“Saiki” creative contest as an experiential learning tool to explore global citizenship education and connection between Kyrgyzstan and Japan

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Abstract

The paper presents the outcomes and analysis of “Saiki” creative student contest, conducted by the Japanese Club of AUCA in Kyrgyzstan, as an experiential learning tool aimed at fostering Global Citizenship Education (GCED) and deepening students’ understanding of the Japanese concept of “Saiki” while fostering connections between Kyrgyzstan and Japan. The main objective of the paper is to analyze the effectiveness of the contest in bridging the gap between the classroom and reality by inviting students to reflect on the “saiki” concept and global citizenship and to practically explore cultural values through this contest.
“Saiki” Contest was launched, drawing inspiration from the “Saiki” art exhibition organized by Yu Beavers, a Japanese designer. For the exhibition, diverse artists from Kyrgyzstan submitted their artwork, all centered around the Saiki concept meaning “comeback”, “recovery”, “resilience” of societies in challenging times. Methods employed include design and organization of the contest, in which students of educational institutions of Bishkek had to produce their own creative works such as paintings, essays, poems, videos, art objects, in which they would reflect on the art exhibition and suggested topics relevant to “Saiki” and global citizenship. The methodology also includes post-analysis of the contest, including collection of participants’ retrospectives on the contest and its impact on them. The results suggest that the contest was effective not only as an experiential learning tool to introduce real-world concepts and issues, but also as an avenue for students’ self-growth and personal skills development. The incorporation of such contests into an educational curriculum can prove to be important for fostering globally minded citizens.

Key words

cross-cultural understanding, experiential learning cycle, global consciousness, living heritage, peace education

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