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Article

Ultra-Orthodox female student teachers' motivation to learn and teach global education

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Keywords: globalization, global education, teacher education, religion, ultra-orthodox

Highlights:
– GE can be embraced by distinct populations with highly religious views
– UOSTs' motivation toward GE is related to competitive-instrumental, social-justice, and personal factors
– UOSTs prioritize local orientation toward GE, over global perspectives.
– UOSTs seem to assess the compatibility of GE with the traditions and norms of their own community
– GE may be perceived as multidirectional and multidimensional rather than a top-down hierarchy

Purpose: This study aims to identify factors that motivate ultra-Orthodox female student-teachers to learn and teach from a global education perspective. Uncovering these factors may inform the discourse on integrating global orientations into education systems.

Design/methodology/approach: The study adopts the broad theoretical idea of global education while employing quantitative analysis.

Findings: Data obtained from 115 participants yielded three factors salient to learning GE: (1) competitive-instrumental; (2) social-justice related; and (3) personal. Motivation to teach GE was found to align with two main approaches, one locally oriented and the other globally oriented.

Research limitations/implications: As the study adopted a quantitative methodology, future research should also elucidate our findings using qualitative methods.

Practical implications: Stakeholders who wish to promote global education should consider that the participants' overall disposition is congenial to global education; however, they interpret this notion in local and personal terms rather than as a global, proactive framework.

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1 INTRODUCTION

Today, in the uncertain post-COVID-19 reality, which has brought to the fore the interdependence of all parts of the world, education systems are striving to find paths to success for students. This reality might serve as a new wave for the idea of *global education* (hereafter, GE). GE is not a new phenomenon, as its development is rooted in the contexts of the post-Great War and post-World War II. These global traumatic realities were a platform for notable attempts to design global curricula aimed at preventing future conflicts. For example, in the aftermath of World War II, the establishment of the United Nations (UN) and the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) aimed to foster peace and dialogue through education. UNESCO's initiatives, such as the Associated School Project Network, sought to develop curricula that promoted intercultural understanding, tolerance, and respect for human rights (Tye, 2009). Today, UNESCO and the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) are the main advocates cursors of GE, albeit both organizations differ in their definitions and terms used. While UNESCO emphasizes supranational identity and belonging and uses the term 'global citizenship' curriculum that is focused on multiculturalism, activism, and an engaged application of knowledge, skills, and attitudes, the OECD (2023) uses the term 'global competence' curriculum focusing on a specific set of skills and abilities that are perceived as contributing to the productivity of the global society. Both definitions go beyond traditional ideas of national development and citizenship, placing individuals in the wider context of globalization (Vaccari & Gardinier, 2019).

Despite these efforts, attempts to design a global curriculum tend to be complicated or fail, especially because of political, ideological, and cultural barriers on the global-international level and the local-national level (Apple, 2011). National interests often take precedence over international cooperation, hindering efforts to develop shared educational frameworks. Additionally, challenges such as linguistic diversity, historical narratives, differing educational philosophies, and wars and terror attacks (Bar-Tal & Labin, 2001) further complicate attempts to design a unified global curriculum. Although these efforts ultimately fell short of their ambitious goals, they laid the groundwork for ongoing discussions and initiatives aimed at promoting GE and peacebuilding, which is evident in the broad theoretical and empirical corpus related to GE (Tye, 2009).

Goren and Yemini (2017b) make a case that "[t]here is not one, single, agreed-upon definition for global citizenship" (p. 10), but rather that scholars operate with a variety of conceptualizations and terms, thereby complicating the integration of this idea in practice. The current study uses the term GE, which is sufficiently broad to encompass multiple conceptions, such as the OECD learning compass, global curriculum, or global citizenship, and to reference a pool of unified knowledge, skills, and competencies while leaving ample room for interpretation.

Yet, evidence suggests that delineating such wherewithal in general terms may be fraught with challenges, given the distinctions among various populations at both the national and global levels. Kayode's (2023) critical analysis of Western, Asian (Chinese), and African perspectives on global citizenship bear ample testimony to the latter. As to the differences at the country level, in an intranational comparison in Israel, Goren et al. (2019) found clear differences in perceptions of global citizenship education (hereafter GCE) between teachers from different sectors: GCE was viewed by secular Jewish teachers as a vehicle to promote global futures and opportunities for their students' benefit; by Arab teachers, as an identity platform for being part of a global society; and religious Jewish teachers viewed it as a threat to their students' national identity and religious values. As a caveat to extrapolating the results of their study, Goren et al. note that the study does not

incorporate teachers from the ultra-Orthodox (*Haredi*) community, which is an integral part of Israeli society. In addition, attempts to incorporate GE into Israeli education systems are complicated mainly due to the ethno-religious, ethno-national lines, and conflict-driven characteristics of the Israeli nation (Al-Haj, 2004; Schulze, 2016). Despite the attempts to promote a multicultural and pluralistic agenda, ethnocentric perceptions and victim mentality were still found to be dominant in the curriculum taught at schools related to the educational streams supervised by the Israeli Ministry of Education (Reingold & Zamir, 2017; Teff-Seker, 2020).

Exploring GE concerning the ultra-Orthodox sector, which is commonly described as an enclave system characterized by strict social and cultural boundaries, is interesting and complicated. First, since the establishment of the Israeli state, the ultra-Orthodox educational stream has established its own educational system, featuring segregated K-12 schooling for boys and girls, alongside a vast network of higher religious study institutions for men (Golan & Fehl, 2020; Ichilov, 2009). Second, based on the Learning Transformative Theory (Mezirow, 1991), GE may provide an opportunity for students to interrogate their social attitudes and the general cultural orientation that underpins much of their lives and identities (Bourn & Issler, 2010). Additionally, GE emphasizes democratic values such as the right for individuals to choose their way of life and the right to education; ultra-Orthodox Jews are expected to reject changes that relate to modern life and to keep obeying their Rabbis as their spiritual leaders while respecting their guidelines and instructions in both the public and the private domain (Katzir & Perry-Hazan, 2023). Thus, one may view GE as contradicting the ultra-Orthodox religious identity and as a threat to their community in general.

In response to Goren et al.'s (2019) call for more research into religious attitudes toward GE, the current study probes the motivations thereto on the part of the Israeli ultra-Orthodox Jewish sector. Most research on this issue relies on the PISA2018 sample drawn from that year's OECD test. However, as David (2020) pointed out, this data does not comprise sufficient ultra-Orthodox students to draw meaningful research conclusions, and the female ultra-Orthodox participants were included highly selectively (OECD 2018b, 2020; RAMA, 2022). Furthermore, the version of the test administered to ultra-Orthodox students excluded the section on "global competencies acquisition" (David, 2020), which was part of the standard version. On these grounds, some scholars have criticized the PISA tests, which is the OECD's tool to evaluate education worldwide, as tendentious and culturally biased and questioned their validity (Goren, 2020; Zamir & Sabo, 2012).

The object of excluding the section related to GE from the ultra-Orthodox version of the PISA tests is not immediately obvious or clear-cut. This strategy could have been adopted to address sensitive issues in assessing that distinctive population without causing inconvenience to either the teachers or the students. However, it may also be viewed as exclusionist, an impediment to gauging the attitudes to GE among the ultra-Orthodox in Israel—and, by extension, among other distinctive populations elsewhere. To offset this drawback, the current study examines the motivations to learn and teach GE among a group of ultra-Orthodox Jewish female student teachers (hereafter, UOSTs). This population was chosen as a case study considering the growing tendency for ultra-Orthodox women to enrol in secular academic teacher training colleges to pursue a Bachelor's degree in education, a requisite for professional work within the Israeli education system (Golan & Fehl, 2020). Moreover, if teacher education is a context in which student teachers are socialized to their professional roles, examining the orientations of this population could be highly revealing.

Employing quantitative analysis, this study endeavours to identify the factors that motivate UOSTs to learn and teach from a GE perspective. The results can inform the discourse on integrating GE orientations into education systems and teacher training in particular.

2 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Conceptualising global education

The notion of GE has evolved, reflecting various ideological and terminological typologies. Hanvey (1976) delineated GE across five dimensions: perspective consciousness, state-of-the-planet awareness, cross-cultural understanding, knowledge of global dynamics, and awareness of human choices. Merryfield (1997) extended this framework, incorporating human values, global systems, history, cross-cultural interaction, and civic participation skills. Merryfield's definition of GE as an academic discipline encompasses human values and beliefs, global systems, global problems and topics, global history, cross-cultural interaction, understanding, awareness of the power to make choices, and the development of analytic and teaching skills that enable civic participation and involvement. The current study operates according to Ferguson-Patrick et al.'s (2014) definition of GE:

> As an approach to education which seeks to enable young people to participate in shaping a better-shared future for the world through emphasizing the unity and interdependence of human society; developing a sense of self and appreciation of cultural diversity; affirming social justice and human rights, peacebuilding and actions for a sustainable future; emphasizing developing relationships with our global neighbors; promoting open-mindedness and a predisposition to take action for change. (p. 471)

These scholars offer a contemporary definition, framing GE as an approach to education that fosters global citizenship, cultural appreciation, social justice, and sustainable actions when GE can be approached through skills-based and critical perspectives. The skills-based approach focuses on preparing students for the global economy, whereas the critical approach emphasizes awareness of social and environmental injustices. These perspectives offer diverse pathways for GE implementation, accommodating varied educational contexts and objectives.

We perceive that Ferguson-Patrick et al.'s (2014) interpretation encompasses the broad spectrum of implied meanings attributed to GE across various definitions found in the literature (Biberman-Shalev, 2021). Consequently, it allows diverse understandings of this concept and thus offers multiple approaches for its implementation. One perspective views GE in terms of both teachers' objectives and students' abilities. Furthermore, this interpretation does not diminish the importance of nationalism but rather promotes a global citizenship that is thoughtful and actively concerned with global issues, recognizing the impact of global events on individuals' lives. In addition, Ferguson-Patrick and colleagues' (2014) approach to GE lies primarily in their research methodology, which focuses on pre-service teachers—a population that has been underexplored in previous studies (Yemini et al., 2019).

One can point to three main waves in the development of GE. The 1950s and 1960s saw a surge in global independence movements, decentralizing authority and emphasizing equality and interconnectedness (Edwards, 2012). The mid-1970s and early-1980s highlighted social justice and active approaches, focusing on understanding power dynamics (Landorf, 2009). The third wave of GE relates to the mid-1980s and currently focuses on ideas such as global responsibility (Kirkwood-Tucker, 2009), cosmopolitanism (Banks, 2004), and global citizenship (H. Marshall, 2011). These terms emphasize "global solidarity" and how the behavior of any individual affects peace, development, and the environment.

In the current wave, initiatives like the OECD (2023) Learning Compass 2030 define the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values needed for global well-being. Scholars advocate for a curriculum that widens perspectives beyond local contexts and promotes cosmopolitan communities. For example, Sparapani et al. (2014) envision a curriculum that would widen teachers' and students' perspectives beyond the context of their local cultures and open them up to alternative and global solutions. Munna (2022) developed this understanding of a global curriculum as "a concept that is symbiotic with a cosmopolitan community" (p. 243). These perceptions have been echoed by UNESCO (2014), which stated that the moral obligations of all human beings must be based solely on humanity with no reference to particular characteristics, be it cultural, religious or ethnic. The direction has thus been set toward GCE, which aspires to expand one's identity and loyalty beyond one's ethnic community or nation-state (Dower & Williams, 2002; Nussbaum, 2002). An objective of this scope, however, has been judged as lofty, not practicable, and Western-hegemonic (Oxley & Morris, 2013), a critique that evokes the challenges of the globalization process, which fosters a unified and cohesive global society.

However, challenges arise due to political, ideological, and cultural barriers at the global and local levels, hindering efforts to design a unified global curriculum.

2.2 GE in specific contexts: Israel's case

Israel's religious and educational divisions (Cochran, 2017) create complexities in implementing GE within its education system, leading to tensions between global and national orientations (Yemini et al., 2014). Israel, with a population of approximately nine million citizens, consists of a Jewish majority (around 75%) and an Arab minority (about 25%), further divided into cultural and religious subgroups. Among Jews, there are distinctions between secular, traditionally observant, religious, and ultra-Orthodox individuals, while the Arab sector includes Muslim Arabs, Christian Arabs, Druze, and Bedouins (Central Bureau of Statistics, 2020). These ethno-religious communities are internally segmented into ethno-cultural groups, some of which have strained relations, such as tensions between Ashkenazi and Sephardi Jews, characterized by differences in religious practices, lifestyles, and political orientations (Schulze, 2016). Orthodox Judaism encompasses various sects like Sephardic, Lithuanian (Mitnagdim), Hasidic, and Religious-Zionist categories, each with distinct religious interpretations and attitudes toward modernity (Golan & Fehl, 2020).

The Israeli education system mirrors these societal divisions through four main streams: state-secular, state-religious, ultra-Orthodox (including state-Haredi and independent-religious schools), and Arab schools. While state-religious schools prioritize both Jewish and secular subjects, independent-religious schools, mainly associated with the ultra-Orthodox sector, primarily focus on Jewish studies, often sidelining secular disciplines. Notably, the establishment of the national ultra-Orthodox education stream in 2014, which incorporated secular subjects alongside Jewish studies, faced resistance from ultra-Orthodox leaders, resulting in minimal enrollment (Golan & Fehl, 2020).

Public debates in Israeli society revolve around the formulation of a national curriculum, with some advocating for a unified curriculum emphasizing social justice and inclusion of secular subjects in ultra-Orthodox education, while others stress the preservation of cultural identities within each sector (Abu-Saad, 2019; Pinson, 2008). Critics argue that the current educational framework neglects democratic principles, worsening religious and sectarian tensions (Cochran, 2017).

Scholars argue that the Israeli curriculum, which is rooted in Jewish culture and identity, prioritizes national narratives over secular content (Chamo, 2013; Gusacov, 2018). However, fields within STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) are often regarded as culturally

neutral and conceptually linked to global phenomena, thus receiving preferential treatment and further accelerating globalization. For example, Mamlok-Naaman and Taitelbaum (2019) describe the influences of global trends on the development of the Israeli Chemistry curriculum with a focus on using technologies. Conversely, subjects with a localized focus, such as literature, civics, or national history, are typically regarded as less prestigious and consequently marginalized (Nussbaum, 2010). According to Yemini and Fulop (2015), school subjects such as Literature, Civics, and History act as a platform for constructing nationhood and thus are more national-oriented. For example, although Israel is a developed OECD country, the focus of the history curriculum has remained on the Zionist 'new Israeli Jew' ethos supporting a national narrative. There is also evidence that civics as a school subject is becoming more national and politically oriented in the Jewish secular education stream (Avnon, 2016; Geiger, 2020) as well as in the state-religious education stream (Sabbagh, 2019). This is evident in the emphasis on Holocaust education, framed within a Jewish national narrative, to instill concepts of existential security and self-reliance (Ariely, 2019; Yemini & Bronshtein, 2016). The Holocaust, as a collective memory, acts as a cornerstone of the Jewish nation. Thus, the Israeli education system is given a particularistic interpretation. The object is to concretize the threat to Jewish existence and to stress the need for self-reliance and existential security. In contrast, Yemini and Bronshtein (2016) found that History teachers reflected different perspectives regarding the Holocaust. While some teachers argued that there is more room for a universal focus on the Holocaust, others related it to the national threat. Ariely (2019) examined the impact of Holocaust Day in Israel on Israeli Jewish students' national identity and collective memory. Panel survey data collected before, during, and after Holocaust Day revealed an increase in the levels of nationalism and perceptions of Holocaust lessons, indicating the significant influence of Holocaust Day on national identity and collective memory. Recent events, such as the 2023 attacks on Israel, have prompted calls for heightened emphasis on national identity and patriotism within the educational system (Biberman-Shalev et al., 2023). Regarding Israeli teachers, concerns regarding the Palestinian-Israeli conflict overshadow efforts toward GCE, fostering nationalist sentiments and complicating the integration of global perspectives (Yemini & Furstenburg, 2018). Scholars such as Adwan et al. (2009) analyzed the curriculum for Arab students in Israeli schools. They found that it generally follows the same guidelines as those for Jewish students. However, efforts have been made to incorporate Arab culture, history, and literature into the curriculum to reflect the unique heritage of Arab citizens in Israel. Additionally, there may be differences in emphasis on certain subjects or historical narratives that align with Arab cultural perspectives.

Globalization intensifies divisions between subjects perceived as global (e.g., STEM disciplines) and those considered national or local (e.g., literature and civic studies; Bleazby, 2015). While STEM subjects receive preferential treatment because of their perceived neutrality and global relevance, subjects with localized content face marginalization (Nussbaum, 2010). The Israeli curriculum, despite its developed status, continues to prioritize Zionist narratives in subjects like history, reflecting national-oriented perspectives (Avnon, 2016; Geiger, 2020). Nevertheless, scholars view the conflict-ridden Israeli reality as fertile ground to examine the feasibility of GCE, particularly within insular groups like the ultra-Orthodox (Yemini & Furstenburg, 2018).

Analysis of the Israeli Ministry of Education (MOE) website reveals a generalized approach to GE, primarily focused on skills development. GE-related topics are presented as optional, left to teachers' discretion, reflecting a lack of standardized integration (MOE, n.d.a, n.d.b). This decentralized approach mirrors international experiences, where the integration of GE varies among educators based on disciplinary preferences (Horsley et al., 2005).

Therefore, the case of Israel offers valuable insights into the complexities of implementing Global Education within diverse sociocultural contexts, underscoring the challenges posed by religious, cultural, and political dynamics. Addressing these challenges requires nuanced approaches that balance global perspectives with national identities while promoting inclusivity and social justice within the educational landscape.

2.3 Education and sociopolitical dynamics: Insights into ultra-Orthodox Jewish communities

Within the ultra-Orthodox community, which is characterized by spiritual adherence, resistance to modernization, and limited engagement with secular institutions, educational paradigms differ significantly from mainstream Israeli norms (Katzir & Perry-Hazan, 2019). Despite efforts to introduce secular studies, Haredi schools maintain traditionalist approaches perpetuated by influential political entities. Funding disparities further underscore these educational complexities, reflecting political considerations and reinforcing conservative factions within the Haredi community (Kingsbury, 2018). Efforts to reform Haredi education, such as the New Haredi Education (NHE) initiative, aimed at integrating Haredi schools into the public education framework, have faced challenges and have not been fully implemented (Katzir & Perry-Hazan, 2019). Funding distribution remains influenced by the degree of secular education offered, highlighting the delicate balance between religious and political factors in Haredi educational financing (OECD, 2018a).

The ultra-Orthodox community in Israel, comprising approximately 13.6% of Israel's population, is characterized by diverse groups and subgroups, each guided by various spiritual and political leaders. The shared ideological principles among these groups include subjection to spiritual authority, the belief that Torah study ensures Jewish continuity, rejection of modernization, and insulation from outside influences. Additionally, this community holds the ideology of non-acceptance of the secular Jewish State, efforts to distance itself from mainstream societal spheres, and limited pragmatic cooperation with state institutions (Katzir & Perry-Hazan, 2019). Despite these tendencies, over recent decades, Haredi political parties have played a pivotal role in Israeli politics, and one can track developments that coincide with broader social changes within the Haredi community, including increased participation in higher education, military service, and digital integration.

According to Malach and Cahaner (2023), the poverty rates within the ultra-Orthodox population are significantly higher than those within the non-Haredi Jewish population, and their impact on quality of life is correspondingly greater. While there has been a noticeable decline in poverty rates among the Haredi population since 2015, as of 2021, they remain relatively high (34% compared to 15% among non-Haredi Jews). Additionally, 72% of ultra-Orthodox Jews and 80% of non-ultra-Orthodox Jews agree or strongly agree that religion has a strong influence in Israel. The majority of Haredim (54%) also agree or strongly agree that the influence of religion has strengthened in recent years, compared with 63% of non-Haredi Jews. However, there is a significant gap between Haredim and non-Haredim regarding attitudes toward the separation of religion and state, with only 15% of Haredim agreeing or strongly agreeing that there should be a separation between religion and state, compared with 57% among non-Haredi Jews. The employment rate of ultra-Orthodox women in education in 2022 (41%) was significantly higher than that of women in this field in the non-ultra-Orthodox Jewish population (16%). According to Malach and Cahaner (2023), the main reason for this is primarily the large number of children in the ultra-Orthodox population,

which requires a larger number of workers in the education system. Additionally, education is also the leading field of employment among ultra-Orthodox women and men. In addition, many ultra-Orthodox women prefer the education and teaching profession because of the convenient working hours and the opportunity to work within the community.

The educational landscape of the Israeli ultra-Orthodox Jewish sector predominantly consists of privately operated, unofficial schools, which sets them apart from publicly managed institutions. While public schools and major Haredi educational networks benefit from complete state funding, other unofficial schools receive only partial financial support, typically ranging from 55% to 75% of the funding allocated to public schools. This funding dichotomy reflects a protracted discourse within the Haredi community concerning the inclusion of secular studies, especially in boys' schools. Despite regulatory efforts to introduce secular subjects, the prevailing influence of Haredi political entities has largely preserved the traditionalist educational approach, reinforcing conservative Haredi factions while sidelining more progressive elements within the community (Katzir & Perry-Hazan, 2019).

The discourse surrounding Haredi education intersects with broader issues within Israeli educational legislation, which is characterized by gaps and antiquated frameworks. Scholars have identified a resultant power struggle over educational governance as various stakeholders contend for control. The inception of the NHE reform in 2013 heralded a significant departure from the prevailing norms. The reform aimed to integrate Haredi schools into a new public education framework, necessitating adherence to a comprehensive core curriculum (i.e., Bible; Social Studies, Homeland, and Civics; History and Geography; Hebrew language, Literature, and English; Mathematics; Technology and Science; MOE, 2012). The focus of the reform was on turning unofficial Haredi schools into official ones by making them join the new public Haredi education stream. However, this educational reform was short-lived, ending in 2014 and leaving the NHE initiative without formal legal or regulatory grounding, despite initial steps taken toward implementation (Katzir & Perry-Hazan, 2019).

The intricate dynamics of funding further underscore the complexity of Haredi education, where allocation decisions are influenced more by political considerations than by standardized criteria. While the Ministry of Education serves as the primary funding source, the distribution of funds reflects the varying degrees of secular education (core curriculum subjects) offered by different Haredi school streams. For instance, the NHE model mandates the teaching of a full core curriculum and parity in funding with public schools, while other unofficial schools receive reduced funding commensurate with their level of secular instruction. Moreover, supplementary support from the Ministry of Religious Affairs underscores the intertwined religious and political factors that shape Haredi educational financing (Kingsbury, 2018). In this regard, institutions affiliated with the Independent Education System and Ma'ayan Hahinuch Hatorani are mandated to deliver instruction across the entire spectrum of core curriculum subjects. Because of this comprehensive educational approach, these schools are entitled to receive full per-student funding support. This category of schools accounts for a substantial portion, approximately 57%, of the total Haredi student population. On the other hand, recognized unofficial schools are held to a slightly different standard. These institutions must cover 75% of the core curriculum subjects in their instructional programs in exchange for receiving 75% of the per-pupil funding allocation. Despite the reduced coverage compared with their counterparts within the Independent Education System, these recognized unofficial schools still play a significant role in Haredi education, catering to approximately 17% of the Haredi student body. Lastly, there are exempt schools that are obligated to

provide instruction in at least 55% of the core curriculum subjects. In return, these schools receive funding equivalent to 55% of the per-student allocation. Despite the more limited scope of their educational offerings, exempt schools remain a crucial component of the Haredi education system, serving approximately one-quarter of Haredi students (OECD, 2018a). These funding and curriculum requirements reflect the diverse educational landscape within the Haredi community and the varying degrees of secular education provided by different types of institutions. From a more global perspective and in relation to promoting secular education in Jewish ultra-Orthodox schools, it is worth noting recent empirical evidence for community-based activism aiming to legitimize secular education in Hasidic schools for boys in the US. This legitimation was found to be related to pragmatic aspects, such as time and the Haredi community's financial distress, as well as educational justification, such as understanding that knowledge is power and children's needs (Katzir & Perry-Hazan, 2023).

In the state Haredi schools that teach core-curriculum subjects, there is no reference to global aspects in the Civic curriculum, except for the idea of the democratic regime. In addition, the goal of teaching and learning History as a school subject is defined as

> Engagement with the History of the Jewish people that presents its unique and distinct narrative alongside the universal and shared history of humanity, juxtaposed with an emphasis on the unique place of the Jewish people and its faith. The study of Jewish history is an attempt to recognize and understand our past, the background to the cultural, religious, and folk creation of our people throughout the generations. (IMOE, n.d.a)

Geography is described as "a field of knowledge that deals with phenomena and processes occurring in space, examining the interrelationships between them. Learning materials in geography are a good source for strengthening the belief in God" (MOE, n.d.c). Thus, as Yemini and Fulop (2015) argue, the Israeli MOE "silence from above" policy (p. 530) supports differing interpretations in introducing global issues in schools and relying "on the good will of teachers to contribute to international topics during their free hours" (p. 532).

2.4 Global education: Text and interpretation

As discussed above, the complexities of Israeli society have largely militated against the incorporation of GE into the country's education system. Thus, for example, principals of Israeli schools that participated in PISA 2018 reported that their curricula excluded activities aimed at developing global competencies, and consequently, these activities were rarely conducted in class. Yet, in spite of the absence of GCE in the official state curriculum (Goren & Yemini, 2017b), according to the results of PISA 2018 (OECD, 2020) – not administered in ultra-Orthodox schools—Israeli students scored high on global competencies. This evidence validates the prior conclusion by Yemini and Furstenburg (2018) that "the absence of GCE in school curricula or education policies may not demonstrate that Israelis are unaware of this concept or that it has not penetrated the national discourse" (p. 720).

The essence of GE may, therefore, be more successfully probed beyond the specific features of the Israeli context, notably in line with Andreotti's (2014) distinction between the "soft" and the "critical" meaning of this concept—the former relating to the general knowledge of global processes, while the latter to concrete actions. Among stringently religious communities, and in the case of the Israeli ultra-Orthodox, action is motivated by the belief in God and divine commandments, as well as the study of the canonical religious text (Torah) and its commentaries. Two

digressions are in order at this point, one of a general nature, dealing with a connection between religion and GE, and the other regarding the relationships between the global and the local, specifically in the Jewish ultra-Orthodox world. Scholarly discourse often characterizes the relationship between religion and globalization as intricate and multifaceted. Indeed, the profound influence of both these frameworks on human experience precludes a simplistic comparison. While acknowledging the parallels among religions within the global context, it is essential to recognize the inherent differences in their approaches to inclusivity and exclusivity, as these disparities significantly shape their responses to contemporary global challenges. For example, in "The Future of Protestant Religious Education in an Age of Globalization" (Kim et al., 2018), the authors challenge the notion that increasing religious diversity and tolerance worldwide arise solely from the movement of people and ideas, and the resulting interconnectedness of economies, societies, and cultures. They argue that the dispersal of millions of Protestants globally represents a manifestation of globalization in itself, underscoring the importance of Protestantism within the global religious landscape. When examining this issue, it is pertinent to consider the relevance of comparing Protestants and Jews while acknowledging the inherent limitations within the Jewish context. While Christianity often embraces inclusivity, Judaism is inherently exclusive. Nevertheless, this comparative framework still offers insights. For instance, Goren et al. (2019) found that religious Jewish educators perceive global citizenship as being rooted in belonging to religious and Orthodox Jewry. This highlights the unique nature of Jewish identity, where religious and cultural affiliations significantly influence perceptions of global citizenship.

Therefore, it appears that the relationship between globalization and religion is one of organic reciprocities, as it were, rather than of causal hierarchy. Paradoxically, this approach resonates with the argument, advanced inter alia by Pashby (2018) and Tarozzi and Torres (2016), that the GE orientation functions as a bond builder between people, not on the basis of birthplace, station in life, or religion, but as an agreed upon set of values such as mutual responsibility and mutual respect. Yet, this bonding has been broadly discussed from the theological perspective, possibly indicating that GE and religious education are not polar opposites, representing two mutually exclusive worldviews (Kim et al., 2018). That said, globalization has also challenged traditional religious practices and beliefs and created new tensions between religious and secular values, particularly with regard to human rights and gender equality. Goren and Yemini (2017a) present an extreme scenario in which any expression of pride in belonging to a particular culture or nationality is taken to imply that the latter's set of beliefs, values, practices, and rituals is superior to others and is, therefore in opposition to global orientation.

2.5 Zoom-in, zoom-out: The story of globalization among ultra-orthodox Jews

Goldman et al. (2020) explored the congruence of religious and secular ethical frameworks with global values such as sustainability. They found that members of secular youth movements demonstrated greater environmental literacy and were more open to pro-environmental activities than their religious peers. Other scholars, however, including Troster (2012), Yoreh (2010), and Alkaher et al. (2018), believe that probing such issues meaningfully would require a deeper analysis of religious thought. Thus, Yoreh (2010) points out that ultra-Orthodox communities have distinctive ideas about recycling. Gross (2013) underscores the dilemmas and challenges involved in religious education, which is inherently parochial and particularistic. There is, for example, the question of priorities in helping others. One view is that a Jew must give charity exclusively to other Jews, as

per the Talmudic precept "Charity begins at home," and the hierarchy stipulated by the respective passage:

> If you lend money to… a Jew and a non-Jew, a Jew has a preference, The poor or the rich, the poor take precedence, your poor or the poor of your city town, your poor come first, the poor of your city or the poor of another city—the poor of your city have priority. (Babylonian Talmud Gittin 71a)

On the other hand, the Talmudic tenet "Repair the world" (Tikkun Olam, Mishna, Gittin, 4) states: "We sustain non-Jewish poor with Jewish poor… for the sake of peace" (Babylonian Talmud Gittin 61a), suggesting that the essence of the Jewish worldview is a global ethic of care and compassion. Renowned American Jewish philosopher Rabbi Joseph Ber Soloveitchik wrote the following in 1978:

> Judaism wants man to cry out aloud against any kind of pain, to react indignantly to all kinds of injustice or unfairness. For Judaism held that the individual who displays indifference to pain and suffering, who meekly reconciles himself to the ugly, disproportionate, and unjust in life, is not capable of appreciating beauty and goodness… God wants to hear the outcry of man, confronted with a ruthless reality. (p. 62)

Furthermore, in the Book of Ruth, Boaz extends compassion toward the Moabite woman Ruth, a poor, young foreigner who takes refuge in his fields. The interaction of kindness between Boaz and Ruth is seen as a profound expression of the archetypical Jewish spirit, and these Biblical characters merit the founding of King David's dynasty. Jewish religious life is fed by both of the above approaches. On the one hand, a Jew is directed to extend help to those most in need, whether or not they share his or her culture, faith, place of residence, or political environment. At the same time, the precept "Charity begins at home" refers not only to impunity but also to a desire for attention or feelings of belonging. According to Wertheimer (2010), Jewish values are expressed not through intermittent acts of loving kindness but through a lifetime of religious observance and participation in community life.

Several facts about the ultra-Orthodox Jewish population in Israel are in order at this juncture. The ultra-Orthodox comprise 13% of the Israeli population—a minority divided into many subgroups differing in ideology and lifestyle yet united in their stringent religious observance and assiduous study of Jewish religious sources. The majority of Haredi men are not part of the Israeli labour force; instead, they spend most of their time studying in a yeshiva (Talmudic academia). In 2021, only 41% of ultra-Orthodox men were employed (compared to 86% of the general Israeli secular and religious male population aged 25–64). On the other hand, 78% of ultra-Orthodox women were employed compared to 82% of the general Israeli secular and religious female population, most of whom were in education and in part-time low-paid jobs (The Israel Democracy Institute, 2022). Therefore, it stands to reason that 44% of the ultra-Orthodox population lives below the poverty line, compared with 22% (as of 2019) of Israel's general population. In recent years, the government has invested substantial efforts in integrating Haredi men and women into the labour force without disrupting their lifestyles. This initiative started by establishing the national ultra-Orthodox Jewish educational stream that integrated religious studies with secular core subjects and has led to more ultra-Orthodox individuals completing matriculation exams, entering Israeli academia, and joining the high-tech job market.

Entering secular academic institutions in Israel reflects the motivation of the young ultra-Orthodox population to achieve economic mobility for their families and the establishment of institutions tailored to the needs of the ultra-Orthodox sector. According to Malach and Cahaner (2023), in the

education and post-secondary training system, ultra-Orthodox men study in four tracks: Yeshivas (for unmarried men), "kollel" (for married men), academic studies, and vocational training. For ultra-Orthodox women, the options include studies in a seminary (which includes vocational training) and academic studies. In 2022, the number of ultra-Orthodox men and women studying for an academic degree tripled the number in 2010. The professions chosen by ultra-Orthodox men and women are predominantly practical and allow for work within the ultra-Orthodox community (education, medical support professions, business administration, and law) or integration into professions needed in the job market. Ultra-Orthodox individuals primarily choose to study in colleges, where admission requirements are relatively low (only 10% of ultra-Orthodox who take matriculation exams meet the threshold requirements of the universities compared to 75% of non-ultra-Orthodox). In 2023, 5% of all college students who studied in Israel that year were ultra-Orthodox, and 69% of ultra-Orthodox students were women. The relatively high number of ultra-Orthodox female students aged 18-21 indicates a shift toward academic studies instead of seminaries for girls. In 2022, education was the leading field of study in which an overwhelming majority of Haredi students (female- 59% and male- 33%). The education track is usually a completion track, and therefore, the duration of studies is short, and the degree is obtained quickly.

A large majority of ultra-Orthodox students pursuing undergraduate degrees in the academic year 2022/23 studied in academic colleges (46%) and colleges of education (23%), with only a minority attending the Open University (21%) and other universities (10%). This composition differs significantly from that of the general student population in Israel, where the proportion of students in universities (excluding the Open University) is much higher (34%), while the proportion studying in colleges of education is much lower (9.5%).

For the ultra-Orthodox community as a bounded community, entering secular academic institutions is a complicated process. According to Golan and Fehl (2020),

> these institutions are specifically designed to meet the needs and cultural sensibilities of Haredi students, in terms of both studies and faculty. This includes tailoring curricula to correspond with the students' modest background in scientific-based knowledge while vetting any content that is deemed inappropriate or morally offensive. (p. 3)

For example, In the academic environment of the Haredi community, there is stringent gender segregation, which entails the complete separation of male and female students. This practice was challenged in a public debate centred on opposing gender inequality. However, for ultra-Orthodox female students, this segregation is perceived as necessary and validates their acceptance of academia. While the receiving institutions attempt to address the needs of the ultra-Orthodox community, empirical evidence indicates the challenges this population faces in academia. These challenges include pressure from family and community to avoid integration into secular institutions, as well as the struggle to comply with academic demands while possessing a modest academic background (Novis-Deutsch & Adams, 2024; Novis Deutsch & Rubin, 2019).

According to Feldman (2022), ultra-Orthodox academic women who relate to the Sephardi Shas party are more encouraged to integrate into the Israeli workforce to support their husbands who are engaged in Torah study. She argues that ultra-Orthodox Jewish women "serve as agents of change within their communities" (p. 13). Working outside the community enables these women to flexibly promote change in their communities and examine the tolerance of society to assimilate change (see, for example, the work of Neriya-Ben Shahar et al. (2023) regarding the use of the internet among ultra-Orthodox Jewish women). Nevertheless, while these women are driving academic and professional transformations within the ultra-Orthodox community, they still serve as

gatekeepers, demonstrating an increased commitment to religious observance, particularly the concept of a community centred around Torah scholarship. Although they exhibit some degree of openness to the outside world, it is constrained and carefully managed (Kalagy & Braun-Lewensohn, 2019).

The research questions addressed in the present study, in response to a call in the scholarly literature to explore this sector's attitudes regarding GE, endeavour to take full account of the complexities inherent in the situation, as discussed above.

A. What factors motivate ultra-Orthodox women to learn in teacher education programs that promote a GE perspective?
B. What factors motivate ultra-Orthodox female student teachers to implement GE in their future teaching roles?

3 METHODOLOGY AND METHODS

3.1 Data collection and ethical aspects of the study

This is a quantitative study based on a validated questionnaire for exploring motivational factors to teach and learn GE (Biberman-Shalev, 2021). To the best of our knowledge, no quantitative research has hitherto targeted Israel's ultra-Orthodox population in relation to GE. There is empirical evidence related to the lack of quantitative research on the Israeli ultra-Orthodox population as part of their community characteristics to distinguish itself from the outside (Simhi et al., 2020; Weinreb & Blass, 2018). However, this approach can provide a broad perspective and may help assess the existing, predominantly qualitative findings regarding GE. The questionnaire was administered to the UOSTs using a Google Form. As part of their entrance to the academic college, these UOSTs need to have a connection to the Internet as all of the courses are taught using the MOODLE Internet platform as the learning management system in the college. However, these students relate to a "bounded community" in which engagement with the outside, for example, through the Internet, is limited, and maintaining distancing from outsiders while maintaining a cohesive group identity is crucial (Golan & Fehl, 2020). Thus, the Internet that UOSTs use is protected by content-filtered technologies and by an agency of religious webmasters who act as gatekeepers for accessing content published online (Golan & Campbell, 2015). Making Koseher the MOODLE means allowing students to enter academic courses on the MOODLE platform used in the college. This context allowed us to distribute the questionnaire using the Google Form link that we located in a course taught by the head of the ultra-Orthdox training program at the college. We distributed the questionnaire only after receiving the approval of both the college Ethics Committee and the head of the training program, who also checked the adequacy of the assertions to this unique community.

The questionnaire included three parts. The first part targeted demographic characteristics such as age, marital status, and religiosity. The second part contained 19 assertions tapping motivations to learn GE (e.g., interest in studying foreign cultures and traditions, learning a foreign language, and acquiring skills for teaching global topics). The third part of the questionnaire contained 18 assertions designating motivational factors for teaching GE (e.g., "Pre-service teachers should be familiar with global issues"; "It is important to teach schoolchildren about issues that affect the entire world"; and "As a teacher, I need to exercise critical reflection about the content I teach and to examine my own assumptions"). The score for one of the assertions ("The teaching of global issues should be managed solely by nonprofit organizations with expertise in global issues

unrelated to the field of education") was inverted in the overall calculation. All assertions were assessed on a four-point Likert-like scale, ranging from 1 = "not at all a motivational factor" to 4 = "a strong motivational factor."

After authorization by the institutional ethics committee, the questionnaire was administered to all ultra-Orthodox female student teachers studying in a secular academic teacher education college located in the centre of Israel. The questionnaire was anonymous; participation was strictly voluntary and involved no payment. It took the participants approximately 5 minutes to complete the questionnaire.

The collected data were subjected to exploratory factor analysis (EFA) with Varimax rotation (i.e., orthogonal rotation without limiting the number of factors) using SPSS software, version 24.

3.2 Research population and sample

The study is based on a random sample of 115 UOSTs enrolled in a teacher education program for kindergarten, elementary special education, and English-language teachers. A return rate of 80% yielded 115 completed questionnaires. Table 1 presents the participants' demographic characteristics:

Table 1. Ultra-Orthodox students' demographic characteristics (*N* = 115)

Background characteristics	Value	Frequency (%)
Age	18-23	31 (27.0%)
	24-34	59 (51.3%)
	35 and above	25 (21.7%)
Marital status	Not married	21 (18.3%)
	Married	94 (81.7%)
Religiosity	Haredi Leumi	30 (26.1%)
	Haredi	85 (73.9%)
Religious group	Lithuanian	23 (20.0%)
	Chabad	20 (17.4%)
	Sephardic	72 (62.6%)
Course of study	Early childhood education	21 (18.3%)
	Special education (elementary)	36 (31.3%)
	English teaching	22 (19.1%)
	Mathematics teaching	36 (31.3%)

4 RESULTS

The two ensuing sections present the findings of the EFA of the motivational questionnaire completed by ultra-Orthodox student teachers (UOSTs): the first, regarding their motivations to learn in a program that promotes a GE perspective, and the second, regarding their motivations to teach GE.

4.1 Motivations to learn global education

First, we ran the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) and Bartlett's sphericity tests to check the feasibility of an EFA for the 19 items of the questionnaire. The KMO value was 0.84, and Bartlett's test rejected the null hypothesis: $\chi^2(171)=1343.20$, $p<.001$. These results confirmed the feasibility of an EFA for the 19 questionnaire items.

The EFA was conducted using Varimax rotation and based on an eigenvalue greater than 1, yielding four orthogonal factors that accounted for 68.78% of the variance. An item is considered to belong to a factor if its loading exceeds .4 (Guadagnoli & Velicer, 1988). In our analysis, items 17 and 18 were equally loaded to the fourth factor, and item 19 was loaded at 0.49 on two different factors. When item 19 was removed, the fourth factor was left with only two items. Little et al. (1999) recommended retaining factors with at least three items; consequently, our further EFA analysis was limited to three orthogonal factors using Varimax rotation (Table 2).

Table 2. EFA findings regarding the ultra-Orthodox student teachers' motivations to learn GE

	Loadings		
Items	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3
I want to gain valuable international experience (Item 7)	.86		
I would like to understand the concept of globalization and the interdependence among countries (Item 16)	.82		
I hope to learn how to teach global topics (Item 3)	.79		
My wish is to learn how to prepare my students for competing in the global labour market (Item 8)	.78		
I want to be well prepared to compete in the global labour market (Item 6)	.77		
I hope to learn about and acquire experience in providing first-aid assistance to Third World countries (Item 18)	.76		
I want to obtain information about climate change (Item 11)	.67		
I want to learn about ways of promoting peace and resolving conflicts (Item 17)	.53		
I want to learn about prejudice and discrimination (Item 14)		.78	
I want to learn about and gain experience in sustainability (Item 10)		.77	
I want to better understand the issues of social justice and inequality (Item 13)		.77	
I want to obtain information about human rights (Item 9)		.72	
I want to obtain information about poverty (Item 12)		.63	
I want to learn about and carry out the planning of a curriculum for a multicultural society (Item 15)		.57	
I want to understand the ways in which globalization affects the education system in Israel (Item 19)		.56	
I want to learn about other countries and cultures and get to know people from different countries (Item 5)			.77
I want to learn about other cultures and traditions (Item 1)			.77

Items	Loadings		
	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3
I want to learn teaching methods other than those implemented in the college (Item 2)			.70
I want to learn a foreign language (Item 4)			.66
Eigenvalue	7.15	3.12	1.52
R2	27.43%	47.52%	62.07%
ΔR2	27.43%	20.09%	14.55%
Cronbach's Alpha	.90	.87	.76
Mean	2.03	2.76	3.04
SD	0.84	0.73	0.79
Min	1.00	1.00	1.00
Max	4.00	4.00	4.00

Table 2 indicates that the three orthogonal factors accounted for 62.07% of the variance. All three factors targeted participants' motivation to learn GE while focusing on its different aspects: competitive-instrumental, social-justice, and personal. The factors consisted of 8, 7, and 4 items, respectively, and accounted for 27.43%, 20.09%, and 14.55% of the variance. The internal consistency of Cronbach's alpha was higher than 0.75 for all three factors.

Finally, one-way repeated measures ANOVA was conducted, indicating significant differences between the three motivational factors for learning GE: $F(2,228) = 80.78$, $p < .001$, $\eta p2 = .42$. According to Bonferroni post hoc analysis, the UOSTs scored higher on the personal factor than on social-justice or competitive-instrumental factors ($p < .001$); and on social-justice factor than on competitive-instrumental factor ($p < .001$).

4.2 Motivational factors in teaching global education

As already stated, the feasibility of a factor analysis for the 18 questionnaire items was confirmed via KMO and Bartlett's sphericity tests, the former yielding a value of 0.82, while the latter rejecting the null hypothesis: χ^2 (153)=828.65, p<.001.

An EFA analysis was conducted using Varimax rotation and based on an eigenvalue greater than 1, yielding five orthogonal factors that accounted for 65.53% of the variance. Nevertheless, the fourth and fifth factors consisted of only one item (5) each. Two items (9 and 15) loaded higher than .40 on two different factors, indicating that they may belong to both these factors; hence, they were removed, leaving the third factor with only two items. Considering Little et al.'s (1999) recommendation discussed above, the ensuing EFA analysis involved two orthogonal factors using Varimax rotation. The two orthogonal factors accounted for only 45.43% of the variance. Items 2 and 14 loaded higher than .40 on the two different factors to which they belonged, while Items 5 and 6 loaded lower than .40 on their respective factors. Therefore, Items 2, 14, 5, and 6 were omitted from the last EFA analysis (Table 3).

Table 3. EFA findings regarding the ultra-Orthodox student teachers' motivations to teach GE (14 items)

	Loadings	
Items	Factor 1	Factor 2
It is important to understand and respect different cultures and worldviews (Item 10)	.81	
As a teacher, I must be able to communicate effectively with people from various backgrounds (Item 11)	.74	
As a teacher, I must know how to work on the computer and acquire other technological skills (Item 16)	.70	
It is important for me to know how to address topics I teach from various points of view (Item 9)	.70	
As a teacher, I must be concerned about the environment and teach about sustainable development (Item 17)	.68	
As a teacher, I need to know how to act in cases of injustice or inequality, even outside the school grounds (Item 12)	.68	
As a teacher, I need to exercise critical reflection about the contents I teach and examine my own assumptions (Item 13)	.58	
Students should understand global issues in order to be successful in life (Item 3)		.86
Pre-service teachers need to know more about global issues (Item 1)		.80
It is important that school curricula include global issues (Item 4)		.75
As a teacher, I must be able to make connections between local problems and issues (in Israel) and the problems and challenges on the global level (Item 18)		.74
As a teacher, I should be familiar with the finance system of the global economy (Item 15)		.68
I can teach schoolchildren and drive them to take action on global issues (Item 8)		.50
In the practicum module, I noticed that teachers at the school devote a great deal of time to global issues (Item 7)		.49
Eigenvalue	5.00	2.28
R2	26.20%	52.03%
ΔR2	26.20%	25.83%
Cronbach's Alpha	.83	.84
Mean	3.49	2.29
SD	0.53	0.58
Min	2.00	4.00
Max	1.00	3.71

Table 3 shows that the two orthogonal factors accounted for 52.03% of the variance. These results point to the two approaches in teaching GE (Biberman-Shalev, 2021; Ferguson-Patrick et al., 2014) discussed in the literature review. However, the items in the two approaches were distributed differently from those in the previous study (Biberman-Shalev, 2021); therefore, the two approaches were labelled differently as well. Both factors targeted participants' motivation to teach GE but

differed in emphasis, focusing on competencies that are locally and globally oriented. The factors consisted of seven items each and accounted for 26.20% and 25.83% of the variance, respectively. For both, the internal consistency of Cronbach's alpha was higher than 0.80. Finally, a paired sample t-test indicated significant differences between the two factors ($t(114) = 20.91$, $p < .001$), with higher scores for the local orientation approach than for the global orientation approach.

5 Discussion

The present study examines the sensibilities and attitudes of Israeli ultra-Orthodox female student teachers to GE, an area that hitherto has not been extensively researched (David, 2020; Goren et al., 2019). Arguably, exploring factors that enhance that sector's engagement in GE could help devise strategies to motivate other culturally distinctive populations to adopt this perspective. The study's findings inform five central concluding arguments regarding GE elaborated below, specifically, regarding (1) the status of GE; (2) the motivations to engage in GE; (3) the different interpretations of GE; (4) the advantages of GE; and (5) the directions within GE.

The first conclusion that can be drawn from our findings is that GE does matter. Participants' responses to the globalization discourse in the questionnaire attest to the broad potential of integrating GE. This finding aligns with the national approach: In December 2022, the Israeli government joined 40 nations in a pledge to build equitable societies through education (OECD, 2022). GE may prove a suitable vehicle to support this declaration, but the conflicts and social entanglements within the Israeli society may become an impediment in implementing it, especially as it is unclear which sectors are motivated to do so, how and why.

Participating UOSTs were motivated to learn and teach GE owing to (a) competitive-instrumental considerations (e.g., I want to learn how to prepare my students for competing in the global labor market); (b) aspirations to social justice (e.g., I want to better understand the issues of social justice and inequality); and (c) personal preferences (e.g., I want to learn about other cultures and traditions). The first two of these motivational factors were identified in a previous study targeting secular Jewish female student teachers (Biberman-Shalev, 2021), suggesting that these issues might preoccupy several different social groups, and not necessarily with reference to GE. However, the third motivational factor, i.e., personal orientation, had not been discussed in the literature previously, yet emerged as the most influential among UOSTs. It reflects participants' eagerness to learn GE for self-improvement and to enhance their general knowledge, as opposed to the first two factors, which have a bearing on their community and future students.

Our study's third conclusion corroborates Goren and Yemini's (2017b) and Goren et al.'s (2019) arguments that GCE is a complex and multidimensional construct that lends itself to a variety of interpretations. While considering global considerations, in reporting their motivations to learn and teach GE, participating UOSTs seem to have been assessing the compatibility of this approach with the traditions and norms of their own community. In weighing the congruence between the global perspective and the Jewish religion, participants may have enacted Hives's (1994) idea of "thinking globally, acting locally." Such a dynamic contravenes the arguments that religion and globalization are mutually exclusive—a rationale that tends to fuel the "they versus us" discourse (Valins, 2003) and may give rise to the misconception that GE is not suitable for all social groups. By showing that GE can be embraced by a distinct population with highly stringent religious views, the current study's findings suggest the opposite.

As in a previous study (Biberman-Shalev, 2021), the findings confirmed two motivational factors to teach GE; however, the items were distributed differently across the two factors. Overall,

participating UOSTs' motivations for learning and teaching GE dovetail with two main approaches, one characterized by a local orientation, while the other by a global orientation (e.g., respectively, "As a teacher, I need to know how to act in cases of injustice or inequality, even outside the school grounds"; "Students should understand global issues to be successful in life"), with the former emerging as more influential by a large margin. This difference, however, may be an artifact of how the questionnaire was phrased: Specifically, all the items related to the global factor contain the word "global," while the word "local" does not figure at all. In this case, the word "global" may have served as a deterrent of a kind, as it stands to reason that the ultra-Orthodox participants should have been more locally oriented in their motivations to learn and teach GE. This tentative conclusion suggests that when distinctive groups are concerned, the global aspect of GE requires further consideration and analysis.

Our fourth conclusion relates to Andreotti's (2014) conception of GE as involving two aspects, the "soft" and the "critical." Our results corroborate her sentiment that 'soft' GCE is appropriate to certain contexts, insofar as participants seemed to be motivated to learn GE as a content that would expand their knowledge and help their community. Learning the "critical" aspect of GE seems to have been less important as a motivational factor in the sense of striving to actively promote that idea in the future, in both the classroom and the community. Participants' lesser motivation to teach GE from a global rather than a local approach may be cautiously attributed to their apprehension of changing the curriculum in their community's schools, which has traditionally foregrounded Jewish religion and culture, and by extension, to their commitment to their religious and cultural identity. These concerns can be allayed by de-emphasizing alternative identities, as referenced by Wertheimer (2010), and by avoiding ideas that may be perceived as weakening one's commitment to religion and undermining the values and way of life of one's community, as discussed by Resnik (2012). The findings may thus suggest that the inclusion of distinct populations in GE requires giving less weight to the GE power discourse related to assimilation or identity change, and instead centering on and promoting a soft discourse to help these communities balance the tension between participating in GE and protecting their lifestyle and norms. GE promotes universal goods such as human rights including rights to education, well-being, and social and environmental justice. Religions may act as an important role or a platform for supporting these goals by religious justifications for change that support these goals without relinquishing authentic religious values (see Farber, 2006, cited in Katzir & Perry-Hazan, 2023). K. Marshall (2018) suggested six dimensions of GE related to religion. Firstly, religious institutions operate education systems of varying quality and influence, with the potential for innovation and impact on access to knowledge. Secondly, diverse actors linked to religious traditions are involved in addressing education needs. Thirdly, religious institutions may contribute to defining religious education in national curricula to foster understanding and social cohesion in pluralistic societies. Fourthly, religious actors and institutions emphasize core social values and play a role in shaping informed global citizens. Fifthly, there is a need to address the training of religious leaders for contemporary challenges such as gender equality and social change. Lastly, religious institutions and leaders can wield significant influence in advocating for social justice and education for all. K. Marshall concludes that

> significant tensions around approaches to education and curriculum are common. But religious actors can and should, in many instances, be 'part of the solution', actively engaged in reflection and action. That is because religion (and its tightly linked companion, culture) is so vital to people, and because of its rich history and ethical contributions. (p. 190)

Thus, considering this study's results while delving into the relationship between GE and religion, one may find that although goals and orientations may sound different in the explicit secular and religious discussions, they are similar in their notion.

The fifth conclusion that can be derived from our findings is that GE may be perceived as multidirectional and multidimensional. Salient discussions tend to treat both soft and critical structures of GE with no reference to distinct population sectors, in terms of a top-down hierarchy whereby "the top" has unquestionable benefits and should be universally emulated. Neither is the current study free from this bias. As already suggested, the research population in the study may have had reservations regarding the term "global," which possibly reflects such hierarchical perceptions. Alkaher et al. (2018) and Gross (2013) criticize the top-down paradigm, call for the reverse of the hierarchy, and suggest a more particularistic approach in which the groups provide the means for empowering them to participate in a pluralistic dialogue. Yoreh (2010), for example, argues that ultra-Orthodox communities are deeply aware of the importance of sustainability, and the ethical grounds for this are developed in Deuteronomy 20:19–20 as a prohibition against destruction (*Bal Tashchit*). The term "global" may be perceived as foreign to this narrative.

6 CONCLUSIONS AND LIMITATIONS

All in all, the findings of the current study suggest that the importance of assimilation processes involved in adopting a GE perspective may need to be downplayed when populations with highly distinctive lifestyles and values are concerned. Such widely accepted pluralistic notions as glocalization, which link between different social and cultural narratives (Mathias & Ben-Yehoshua, 2014), may not be optimal as a basis for initiatives to include such populations in GE. The factors identified here as influential in motivating participating UOSTs to learn and teach GE may be tantamount to abandoning the prevailing hierarchical notions and adopting a flexible approach whereby global and local perspectives inform each other in equal measure. To promote GE within a group, their view of their own cultural, religious, and social narratives needs to be endorsed and foregrounded, while other narratives in that perspective are rendered more marginal. In promoting and adopting GE, all stakeholders need to have a profound understanding of one another's narratives, and the dynamics should be based on between- and within-group discussions, especially about priorities, where possible complexities and contradictions should not be viewed as a threat. Such an approach is especially salient in education, a field whose objective is to promote learning through inquiry and awareness that many questions may not have definitive answers. The thrust of such an endeavor should be to find an effective way to reconcile and merge two different narratives.

In light of the above rationale, we invite teacher educators who set out to promote GE in teacher training to organize two different types of discussions: those that encompass the two directions—from global/universal to local/particularistic and vice versa; and those that encourage a distinctive group to probe their inner values and dilemmas that may reflect strong structures of GE. Thus, we call for an educational discussion that is similar to a mosaic of differences and voices and should contain them all.

Future research could capitalize on the findings of this study and explore ways to include other distinct religious groups in GE by offering a more flexible discourse on this perspective that allows room for interpretation and is thus more welcoming to diverse populations. As a starting point, interfaces between the values of the group and GE can be identified; next, different conceptions of globalization can be probed, with social-cultural boundaries superimposed on the cosmopolitan

diversity. All such investigations need to take count of the possibility that a similar conception or value can be designated by a variety of signifiers and that the choice of a verbal symbol need not obviate the essence of the principle.

This study is not free of limitations. First, it is based on a sample of ultra-Orthodox women who chose to take part in the Israeli secular academy and whose social milieu allowed them to do so. These women may differ in their views on GE from ultra-Orthodox groups that avoid any contact with the secular Jewish sector. Thus, the population studied is not representative of the Israeli ultra-Orthodox sector as a whole. Another limitation relates to the quantitative methodology employed, which may not have yielded a comprehensive picture of UOSTs' motivations regarding GE. Thus, future research should corroborate and elucidate our findings using qualitative methods.

Notwithstanding these limitations, the study has yielded valuable insights about the inclusion of distinctive religious populations in GE, indicating that stakeholders need to examine each group's motivations to learn and teach this perspective and design a flexible curriculum that allows for a variety of semiotic interpretations.

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