, behaviors, and attitudes were present in conversations for seven families.

GCED knowledge and attitudes were present in world history for five families.

Less common ways that homeschooling families incorporated GCED tenets were through travel, language learning and cultural immersion, reading, music, primary sources, and multi-cultural backgrounds. GCED knowledge was present in travel for four families. GCED skills were integrated in language learning and cultural immersion for four families. GCED knowledge and values were present in reading for two families. GCED knowledge was present in music and primary sources for two families. GCED attitudes were present in the multi-cultural background for one family.

### **Practical Applicability**

Understanding these eight homeschooling families' experiences sheds light on how the GCED tenets can be incorporated in homeschooling and contributes to scholarship on homeschooling and GCED applicability, which has been focused primarily on institutional schooling. Scholars of both homeschooling education and GCED can now build on this research to further understand these two phenomena in education.

Homeschool experts can find valuable applications of GCED in institutional schooling as well as homeschooling environment. Families who are currently homeschooling or considering homeschooling might find value in the findings of this research and be encouraged to seek out additionally resources to incorporate GCED tenets of knowledge, skills, behaviors, actions, values, and attitudes.

As GCED becomes more prevalent in institutional curriculum and education forms, the findings of this study could offer insights into how to incorporate GCED in various schooling forms, particularly as leaders and policy makers promote education policies that are inclusive of

a variety of learners and educators. For example, by drawing on resources like Teaching for Change (2020) curriculum, Five in Row (2020) curriculum), and Putumayo World Music CDs (2020) as well as publications such as National Geographic (n.d), Greenpeace (n.d.), and the Southern Poverty Law Center (n.d.) GCED knowledge and skills can be incorporated into reading and history instruction. By allowing more freedom to shape their own education, children can be encouraged through social justice work and environmental sustainability to embody behaviors and actions that improve society and the world. By incorporating curricula that encourage engaging and interacting with members of society across generational, racial, and economic spectrums, children can obtain values and attitudes set on improving society by working towards racial, economic, and social justice.

### **Recommendations for Further Research**

This study sheds light on how a handful of homeschooling families experience GCED. This study is just the beginning of an exploration. The insights gained from this study open doors for further questioning in this timely topic, as outlined in four potential avenues for further research. The first is to incorporate more diversity that is representative of the diversity in homeschooling today. A way this can be done is to survey parents who are currently homeschooling. This has the potential to capture a wider subset of homeschooling families, particular those who come from diverse racial, ethnic, linguistic, and socio-economic backgrounds. Moreover, as safety and security are becoming a more prevalent reason for parents to choose homeschooling, further research could be conducted based on why this is the most prevalent reason for homeschooling families, and how it relates to how they choose to educate their children. Alternatively, further research could be conducted from the angle of how travel

experiences for the homeschooling parents have impacted their approach to educating their children.

As this study was conducted in a limited timeframe, the methods for finding participants were largely limited to those individuals to whom I had access, namely those whose contact information I could find online. Many of the participants were heavily involved in the homeschooling community, with some who served as homeschooling mentors and homeschool community group leaders. One parent has written extensively on the benefits of homeschooling. In order to diversify the perspectives, further research could bring in more voices from families who are not considered leaders in the homeschooling community. Another avenue could focus on *second generation homeschoolers*, or parents who were homeschooled themselves. This study did include a few participants who have decided to homeschool their children; the insights they shared about their experiences with both homeschooling and GCED were enlightening.

This study contributes to better understanding homeschooling and GCED in the United States. It shows ways that a small subset of homeschooling families in four Northeastern states have engaged with GCED. Further avenues of exploration will only serve to continue the conversation and shed more light on how formal and alternative educational approaches intersect. Research has the potential to strengthen both approaches as families, educators, and education policies makers seek to prepare youth to become contributing members of society.

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