



Original Article / Orijinal Makale

## Exploring EFL Students' Dispositions toward Global Citizenship: A Quantitative Study at a Preparatory School in Türkiye

### İngilizceyi Yabancı Dil Olarak Öğrenen Öğrencilerin Küresel Vatandaşlığa Karşı Tutumlarının İncelenmesi: Türkiye'deki Hazırlık Okulunda Yapılan Nicel Bir Çalışma

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#### ABSTRACT

Global Citizenship (GC) has become a vital focus in teaching English to foster globally minded language learners to build a more inclusive and sustainable world. For this reason, the present study aims to explore GC dispositions of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) preparatory school students at a Turkish higher education institution (HEI). The study adopted a quantitative research design. Data was collected from 181 preparatory school students (129 female and 52 male) enrolled. The Turkish version of the Global Citizenship Scale (Erbaş et al., 2023), adapted from Reysen and Katzarska-Miller (2013), was used as the data collection tool. Statistical analysis, including descriptive statistics, Pearson product-moment correlation analysis, independent samples t-test, and one-way ANOVA, were conducted using SPSS version 29. Findings showed that students scored highest in global awareness, normative environment, and environmental sustainability; though, they scored lowest in global citizenship identification. Furthermore, the strongest correlations were identified for responsibility to act, intergroup helping, and intergroup empathy. The findings revealed no statistically significant difference in terms of gender, though females had higher levels of mean GC score. Likewise, though there were also no statistically significant differences across their academic majors and language proficiency levels, vocational school students and lower proficiency level students showed higher levels of GC scores. These findings suggest that while students show awareness of key global issues such as environment, justice, and understanding among groups, they show a relatively low level of identity and, in turn, global citizenship. Therefore, practitioners and curriculum designers might integrate identity and engagement-related components into the English language teaching curricula rather than solely awareness-related components to foster more globally competent and engaged learners.

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## ÖZ

Küresel Vatandaşlık (KV), daha kapsayıcı ve sürdürülebilir bir dünya inşa etmek için küresel düşünen dil öğrenenleri teşvik etmek amacıyla İngilizce öğretiminde hayati bir odak noktası haline gelmiştir. Bu nedenle, bu çalışma, bir Türk yükseköğretim kurumundaki (HEI) Yabancı Dil Olarak İngilizce (EFL) hazırlık okulu öğrencilerinin Küresel Vatandaşlık eğilimlerini araştırmayı amaçlamaktadır. Çalışmada nicel bir araştırma tasarımı benimsenmiştir. Veriler, kayıtlı 181 hazırlık okulu öğrencisinden (129 kız ve 52 erkek) toplanmıştır. Veri toplama aracı olarak Reysen ve Katzarska-Miller'dan (2013) uyarlanan Küresel Vatandaşlık Ölçeği'nin (Erbaş vd., 2023) Türkçe versiyonu kullanılmıştır. Tanımlayıcı istatistikler, Pearson korelasyon analizi, bağımsız örneklem t-testi ve tek yönlü ANOVA dahil olmak üzere istatistiksel analizler SPSS sürüm 29 kullanılarak yapılmıştır. Bulgular, öğrencilerin küresel farkındalık, normatif çevre ve çevresel sürdürülebilirlik alanlarında en yüksek puanları aldıklarını; ancak küresel vatandaşlık kimliğinde en düşük puanları aldıklarını göstermiştir. Ayrıca, en güçlü korelasyonlar eylem sorumluluğu, gruplar arası yardımlaşma ve gruplar arası empati için tespit edilmiştir. Bulgular kadınların ortalama küresel vatandaşlık puanlarının daha yüksek olmasına rağmen, cinsiyet açısından istatistiksel olarak anlamlı bir fark olmadığını göstermiştir. Benzer şekilde, öğrencilerin akademik bölümleri ve dil yeterlilik düzeyleri arasında da istatistiksel olarak anlamlı bir fark bulunmamasına rağmen meslek yüksekokulu öğrencileri ve düşük yeterlilik düzeyindeki öğrenciler daha yüksek küresel vatandaşlık puanları göstermiştir. Bu bulgular, öğrencilerin çevre, adalet ve gruplar arası anlayış gibi temel küresel konular hakkında farkındalık gösterirken, küresel vatandaşlık konusunda nispeten düşük düzeyde kimlik ve buna bağlı olarak katılım gösterdiklerini ortaya koymaktadır. Bu nedenle, uygulayıcılar ve müfredat tasarımcıları, küresel anlamda daha yetkin ve ilgili öğrenciler yetiştirmek için İngilizce öğretim müfredatına yalnızca farkındalıkla ilgili bileşenler yerine kimlik ve katılımı ilgili bileşenleri entegre etmek isteyebilir.

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## INTRODUCTION

In today's globalized world, increasing intercultural mobility and transnational challenges have reinforced the need to educate responsible and ethically aware global citizens. Thus, as a transformative pedagogical approach, Global Citizenship Education (GCE) was created to equip learners with skills, values, knowledge, and attitudes needed to engage meaningfully in both a diverse and interdependent world (Reysen & Katzarska-Miller, 2013; UNESCO, 2014; Xu & Stahl, 2023). The development of intercultural understanding, global competency, and a feeling of shared responsibility for global justice, equity, and sustainability are central to this concept (Navarro et al., 2025). EFL classrooms can promote global citizenship by giving language learners opportunities to share their cultural backgrounds and engage in critical reflection and dialogue to raise their level of global awareness (Byram et al., 2001; Schutte et al., 2017). Language learners not only enhance their receptive and productive language skills but also gain a better understanding of important aspects of global citizenship, such as showing empathy, understanding other cultures, and being involved in their communities (Nguyen, 2021; Xu & Stahl, 2023).

Despite the increasing demand for global citizenship in international education, there is a limited number of studies that explore these dispositions among EFL learners, especially in non-Western educational settings. In Türkiye, only limited research (Gezer & İlhan, 2023; Erbaş et al., 2023) has explored the extent to which students feel connected to global citizenship. Furthermore, there is also a lack of studies that investigate how variables such as gender and language proficiency might influence global citizenship perspectives among language learners in higher education.

Therefore, this study aims to address this research gap by examining EFL preparatory school students' perceptions of global citizenship at a Turkish state university. To gain a deeper understanding of the relationship of global citizenship, certain demographic variables such as gender, academic background, and language proficiency of EFL language learners are examined. Unlike previous research, this study provides a comprehensive descriptive examination of global citizenship perceptions among Turkish EFL preparatory school students by simultaneously considering multiple demographic variables. By doing so, it offers context-specific insights that can guide how global citizenship education could be effectively integrated into an EFL context to cultivate more globally aware and competent learners.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### Global Citizenship

Global citizenship refers to recognizing one's role within a wider global community and acknowledging that actions extend beyond local or national boundaries. This perspective encourages individuals to effectively respond to global challenges—such as inequality, environmental crises, and political instability—and to contribute to greater intercultural harmony and cooperation (UNESCO, 2014; Nguyen, 2021; Zhang & Li, 2025).

One influential model of global citizenship is the framework proposed by Reysen and Katzarska-Miller (2013). They conceptualize an identity that includes “awareness, caring, and embracing cultural diversity while promoting social justice and sustainability, coupled with a sense of responsibility to act” (p. 858). This identity is based on two variables: global awareness and normative environment (see Figure 1), which indicate to what extent individuals are global citizens, and if identity leads individuals to develop positive attributes such as intergroup empathy, increased understanding towards diversity, and eagerness to act on global issues (Reysen & Katzarska-Miller, 2013).

Global citizenship measurement tools have been developed and validated by researchers. For example, the recently developed Adolescent Global Citizenship Scale (Zhang & Li, 2025) includes three dimensions: global awareness, citizenship values, and a sustainable development perspective. The findings indicate the necessity of global awareness and an action-oriented approach among adolescents. Similarly, global citizenship in a Vietnamese university context was measured by focusing on social responsibility, global competence, and civic activism. This study emphasized that the concept of global citizenship can be contextually grounded with culturally sensitive adaptations. When Gezer and İl-

han (2023) translated this inquiry into Turkish, they likewise found similar results and indicated the need for culturally adapted scales, particularly in non-Western contexts.

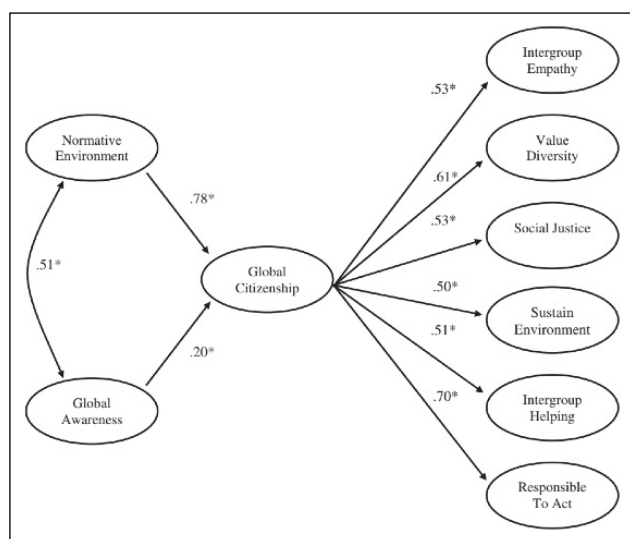
International organizations such as the Council of Europe and UNESCO support the integration of Global Citizenship Education (GCE). They are particularly interested in instilling values like empathy, tolerance, and collective responsibility to encourage learners to take action for a more sustainable world (UNESCO, 2014; Gezer & İlhan, 2023). These values could be understood by understanding global issues and engaging in intercultural activities (Narvarro et al., 2025).

### Global Citizenship in Foreign Language Education

It is becoming increasingly acknowledged that integrating global citizenship into foreign language education, specifically English language teaching (ELT), has become both necessary and beneficial. The fact that EFL classrooms inherently provide a unique context for cultural and ideological components makes them special educational settings for enhancing intercultural understanding and civic responsibility (Byram et al., 2001; Xu & Stahl, 2023). Through reflections, communicative practices, and task-based language learning, language learners can engage with diverse worldviews, such as identity, global interdependence, and sustainable development.

GCE offers several pedagogical benefits in language education. First, it promotes critical thinking and intercultural competence—the ability to interact effectively across cultures (Davies, 2008; Deardorff, 2006). For example, discussing topics such as climate change, migration, and human rights with peers from diverse cultural backgrounds develops their global insights and requires them to critically reflect on their existing beliefs while engaging in meaningful interaction (Davies, 2008). Second, authentic discussions of real-world global issues enhance language proficiency and increase learner engagement (Deardorff, 2006). In addition, GCE also cultivates empathy and social responsibility when exploring topics such as poverty, inequality, and peace. As a result, within the context of an EFL classroom, this impacts students' attitudes to be more mindful towards others both locally and globally (UNESCO, 2014). An additional asset to GCE is that it helps learners conceptualize their role as it relates to others and the planet. In turn, this contributes positively to society (OXFAM, 2006). Furthermore, GCE equips students with soft skills imperative to navigate international networks and varying cultural contexts, preparing them for careers worldwide (Byram, 2008). Integrating all of these essential GCE aspects creates a collaborative and inclusive classroom environment where students learn to respect and accept differences (UNESCO, 2015).

Research studies show that GCE can be successfully incorporated into EFL classrooms to support global mindedness. For example, Schutte et al. (2017) studied the effects of a Dutch undergraduate honors course based on



**Figure 1.** Model of Global Citizenship: Antecedents and Outcomes (Reysen & Katzarska-Miller, 2013, p. 864).

the Global Justice Citizenship Education (GJCE) framework. The course combined learning with a 15-hour social movement internship. At the end of the semester, students showed more ethical sensitivity, societal understanding, respect for diversity, and awareness of their roles as global citizens. Similarly, another study by Wang et al. (2021) examined four weekly Zoom sessions between Irish beginner Chinese learners and native speakers. The research found that these virtual exchanges significantly enhanced students' understanding of cultural differences and helped refine both their language proficiency and intercultural competence. Even though the study was brief, the sessions provided meaningful, real-time interactions. The study concluded that digital platforms such as Zoom are effective in developing language learners' global understanding and communication skills. In addition, Comparable research by Nguyen (2021) explored how embedding global citizenship themes into courses in Vietnam affected students' global competence and civic activism. The findings revealed that the students' ability to engage with global issues and participate in active civic engagement increased after exposure to topics such as human rights, sustainability, and social justice. Last, a subsequent study on GCE curriculum with an emphasis on language and cultural learning was conducted in New Zealand (Navarro et al., 2025). The study aimed to develop intercultural understanding and global awareness among language learners at the secondary and collegiate levels. Throughout the course of an academic year, a strong emphasis was put on respect for all cultures and countries, openness, inquiry, and understanding. By the semester's end, students demonstrated greater awareness of cultural diversity, curiosity about global issues, respect for diverse viewpoints, and openness to other cultures.

While global citizenship education (GCE) is widely endorsed by teachers and educational authorities (Gaudelli, 2016; UNESCO, 2015), several challenges persist. To begin with, some researchers (e.g., Navarro et al., 2025; Xu & Stahl, 2023) warn that GCE models may impose Western-centric norms if not critically adapted to local cultural contexts. Therefore, the models should be designed to be culturally sensitive, following the needs of local educational settings to eliminate the risk of enforcing universalized conceptions regarding citizenship. Second, it is important to validate and adapt measurement tools such as the Global Citizenship Scale for particular settings, like Türkiye, as Erbaş et al. (2023) and Gezer and İlhan (2023) emphasized. Specific contexts require different needs, which create complexities. However, these complexities stress the significance of culturally responsive teaching approaches.

Teachers may encounter ideological resistance, particularly in contexts where nationalist narratives dominate education while promoting GCE as a transformative project. Therefore, implementing GCE in such contexts requires teachers to navigate ideological tensions and maintain con-

fidence in their pedagogical roles. Educators with GCE programs see themselves as advancing an agenda beyond their local communities. However, implementing this vision of GCE can be challenging, where teachers lack agency, and authorities resist bottom-up political change. For example, GCE principles are difficult to adopt in authoritarian regimes like China, where national interests and the promotion of human rights with "Chinese characteristics" conflict with the global understanding that human rights are universally applicable (Donnelly, 2013). GCE is also critiqued for its diverse ideological orientations—neoliberal, liberal, and critical—which generate competing understandings of what global citizenship should entail (Lütge et al., 2022): *neoliberal*, linking it to competition and personal social capital; *liberal*, emphasizing individual rights and public good; and *critical*, focusing on social justice, global inequalities, and sustainability, while challenging colonial mindsets. Accordingly, this study adopts a perspective consistent with the critical strand of GCE, highlighting social justice and global responsibility.

### Challenges of Global Citizenship Education in Turkish Context

Global Citizenship Education in Türkiye faces several challenges that stem from both national and international contexts. Türkiye's political landscape tends to prioritize national identity and sovereignty over global cooperation. Consequently, this leads to a rejection of the more universal aspects of GCE, like human rights being universally applicable, as it conflicts with certain nationalist ideologies (Starkey, 2020). In addition, there have been limited efforts to integrate intercultural education, global awareness, and critical perspectives on global inequalities into the formal Turkish educational curriculum. Instead, there is a focus on national history and values, which can hinder the broader objectives of GCE (Ersoy, 2013; Kıyak, 2020).

In Turkish context, it is seen that many preservice teachers and teachers lack adequate preparation in intercultural education and GCE (e.g., Bulut, 2019; Çolak et al., 2019), further limiting implementation efforts. In addition, textbooks do not explicitly include global citizenship education (Karatekin & Uzunöz, 2022). This includes both a lack of professional development in intercultural competence and the absence of a coherent, nationwide policy framework for GCE.

While GCE offers an opportunity to build a more empathetic, inclusive, and globally aware generation, the challenges in Türkiye—ranging from political resistance and curriculum limitations to cultural diversity and teacher preparedness—pose significant barriers to its widespread implementation. Overcoming these challenges will require a concerted effort at the national level, involving changes in policy, curriculum development, and teacher training to construct a more comprehensive and globally-minded educational framework.

In conclusion, integrating global citizenship with ELT has the potential to educate globally minded, interculturally competent, ethically responsible individuals. Therefore, this study investigated EFL preparatory school students' current global citizenship dispositions to serve as a barometer at a Turkish higher education institution. Within this perspective, the study addressed the following research questions:

1. What are preparatory school students' overall global citizenship scale and subscale scores?
2. How strongly does each global citizenship subscale correlate with the overall score?
3. Is there a statistically significant difference in overall global citizenship scores by gender?
4. Is there a statistically significant difference in overall global citizenship scores by academic major?
5. Is there a statistically significant difference in overall global citizenship scores by English language proficiency level?

## METHOD

The present study adopted a quantitative approach to explore EFL preparatory students' dispositions toward global citizenship and examine how these tendencies might vary by gender, academic major, and language proficiency. A survey design was used to collect the data through a translated and validated Likert-scale instrument, as it allows for the collection of data from a large sample, produces generalizable findings in students' dispositions so that practitioners and curriculum developers could be informed, and reduces researcher bias (Creswell, 2014).

### Research Context

This study was conducted with preparatory school students studying at the School of Foreign Languages at Süleyman Demirel University in Isparta, Türkiye. The preparatory program provides one-year intensive English language courses to equip students with the minimum required language proficiency to gain entry into their respective academic majors. Due to the increasing necessity for global responsibility, intercultural competence, and multiculturalism among students in higher education, the program is expected to integrate global and cultural themes into curriculum development with an emphasis on global citizenship.

### Participants

The study sample consisted of 181 EFL preparatory school students in the 2025 spring semester. Their ages ranged between 18 and 22. Of the respondents who reported gender ( $n=181$ ), 129 were female, 52 were male. Participants were registered in various majors across the university, so their majors were mainly grouped under a) Faculty of Business and Economics, b) Faculty of Education, c) Faculty of Engineering, d) Faculty of Humanities, and e) Vocational School. Lastly, participants' English proficiency levels

were institutionally classified into six levels (A1 to C1 on the CEFR scale) based on placement tests conducted at the beginning of the academic year. The study employed a convenience sampling strategy, and participation was entirely voluntary, which should be considered when interpreting the generalizability of the findings.

### Data Collection Tool and Procedure

The study used one tool to measure global citizenship perceptions and attitudes in educational settings. The Global Citizenship Scale was originally developed by Reysen and Katzarska-Miller in 2012 and then validated in the subsequent study (Reysen & Katzarska-Miller, 2013). However, its Turkish version, validated by Erbaş et al. (2023), was utilized. The scale consisted of 22 items measured on a 7-point Likert scale. The items were categorized under nine dimensions: (1) Normative Environment, (2) Global Awareness, (3) Global Citizenship Identification, (4) Intergroup Empathy, (5) Valuing Diversity, (6) Social Justice, (7) Environmental Sustainability, (8) Intergroup Helping, and (9) Responsibility to Act. Each dimension of the scale referred to crucial components of global citizenship, such as awareness, identity, and engagement. The Turkish version of the scale demonstrated high internal consistency and validity for use with a Cronbach's Alpha of .90. In the present study, internal consistency was also calculated, and the overall Cronbach's Alpha for this sample was  $\alpha = .93$ , indicating that the instrument showed high reliability and excellent internal consistency with the current participants.

Data were collected through an online survey via Google Forms once approval was received from the Ethic Committee of Süleyman Demirel University (dated 07.03.2025 and numbered E.965132) and then the Directorate of the School of Foreign Languages. Instructors were visited in their offices for 2 weeks, the purpose of the research was explained, and the survey link was shared in their WhatsApp group by the Directorate. Instructors supported data collection by allocating time in their classes for students to fill out the survey. In the survey link, students were first assured of the confidentiality and anonymity of their responses before participation, and participation was entirely voluntary.

### Data Analysis

The collected data were analyzed using SPSS 29. The analysis was conducted sequentially based on the research questions. First, descriptive statistics such as mean, standard deviation, minimum, and maximum values for the total GC scores and the nine subscales were calculated. Second, the normality assumption was checked through skewness and kurtosis values. The statistical analysis indicated that the total GC scores and subscale scores were within the acceptable  $\pm 2$  range as suggested by Mayers (2013). Hence, a Pearson product-moment correlation analysis was conducted, as the assumption of normality was met, to examine the relationships between overall GC scores and the nine subscales.



Third, an independent sample t-test was run to identify any statistically significant difference between male and female students after confirming the assumptions of normality and homogeneity of variances. Levene's Test for Equality of Variances was not significant ( $F(1, 179) = 1.55, p = .214$ , which means that the assumption of equal variances was met. Finally, the effect size was calculated. For research questions 4 and 5, a one-way ANOVA was employed to investigate whether students' academic majors and English language proficiency levels significantly affected their total GC scores.

## FINDINGS

The data about global citizenship was collected from 181 EFL students from different majors and levels of language proficiency. It was analyzed using the SPSS 29. Descriptive statistics, Pearson correlation analysis, independent samples t-test, and one-way ANOVA were the statistical analysis methods sequentially employed to explore EFL students' dispositions of GC at the preparatory school at Süleyman Demirel University, and determine the possible effects of variables, including gender, major, and language proficiency.

### 1) What are preparatory school students' overall global citizenship scale and subscale scores?

Descriptive statistics were obtained for total global citizenship scores and their nine subscales to address the first research question and identify preparatory school students' global citizenship scale scores. With the help of descriptive statistics, preparatory students' overall global citizenship awareness levels and their highest and lowest scores regarding the subscales could be identified. Accordingly, Table 1 below indicates the descriptive statistics for global citizenship subscales and total scores.

As shown in Table 1, the mean score for overall GC was 114.66 ( $SD = 22.77$ ), with scores ranging from 28 to 154. The preparatory school students, therefore, had a relatively robust level of awareness about global citizenship concepts. The findings revealed that Turkish EFL students had the highest levels of mean scores for the *global awareness* ( $M = 21.37$ ,

$SD = 4.73$ ), meaning that preparatory school students have a deep understanding of global issues. Likewise, students' mean scores for the *normative environment* ( $M = 19.72$ ,  $SD = 5.28$ ) subscale were quite high, showing EFL students' strong support for global citizenship norms. Lastly, high mean scores were found regarding *environmental sustainability* ( $M = 12.05$ ,  $SD = 2.57$ ) subscale, indicating students' concerns about ecological issues and sustainable living. On the other hand, the findings showed that students had the lowest mean score for the Global Citizenship Identification ( $M = 9.44$ ,  $SD = 3.16$ ) subscale, which could be interpreted as students not completely embracing or internalizing the concept of being a global citizen as a part of their identities. As per the total global citizenship scores, it was found that preparatory school students had a high level of agreement with the concepts measured by the global citizenship scale.

### 2) How strongly does each global citizenship subscale correlate with the overall score?

The second research question explored the relationship between each nine subscales in GC scale and overall GC score. Since the data was normally distributed, a Pearson correlation analysis was run. The findings related to this analysis are shown in Table 2.

As inferred from Table 2, the analysis showed that all nine sub-scales were positively and significantly correlated with the overall GC scores. The findings also revealed that the strength of associations varied from moderate to very strong. The strongest correlations were identified for *responsibility to act* ( $\rho = .817$ ), *intergroup helping* ( $\rho = .699$ ), and *intergroup empathy* ( $\rho = .579$ ). On the other hand, the weakest but still statistically significant association was detected in the *valuing diversity* sub-scale ( $\rho = .451$ ).

### 3) Is there a statistically significant difference in overall global citizenship scores by gender?

The third question aimed to detect whether total global citizenship scores differed significantly according to gender variable. Therefore, an independent samples t-test was run after testing the assumption of normality through the Shapiro-Wilk test and homogeneity of the variances via Levene's

**Table 1.** Descriptive statistics for total GC scale and subscale scores

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	SD
Global Awareness	181	4.00	28.00	21.37	4.73
Normative Environment	181	4.00	28.00	19.72	5.28
Global Citizenship Identification	181	2.00	14.00	09.44	3.16
Intergroup Empathy	181	2.00	14.00	10.67	2.94
Valuing Diversity	181	2.00	14.00	09.80	2.87
Social Justice	181	2.00	14.00	11.00	3.43
Environmental Sustainability	181	2.00	14.00	12.05	2.57
Intergroup Helping	181	2.00	14.00	10.33	3.39
Responsibility to Act	181	2.00	14.00	10.28	2.91
GCE Total	181	28.00	154.00	114.66	22.77

Test for Equality of Variances. The findings regarding gender variables are reflected below in Table 3.

As shown in Table 3, female students' total global citizenship scale scores ( $M = 116.76$ ,  $SD = 21.04$ ) were higher than male students' total global citizenship scale scores ( $M = 109.46$ ,  $SD = 26.06$ ). The findings revealed no statistically significant difference across genders ( $t(179)=1.97$ ;  $p=.051$ ). Even though the effect size (Cohen's  $d = 0.32$ ) pointed to a small to moderate practical effect, no statistically significant difference was found at the conventional  $p < .05$  level.

4) *Is there a statistically significant difference in overall global citizenship scores by academic major?*

For the fourth research question, the ANOVA test measured whether the effect of academic majors on overall GCE scores was statistically significant. In this case, the assumptions for ANOVA were met by testing the variances, and the results are presented below in Table 4.

As illustrated in Table 4, no statistically significant difference was found in overall GCE scores depending on students' academic majors  $F(4, 176) = 1.67$ ,  $p = .159$ . In addition, it was found that the effect size ( $\eta^2 = .037$ ) was small, and only about 3.7% of the variance in GCE scores could be attributed to the academic majors. The findings also showed that vocational school students had the highest global citizenship mean scores ( $M = 134.86$ ), while students majoring at the faculty of humanities had the lowest global citizenship mean scores ( $M = 111.71$ ). Lastly, post hoc Tukey tests also did not reveal statistically significant pairwise differences across departments.

5) *Is there a statistically significant difference in overall global citizenship scores by English language proficiency level?*

For the last research question, a one-way ANOVA was conducted to explore whether the global citizenship scores

of preparatory students differed depending on their English language proficiency levels. The assumption of homogeneity of variances was met, and the findings are displayed in Table 5 below.

As shown in Table 5, GCE scores did not yield statistically significant differences by English proficiency levels,  $F(5, 175) = 0.83$ ,  $p = .528$ . The small effect size ( $\eta^2 = .023$ ) indicated that approximately 2.3% of the variance in GCE scores could be attributed to English proficiency level. Further, post hoc Tukey tests did not reveal any significant pairwise differences between any two proficiency groups. Lastly, C1 level students had the lowest global citizenship mean scores ( $M = 106.65$ ,  $SD = 29.73$ ), whereas A1 level students had the highest global citizenship mean scores ( $M = 127.00$ ,  $SD = 5.66$ ).

## DISCUSSION

The present study explored EFL preparatory school students' global citizenship dispositions at a Turkish state university. EFL students' overall GC scores and global citizenship orientations in relation to different demographic variables such as gender, academic major, and language proficiency were also examined. Accordingly, the findings and their implications are discussed with respect to each research question.

### Students' Global Citizenship Levels

The descriptive statistics showed that EFL at the preparatory school students' awareness levels and agreement with global citizenship dimensions were relatively high, with an overall mean score of 114.66. In addition, EFL students had the highest mean scores in relation to *global awareness*, *normative environment*, and *environmental sustainability* subscales. In this sense, high mean scores in the *global awareness* subscale indicate that EFL learners are open to learn about world issues and aware of global interdependencies, which is an important outcome that Global Citizenship Education aims for (UNESCO, 2014). Likewise, previous studies (e.g., Nguyen, 2021; Xu & Stahl, 2023) revealed that inclusion of globally oriented curricula would contribute to EFL students' engagement with sustainability. In this sense, students' high awareness of environmental issues could be interpreted as a reflection of the increasing social emphasis on sustainability in Türkiye and globally.

On the other hand, EFL students exhibited the lowest mean score for *global citizenship identification*, which means that EFL preparatory school students did not identify them-

**Table 2.** Pearson correlation between GC subscales and total GC score ( $n=181$ )

Subscale	$\rho$	$p$
Global Awareness	.564	< .001
Global Citizenship Identification	.520	< .001
Intergroup Empathy	.579	< .001
Responsibility to Act	.817	< .001
Normative Environment	.500	< .001
Environmental Sustainability	.549	< .001
Social Justice	.572	< .001
Intergroup Helping	.699	< .001
Valuing Diversity	.451	< .001

**Table 3.** Independent samples t-test results for total GC scale scores by gender

	Gender	N	Mean	SD	df	t	p
Global citizenship scores	Male	52	109.46	26.06	179	1.97	.051
	Female	129	116.76	21.04			

**Table 4.** One-way ANOVA for total GC scale scores by major

	SS	df	MS	F	p
Between Groups	3412.48	4	853.12	1.67	.159
Within Groups	89273.97	176	510.65		
Total	92686.44	180			

**Table 5.** One-way ANOVA for total GC scale scores by proficiency levels

	SS	df	MS	F	p
Between Groups	2169.74	5	433.95	0.83	.528
Within Groups	91116.70	175	520.67		
Total	93286.44	180			

selves as global citizens or did not internalize this concept. Even though Turkish EFL students showed high global citizenship awareness, their relatively weaker identification with the role of global citizen could be regarded as an indication of the gap between cognition and affective identity formation. This could be the outcome of the abstract nature of global identity or the limited integration of explicit global citizenship content in the current EFL curriculum (Erbaş et al., 2023). A possible explanation for this finding might be related to the gap between EFL learners' global citizenship awareness and personal sense of global engagement or identity. This difference could be attributed to the EFL curriculum's deficiencies in providing emotional investment and action-oriented tendencies regarding global citizenship. It can therefore be assumed that further studies should focus on supporting EFL learners' agency, emotional connection, and critical reflection as global citizens.

### Correlations Between Subscales and Overall Global Citizenship

The findings indicated that Pearson correlation analysis yielded significant and positive associations between all nine subscales and the overall GC score. Among these nine subscales, *responsibility to act*, *intergroup helping*, and *intergroup empathy* were found to have the strongest correlations with the overall score. This finding might be explained by the fact that EFL students identifying themselves as global citizens possess a sense of ethical responsibility and a tendency to support others beyond cultural boundaries. Consistent with this finding, previous studies (e.g., Byram et al., 2001; Navarro et al., 2025) reported that affective components such as valuing diversity, empathy, and mindfulness were essential for fostering global citizenship. Likewise, empathy, justice, and responsibility for action have been identified as influential dimensions shaping global citizenship and student outcomes (e.g., Nguyen, 2021; Schutte et al., 2017). Therefore, these findings might suggest that global citizenship education could be fostered through active engagement and awareness (Reysen & Katzarska-Miller, 2013). Interestingly,

another finding that stood out from the results reported earlier was that *valuing diversity* had the lowest correlation with the overall GC scores, which suggests that despite students' appreciation for cultural differences, this dimension is not internalized or emphasized in educational contexts. Since valuing diversity demands more than conceptual awareness, intercultural engagement and interaction with diverse cultures are highly crucial for the development of this construct. However, intercultural exposure to different perspectives and dialogic experiences might be limited in Turkish EFL context and classroom setting. Therefore, EFL learners' global awareness may not have transformed into emotional attachment or inclusive attitudes towards cultural diversity.

### Gender Differences in Global Citizenship Scores

Independent sample t-test results indicated no statistically significant difference ( $p = .051$ ) between female and male students total GC scores. However, the study found that female students had higher mean global citizenship scores than the male students. In accordance with the present results, previous studies (e.g., Bulut, 2019; Gezer & İlhan, 2023; Nguyen, 2021) found that female students had higher global citizenship dispositions, which could be attributed to females' greater socialization involving empathy, cooperation, and social justice. In addition, global research revealed that females tended to support values such as empathy, tolerance, and caring values, which were also promoted by GCE (UNESCO, 2014). Accordingly, it could be stated that more gender-sensitive pedagogical practices should be integrated into ELT contexts, and male students should also be encouraged to engage with global issues and identities. Lastly, although the result is not statistically significant, the small to moderate effect size (Cohen's  $d = 0.32$ ) suggests a model that is worthy of further research.

### Differences in Global Citizenship Scores by Academic Major

The one-way ANOVA analysis did not reveal any statistically significant difference in overall GC scores across academic majors. Surprisingly, vocational school students were found to have the highest total GC scores, while the students from faculty of humanities had the lowest overall GC scores. The difference between high and low levels of GC scores could be attributed to personal or contextual factors like career goals, practicality, and empathy-focused motivations. An implication of this finding could be that students' exposure to global citizenship themes is not specific to the discipline yet, or that preparatory school offered a uniform exposure to global values, as highlighted by Gezer and İlhan (2023). This finding broadly supported the work of Erbaş et al. (2023), who noted that GCE integration is still in its initial stages in Türkiye, and is not fully embedded into all academic areas. Consistent with the literature, it could be assumed that school-wide curriculum or instructors could be more influential on GCE values rather



than academic majors. Hence, the incorporation of explicit interdisciplinary connections and global citizenship values into ELT curricula at the preparatory level would contribute to EFL learners' awareness and development of a global identity.

### Differences in Global Citizenship Scores by English Proficiency Level

No statistically significant difference was found regarding EFL students' proficiency levels according to the one-way ANOVA analysis report. Surprisingly, lower-proficiency (A1) students had higher GC mean scores than higher-proficiency (C1) students. A1 students' higher GC scores could be related to their greater idealism, openness, or motivation to learn about global issues despite their limited language skills. A possible explanation for this unexpected result could be attributed to attitudinal and contextual factors representing EFL learners' identity aspirations and affective engagement. This interesting finding could be related to students' enthusiastic responses and commitment to values such as sustainability, human rights, and equality. Even though these learners have a lower language proficiency level and limited language skills, they might be eager to engage with the global citizenship concepts. In this regard, Reysen and Katzarska-Miller (2013) assert that not only linguistic ability but also characteristics like awareness, empathy, and responsibility promote the process of global citizenship identity formation. This also accords with Navarro et al.'s (2025) study, which shows that global citizenship orientations are shaped by both linguistic competence and educational exposure to global issues and themes. In accordance with this, previous studies (e.g., Byram et al., 2001; Xu & Stahl, 2023) demonstrated that GCE values like intercultural understanding and global awareness should be fostered in all language learning environments. That is why it could be argued that global citizenship values could be enhanced regardless of language proficiency, and GC dispositions could be developed through instructional content and classroom culture. Therefore, it would be important to integrate the global themes and intercultural issues into language classes across all levels, not just high proficiency language classes.

### CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

This study aimed to explore the global citizenship dispositions of EFL preparatory school students in a Turkish higher education context, considering the lack of studies that investigate how these dispositions might vary by gender, academic major, and language proficiency.

The main results demonstrated that EFL learners had a relatively high awareness of global issues, but their identification, and in turn engagement, with the notion of global citizenship remained low. This implies that even though learners are conscious of and care about global issues, they

might not yet internalize the concept of GC as a part of their identity. In addition, the present study also showed a marginal gender difference favoring female students, while academic major and English proficiency level did not produce statistically significant differences. These results suggest the need for addressing identity and gender-related dimensions of global citizenship in ELT curricula, thereby moving beyond global awareness and knowledge.

In addition, there are several limitations of the study that should be addressed. First of all, the study is limited to the data gathered from a single institution, which does not allow the generalizability of the data. Secondly, the scope of this study was limited in terms of demographic and contextual diversity, which means that the findings may not reflect the regional and curriculum-related differences. Thirdly, this study is restricted to the use of a self-assessment instrument, focusing on perceived dispositions of EFL participants rather than observed behaviors; that is why, the findings may be limited to the socially desirable responses.

Based on these limitations, future studies can be conducted via using larger and diverse sample sizes to make comparisons across program types and institutions. Additionally, further studies can benefit from classroom observations, interviews, and performance-based evaluations to reflect EFL learners' actual and verified behaviors representing their global citizenship dispositions. Finally, practitioners and curriculum designers are recommended to integrate GCE dimensions such as empathy-building activities, sustainability topics, and civic engagement projects into EFL classrooms so that learners' identity and engagement with global citizenship could be enhanced. In this way, empowered individuals who are eager to take action to live in a more sustainable and inclusive world could be cultivated.

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