COGNITIVE SCIENCES AND HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

Global Competence Skills among Graduates of a State Private University

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ABSTRACT

While global competence is increasingly recognized as a vital skill for graduates in today's interconnected world, research on its development in state-funded private universities remains limited. This study addresses this gap by assessing the global competence skills of graduates from a state-funded private university. Using an adapted questionnaire covering nine dimensions, 436 students participated in the study. The findings reveal that graduates exhibit particularly high scores in four key areas: respecting cultural diversity, accepting other cultures, adopting diverse perspectives, and communicating effectively with people from different cultures. Additionally, five other dimensions, adaptability, global mindset, attitudes towards immigrants, understanding global issues, and self-efficacy regarding global challenges, were rated highly. These results underscore the role of global and international education coursework in enhancing graduates' competencies and employability. Graduates prioritizing cultural respect, engaging in cultural activities, valuing cross-cultural communication, and developing a global mindset are better positioned for future career success. Based on these findings, the study proposes several measures to further enhance graduates' global competence skills and prepare them for the demands of a globalized workforce.

Keywords: global competence, global citizenship, global mindset, intercultural communication skills, graduate employability

1   INTRODUCTION

The competencies of Malaysian graduates have become a significant priority for universities and industry stakeholders. Several factors, including work experience, professionalism, job satisfaction, challenges, and market forces, may influence graduates' employability (Mokhtar et al., 2022). Mani and Mustaffa (2024) proposed a framework outlining graduates' competency skills, which includes fundamental and advanced characteristics that set them apart from competitors. In addition to developing job-related competencies, graduates must also focus on cultivating global competence skills to enhance their effectiveness in an increasingly interconnected world. Graduates should understand the interconnection between global issues such as public health, national security, and climate change.

Global competence includes knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values. The APEC Human Resources Development Working Group defines it as the ability to analyse global and intercultural issues from various perspectives critically, understand how differences shape perceptions and judgments, and engage effectively with people from diverse backgrounds (Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation Secretariat, 2017). Similarly, the OECD defines global competence as adapting international issues to local contexts and considering intercultural issues about sustainable development (Jiaxin et al., 2024). Graduates need these skills to thrive as informed global citizens, enabling them to critically examine global issues, communicate across cultures, and assess actions to address these challenges (Ramos & Schleicher, 2018). In the fields of study, international organisations like APEC and OECD, and the UNESCO Sustainable Development Goals recognise global competence as essential for future economic success. Given these challenges, higher education institutions are increasingly examining how their programs and curricula can foster global competence (Robertson, 2021a).

Furthermore, students must acquire global competence skills to tackle pressing societal and environmental challenges. Early research indicates that global competence can be developed across various age groups, disciplines, and institutions (Mansilla & Jackson, 2013), with international perspectives influenced by pre-college experiences (Shuman et al., 2016). Kjellgren and Keller (2018) assert that all university students should graduate with an understanding of internationalisation or intercultural competence.

This study is positioned within the Malaysian context, focusing on state-funded private universities, a sector critical for achieving national goals related to human capital development and global competitiveness. The gap in the existing literature is evident in the lack of effective strategies for developing intercultural competencies among students from diverse backgrounds, particularly in state-funded institutions where resources may vary compared to fully public or private counterparts. By examining quantitative aspects of graduate experiences with internationalisation efforts, this study provides actionable recommendations to enhance curriculum delivery and faculty training programs, ultimately contributing to the development of globally competent graduates who can excel locally and internationally.

Mehta et al. (2021) found that students oriented towards overseas study, mastering English, and participating in international curricula have enhanced global mindedness. Curriculum enrichment has increased cultural awareness and made students more productive and satisfied in the workforce (Robertson, 2021a; Robertson 2021b; Yu & Duchin, 2024). However, several studies report a lack of global competence among academics and students, especially when addressing complex problems. Contributing factors include personal characteristics, school rankings, exposure to foreign cultures, curriculum interventions, and the validity of instruments used in studies. Jiaxin et al. (2024) suggest that future research should focus on defining and measuring global competence in diverse cultural contexts, particularly from an Eastern perspective, as well as on the role of teachers in integrating these skills into teaching practices.

At the university where this study was conducted, the "Mahasiswa Budiman" concept is central to student development. This concept aligns with the "MADANI" values of the government of Selangor, which reflect the values of the present federal government of Malaysia (Aris et al., 2023; Azman & Rahman, 2023). This alignment justifies the current study's need to fill a gap in the existing literature on global competence development among students. By answering the research questions, this study can improve practices and inform decision-making among stakeholders or contribute to developing theoretical frameworks for future research. Figure 1 illustrates the conceptual framework depicting the relationship between various factors related to graduates' global competence, including prior experiences, the campus environment, and their impact on the workforce.
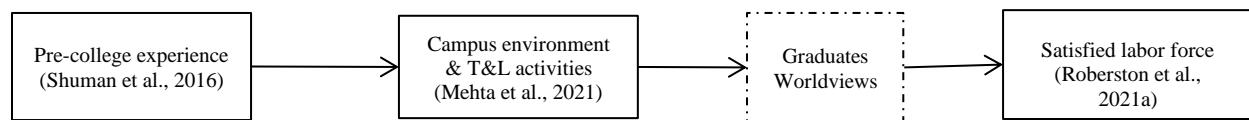
| Pre-college experience (Shuman et al., 2016) | → | Campus environment & T&L activities (Mehta et al., 2021) | → | Graduates Worldviews | → | Satisfied labor force (Roberston et al., 2021a) |

Figure 1. Conceptual framework of the study.

Previous studies in Malaysia have found that teachers are often unaware of the elements of global competence (Yaccob et al., 2022). Zakaria et al. (2019) reported that while the level of global knowledge among teachers and students at the Institute of Teacher Education was high, acceptance of cultural diversity was moderate. Karim et al. (2021) found that teachers face challenges in acquiring the "6Cs" of global competence, with collaboration being the easiest and creativity the hardest. Ibrahim and Matore (2024) reported a lack of quality in teachers' global competence programs, though they noted the potential for improvement with proper strategies. These findings highlight the need for further research involving trainee teachers in higher education institutions.

This study aims to assess graduates' global competence skills at a state-funded private university, with the expected outcomes to enhance students' global citizenship knowledge, understanding, and abilities. It also seeks to help the university and stakeholders develop curricula and activities that align to produce global citizens. This research is grounded in 1969 Arthur W. Chickering's identity development theory (Abd Wahab et al., 2024; Rajagukguk et al., 2022) and 1970 William Perry's cognitive structure theory (Tomlinson & Johnson, 2015; Wankat & Oreovicz, 2015), both of which guide higher education administrators in organizing teaching and learning programs that broaden students' learning experiences on campus.

2   METHODS

2.1   Participants and Design

This study employed a brief survey administered to a group of graduates from a state-funded private university in Selangor, Malaysia. According to the latest statistics, Malaysia has 388 Private Higher Education Institutions (PHEIs), which include 63 universities, 32 university colleges, 283 colleges, and 10 branch campuses of overseas universities (Ministry of Higher Education Malaysia, 2023). The participants were graduates enrolled in a three-credit International and Global Education course. The study used a survey design to gather information from the participants.

2.2   Instrument

The instrument used in the study was an adapted version of the global competency questionnaire developed by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) (Ramos & Schleicher, 2018). A senior academic with a doctorate and substantial international experience reviewed and validated the questionnaire. The survey was structured into two parts: Part A, which gathered demographic information such as the participants' level and field of study, language proficiency, international communication experience, and family background, and Part B, which assessed global competency skills across nine dimensions. These dimensions included respecting cultural diversity, adaptability, a global mindset, and awareness of cross-border challenges. Part B contained 50 items in total.

Five-point and four-point Likert scales were used to capture participants' feedback across these dimensions. The five-point Likert scale was employed for four dimensions (respecting cultural diversity, taking perspectives, adaptability, and interest in learning about other cultures). A four-point Likert scale was used for the remaining five dimensions (awareness of cross-border challenges, self-efficacy on global issues, awareness of intercultural communication, global mindset, and response towards immigrants). This mixed-scale design was implemented to reduce the likelihood of patterned responses, such as typical zigzag or straight-line answers.

The instrument's reliability was assessed using the Alpha Cronbach coefficient, as indicated in Table 1, a widely recognised method in the social sciences for evaluating internal consistency (Wadkar et al., 2016). The results showed that seven dimensions exhibited good reliability, one demonstrated moderate reliability, and one exhibited weak reliability. Despite the lower reliability score for one dimension, it did not raise significant concerns, as the instrument was adapted from a validated framework developed by the OECD. It was noted that the lower reliability could have been influenced by factors such as the number of items in the scale and the participants' backgrounds.

Table 1. Cronbach's alpha coefficient values for each study construct.

No.	Construct	No. of items	Alpha Cronbach value	Reliability table
1.	Learning interest in other cultures	4	0.866	Very Good (0.8 to < 0.9)
2.	Respecting different cultural backgrounds	5	0.861	Very Good (0.8 to < 0.9)
3.	Adaptability	6	0.825	Very Good (0.8 to < 0.9)
4.	Self-efficacy on global issues	6	0.782	Good (0.7 to < 0.8)
5.	Sensitivity to global issues	7	0.759	Good (0.7 to < 0.8)
6.	Taking perspective	5	0.741	Good (0.7 to < 0.8)
7.	Attitude towards immigrants	4	0.740	Good (0.7 to < 0.8)
8.	Global mindset	6	0.697	Moderate (0.6 to < 0.7)
9.	Awareness of intercultural communication	7	0.447	Weak (Below 0.6)

2.3 Procedure

The data for the study were collected through a survey administered to graduates of a state-funded private university in Selangor, Malaysia, during the data collection period in August 2024. The data collection process spanned three weeks.

3 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Profile of Respondents

A total of 436 students completed the questionnaire. As shown in Table 2, a slightly higher percentage of students were from social sciences programmes (56.2%) compared to physical sciences programmes (45.8%). The underrepresentation of students in Science and Technology (S&T) and STEM fields has been widely documented in the literature (Aspin et al., 2021; Jinn et al., 2022). This difference in enrolment is not unexpected, as the Faculty of Education and Social Sciences is the largest faculty at the university, accounting for more than 60% of the total student enrolment, which is greater than the other three faculties. However, this disparity in the percentage of students across fields of study is unlikely to impact the findings, as all students are required to take a compulsory three-credit Sustainability course, classified under *Mata Pelajaran Wajib Universiti (MPU).* The content of this course introduces students to various global issues that are indirectly related to the development of global competence. Previous local studies have not indicated any preference for specific programmes regarding acquiring global competence skills

(Karim et al., 2021; Yaccob et al., 2022; Zakaria et al., 2019). Further analysis reveals that the distribution of students between diploma and bachelor's programmes is nearly equal, with 44.7% enrolled in diploma programmes and 41.5% in bachelor's programmes. A majority of respondents (64%) reported speaking more than one language (279 students), although most had limited experience in communicating with international peers (78.9%, or 344 students). Additionally, 66.1% of the respondents (289 students) stated that they did not have any family members or relatives who had studied abroad, as shown in Table 3.

Table 2. Distribution of respondents by faculty and level of study.

Faculty	No.	%	Program	No.	%
Education and Social Sciences	245	56.2	Foundation	60	13.8
Communication, Visual Arts, and Computing	78	17.9	Diploma	195	44.7
Engineering and Life Sciences	57	13.1	Bachelor	181	41.5
Foundation and General Studies	56	12.8			

Table 3. Respondents' language proficiency, cross-border communication experience, and the presence of family members abroad.

Language mastery			Cross-border communication			Family members abroad		
No.	Total	%	Status	No.	%	Status	No.	%
1	66	15.8	No	192	44.0	Yes	147	33.7
2	279	64.0	Rare	152	34.9	No	289	66.1
3	77	17.7	Seldom	67	15.4			
>3	11	2.5	Frequent	25	5.7			

3.2 Average Mean Scores

Graduates assigned exceptionally high scores to four key dimensions: respect for diverse cultural backgrounds, learning about other cultures, adopting various perspectives, and awareness of intercultural interactions, as shown in Table 4 and interpreted in Table 5. Additionally, five other dimensions received high scores: adaptability, global mindset, attitudes towards immigrants, awareness of global issues, and self-efficacy concerning global challenges. These results are consistent and do not present any abnormalities. They reflect a broader awareness of cultural diversity, particularly in Malaysia's multicultural context. The university environment mirrors this setting, encouraging Malaysian students to acknowledge and respect the cultural differences and similarities of others (Dalib et al., 2019). A similar observation was made by Lino and Mohd Hashim (2020), who reported that graduates of higher learning institutions considered themselves highly tolerant and generally agreed that individuals should be free to practice their cultural beliefs. The study also found that these graduates consistently displayed positive emotional responses, such as curiosity, interest, and gratitude, towards others who practice different cultures, demonstrating acceptance and respect.

Table 4. The average mean score for each construct of the study.

No.	Construct	Mean score	Standard deviation	Variance
1.	Respecting cultural diversity*	4.0298 (VH)	.70371	.495
2.	Learning interest in other cultures*	3.8727 (VH)	.82289	.677
3.	Taking perspective*	3.7495 (VH)	.65209	.425
4.	Intercultural communication awareness#	3.2611 (VH)	.60633	.368
5.	Adaptability*	3.4996 (H)	.71746	.515
6.	Global mindset#	3.0375 (H)	.45849	.210
7.	Attitude towards immigrants#	2.8859 (H)	.62562	.391
8.	Awareness of global issues#	2.8162 (H)	.50987	.260
9.	Self-efficacy on global issues#	2.7244 (H)	.55609	.309

*(5 points-scale) / # (4 points-scale)

Table 5. Interpretation of the scale values (mean scores).

Range of scores for 5-point scale values	Range of scores for 4-point scale values
1.0 – 1.8 (Very Low)	1 – 1.75 (Very Low)
1.9 – 2.6 (Low)	1.76 – 2.5 (Low)
2.7 – 3.4 (High)	2.6 – 3.25 (High)
3.5 – 4.2 (Very High)	3.26 – 4.00 (Very High)
4.3 – 5.0 (Extremely High)	

3.3 Findings regarding Global Competency Constructs

In this section, the key constructs measured in the study focus on cultural respect, intercultural communication, adaptability, global thinking, and awareness of global issues. Each of these constructs represents an essential component of global competency, and the high scores across these areas suggest a strong level of global awareness and engagement among the respondents. Table 6 provides an overview of the mean scores for the various constructs, offering a comprehensive understanding of the global competencies assessed. The details of each construct are discussed below:

3.3.1 Respecting Cultural Diversity

Respect is a fundamental concept that reflects a commitment to human values (Ramos & Schleicher, 2018). Respondents consistently provided high scores for all statements about their behaviour towards individuals from diverse cultural backgrounds. They demonstrated strong respect for individuals from other cultures by treating them equally, actively listening to, valuing, and respecting their insights and perspectives.

3.3.2 Learning Interest in Other Cultures

Global citizens should value others' perspectives and recognise that behaviours are shaped by a variety of influences (Ramos & Schleicher, 2018). Respondents provided very high scores for all statements regarding their interest in learning about other cultures. They actively seek to learn about different religions, cultural traditions, and lifestyles in various parts of the world.

3.3.3 Taking Perspective

Perspective-taking involves understanding another person's point of view and recognising how different perspectives relate to each other. This ability helps facilitate more mature and tolerant interpretations of differences among groups (Ramos & Schleicher, 2018). Respondents provided very high scores for all statements about their ability to take perspectives on individuals from different cultures. The highest score was given to the statement about considering oneself before criticising others, while the lowest score was for considering the views of others who disagree before deciding.

3.3.4 Awareness of Intercultural Communication

Effective communication requires the ability to engage respectfully and effectively with people perceived to have different cultural backgrounds (Ramos & Schleicher, 2018). As higher education becomes increasingly diverse with the influx of international students, graduates must navigate multicultural environments and interact regularly with peers from other cultures. Respondents gave very high scores for four statements and high scores for three others regarding their awareness of intercultural communication. The highest score was given to the choice of words, while the lowest score was for observing a person's reaction.

The study reveals a discrepancy between graduates' verbal communication skills and non-verbal communication, particularly in observing others' reactions. This suggests an area for improvement, specifically in recognising and interpreting subtle cues such as body language and facial expressions. These are essential skills for successfully navigating diverse cultural contexts (Abu-Arqoub & Alserhan, 2019). By addressing this gap through curriculum enhancements, practical training, and refined assessments, educational institutions can better equip graduates with the intercultural competencies needed in today's interconnected world.

3.3.5 Adaptability

Adaptability involves adjusting to novel situations and challenges, which is essential for developing long-term interpersonal relationships with people from other cultures and remaining resilient in changing circumstances (Ramos & Schleicher, 2018). Respondents gave very high scores to two statements and high scores to four, indicating strong adaptability skills. The highest score was given to the ability to change behaviour in response to new situations, while the lowest score was for handling unusual situations.

3.3.6   Global Thinking

Globally minded individuals strive to create space for different ways of living with dignity, feeling connected to the world community, and having a sense of moral responsibility to improve others' conditions, regardless of distance or cultural differences (Ramos & Schleicher, 2018). Respondents gave high scores to all six statements regarding their global mindset. The highest score was for their sense of obligation to address poor living conditions around the world, while the lowest score was related to the thought of acting to address global problems.

3.3.7   Attitude towards Immigrants

Attitudes towards immigrants largely reflect daily activities that require community cooperation (García-Muñoz & Milgram-Baleix, 2021). Respondents gave high scores to all statements regarding their attitudes toward immigrants. The highest score was for providing equal educational opportunities to all children, while the lowest score was for the rights of immigrants within the country.

3.3.8   Awareness of Global Issues

Graduates must develop global consciousness, which includes understanding perspectives, awareness of international issues, cross-cultural dynamics, and human choices (Veselinovska et al., 2011). Respondents gave high scores to all statements regarding their awareness of global issues. They demonstrated greater awareness of issues such as global health, gender equality, poverty, hunger, lack of nutritious food, and climate change compared to issues like human migration and international conflicts.

3.3.9   Self-Efficacy on Global Issues

A high sense of self-efficacy regarding global issues brings positive behavioural outcomes, such as increased self-confidence, a sense of responsibility, resilience, and a willingness to volunteer and help others (Afari et al., 2012). Respondents gave high scores for five statements and a low score for one regarding their self-efficacy on global issues. The highest score was given for the statement comparing the effects of global warming between countries, while the lowest score was for explaining the relationship between textile prices and working conditions in producing countries.

Table 6. The mean scores for all items of the study.

Statement		Mean score	Standard deviation	Variance
a) Respecting others of different cultures (self-reflection)	Valuing diverse cultures.	4.06	0.832	0.693
	Valuing the insights and perspectives of all individuals.	4.05	0.833	0.780
	Respecting individuals from other cultures.	4.02	0.944	0.891
	Treating everyone with respect.	4.02	0.871	0.758
	Creating space for others to express themselves.	4.00	0.850	0.722

b)	Interest in learning other cultures (self-reflection)	Learning about other cultures.	3.98	0.893	0.797
		Understanding everyone's perspective of the world.	3.94	0.939	0.882
		Learning about living in other countries.	3.81	1.075	1.155
		Learning about the religions of the world.	3.76	0.982	0.965
c)	Perspective-taking (self-reflective)	Imagine other people's feelings before criticizing them.	3.90	0.905	.905
		Taking other people's perspectives when frustrated.	3.79	0.954	.954
		Imagine the opposite of understanding my friends.	3.74	0.925	.925
		Looking at both sides to understand the issues	3.70	0.917	.917
		Seeing the side of people before deciding.	3.62	0.950	.950
d)	Intercultural communication awareness	Choosing words carefully.	3.42	1.571	2.469
		Explain the idea by giving a concrete example.	3.32	2.471	6.107
		Listening carefully to what others were saying.	3.29	0.655	0.429
		Explaining things carefully.	3.25	0.708	0.501
		Looking for a solution to a problem.	3.24	0.749	0.560
		Making everyone understand each other properly.	3.19	0.699	0.488
		Observing the reactions of others.	3.11	0.748	0.560
e)	Adaptability to global education (self-reflection)	Meeting the needs of the new situation.	3.65	0.921	0.848
		Thinking of ways to resolve a difficult situation.	3.55	0.952	0.906
		Adapting to different situations even under pressure.	3.49	0.977	0.954
		Adapting to a new culture.	3.48	1.014	1.027
		Interacting with people from other cultures.	3.45	1.006	1.011
		Handling unusual situations.	3.37	1.019	1.039
f)	Global thought (approval level)	Feeling obligated to poor people.	3.17	0.629	0.396
		Boycott inconsiderate companies.	3.12	0.789	0.622
		Sensitive to the global environment.	3.11	0.683	0.466
		Acting as a citizen of the world.	3.04	0.745	0.555
		Doing something about the world's problems.	2.83	0.770	0.593
g)	Attitudes towards immigrants (approval level)	Equal chance of education for children.	3.03	0.852	0.725
		Passing on their customs and lifestyles.	2.89	0.769	0.592
		Voting in elections.	2.81	0.833	0.694
		Having the same rights as everyone else.	2.81	0.880	0.775
h)	Awareness of global issues	Global health.	2.93	0.696	0.485
		Equality between men and women.	2.87	0.829	0.687
		Poverty.	2.82	0.820	0.673
		Climate change and global warming.	2.80	0.789	0.623
		Hunger and malnutrition.	2.80	0.860	0.739
		Migration.	2.78	0.742	0.551
		International conflicts.	2.71	0.832	0.692
		Explaining the impacts of global climate change.	2.86	0.837	0.701

i)	Self-efficacy on global issues (self-reflective)	Discussing the relationship between economics and the environment.	2.78	0.837	0.701
		Discussing the different reasons for refugees.	2.77	0.742	0.551
		Explaining the impact of the global economic crisis.	2.74	0.810	0.656
		Explaining the effect of carbon dioxide emissions on climate change.	2.69	0.801	0.642
		Promoting comfortable working conditions.	2.50	0.789	0.623

4   DISCUSSION

This study demonstrates that graduates from state-funded private universities in Malaysia exhibit a commendable level of global competency. The findings suggest the importance of global and international education coursework and the effectiveness of course delivery at the institution. However, outcomes from similar studies conducted at other higher learning institutions differ. For instance, a study at a public university found that graduates displayed a high level of well-being across aspects such as positive emotions, commitment, relationships, meaning, and accomplishment (Lino & Mohd Hashim, 2020). Dalib et al. (2019) also highlighted the critical role of language in intercultural communication, stressing the need for awareness of one another's linguistic peculiarities. Furthermore, Yaacob et al. (2019) observed that Malaysian higher education institutions reported a moderate climate of diversity with a low level of global mindedness. They found significant differences in students' perceptions of diversity and global mindedness based on ethnicity and suggested that a broader understanding of learner diversity is necessary to ensure the sustainable development of Malaysia's higher education institutions.

Several factors could explain the outcomes observed in this study at the research location. The presence of numerous international students on campus allows local students to learn about global identities and values (Nazir et al., 2023). Moreover, the university has actively facilitated outbound activities for students to universities in countries such as Indonesia, Thailand, China, and Korea, with recent announcements inviting students to participate in international programmes, including those in Europe. The university also invites foreign experts and academics as programme advisors, assessors, and speakers for conferences and workshops. International trips for academic staff, organised by the university and under state invitation, enhance global competence by providing opportunities for cultural immersion, networking, and exposure to diverse educational practices (Fisher et al., 2022).

Another factor contributing to the high global competency scores may be the university's long-standing involvement in cross-border education since its establishment in the early 2000s. For example, the university was the first institution to offer a specialised 3+2 programme in collaboration with Japanese technical universities, wherein students complete their diploma at the university before continuing their degree studies at Japanese universities. This experience has shaped the institution's climate and culture, significantly influencing the graduates (Dong & Musah, 2023; Kim & Lee, 2017).

The study reveals that graduates are knowledgeable about and eager to learn more about the different cultures surrounding them. They exhibit a positive approach to intercultural communication and demonstrate an increased awareness of its importance. This finding reflects a positive campus environment that facilitates adaptation between graduates from diverse backgrounds in local higher education institutions today (Xiaoyan et al., 2024). According to Ministry statistics, in addition to full-time students, approximately 160,000 international students from over ten countries are enrolled in Malaysian higher learning institutions in 2023 (Ministry of Higher Education Malaysia, 2023).

Arandas et al. (2019) found that social isolation and discrimination are serious challenges international students face in Malaysia. Effective intercultural communication skills among both local and international graduates are crucial, as these skills contribute to mental health and overall life satisfaction throughout their studies. Graduates who value respect for diverse cultural backgrounds, easily adapt to other cultures, and recognise the importance of cross-cultural interactions are laying a solid foundation for their future careers. These skills enhance professional development and positively impact workplaces and society. Graduates' reputation as potential employees with strong global competencies is an asset for attracting foreign investors. Inward investors seek skilled talent when selecting countries for investment, making the availability of such skills in a location crucial for attracting investment (OCO Global, 2022). Simultaneously, the demand for employees with global competencies is growing in the employment sector as businesses increasingly require professionals capable of working across borders. The lack of individuals with these competencies can create barriers to economic integration and trade in goods and services (Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation Secretariat, 2017). Local graduates who possess global proficiency are better positioned to present themselves to multinational companies operating in the country.

In conclusion, this study reveals that graduates from state-funded private universities in Malaysia demonstrate robust global competency across essential areas, including respect for different cultures, perspective-taking, intercultural communication awareness, adaptability, and response to global risks. These findings underscore incorporating more international education coursework into university curricula to enhance students' understanding of cultural diversity and adaptability. Graduates with such competencies are well-positioned for careers in multinational corporations, where intercultural skills are increasingly valued. Educational institutions should prioritise curriculum reforms that focus on deepening cultural awareness through modules on intercultural communication and collaboration with diverse groups. Additionally, training programmes for academic staff are essential to ensure educators are equipped to teach these vital competencies effectively. Graduates with strong global competencies are highly sought after by multinational corporations, which value intercultural skills for success. This positions them favourably for careers in diverse environments and contributes positively to societal cohesion through improved cross-cultural understanding. These findings align with national objectives aimed at developing globally competent citizens, as outlined in Malaysia's Education Development Plan 2013-2025 (Ministry of Higher Education Malaysia, 2015).

Future research should explore specific teaching methods, such as experiential learning or project-based approaches, to further cultivate students' global competencies. Longitudinal studies would provide valuable insights into the long-term development of global competency skills after

graduation. Furthermore, partnerships between educational institutions and multinational corporations could be explored to create tailored job opportunities that leverage the strengths of globally competent graduates, enhancing their personal and professional growth. Research could also examine the impact of emerging technologies, social media, and innovative teaching tools on developing global competencies. Expanding the scope of global contexts within university campuses and exploring their connections to real-world situations and career opportunities would further contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of how these competencies can be applied in diverse environments.

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