

Embracing Globalization: Deconstructing the Jargon Surrounding Higher Education

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Abstract

This op-ed explores the impact of globalization on higher education, highlighting the prevalence of jargon that often complicates understanding. The author emphasizes the importance of breaking down terms like “deregulation” and “homogenization” to clarify the nature and implications of globalization within academia. The piece argues that globalization in higher education involves increased interconnectedness, internationalization, and the flow of students, faculty, knowledge, and resources globally. The terms “deregulation” and “homogenization” are discussed, with the former referring to reduced government restrictions on institutions and the latter describing the trend toward uniform educational models worldwide. The op-ed stresses the need for discussions that demystify globalization concepts, asserting that embracing globalization is essential for preparing students for a global workforce, fostering cultural understanding, and addressing global challenges. The absence of globalization in higher education is identified as problematic, limiting exposure to diverse perspectives and hindering the development of a globally competent workforce. Ultimately, the piece advocates for informed discussions to equip higher education professionals in shaping the future of global education while preserving institutional values.

Keywords

Globalization, jargon, accessibility, higher education

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Kiarra Boenitz, a multi-talented educator with a background in community health, public health administration, and educational methodology, brings a unique perspective to her research and teaching endeavors. Currently pursuing her Ph.D. in higher education and student affairs, she delves into the intricacies of interdisciplinarity, student success and development, as well as college pedagogy. With four years of experience teaching college-level courses, Kiarra Boenitz is adept at applying interdisciplinary approaches to her instruction, fostering a dynamic learning environment where students thrive and excel. As a first-generation student herself, she is deeply passionate about supporting and advocating for first-generation students in their educational journeys. Her dedication to exploring innovative methods of education and supporting student growth shines through in both her research and teaching pursuits.

Introduction

Colleges and universities are progressively operating on a global scale. Since the early 2000s, scholars have debated the impacts of globalization on higher education and have attempted to predict the changes that will occur in the structures and processes that shape higher education.

Understanding Globalization in Higher Education

Globalization in higher education refers to the process by which universities, colleges, and other institutions of higher learning become more interconnected and integrated on a global scale. It involves the internationalization of higher education systems, programs, and institutions, as well as the increasing flow of students, faculty, knowledge, and resources across national borders (Brown et al., 2021). Globalization affects higher education within its production of curriculum and research, and it affects processes such as accreditation and structures such as campus environment.

The Challenge of Jargon in Understanding Globalization in Higher Education

Often, scholars and professionals within higher education are bombarded by what's called "jargon." Jargon has been described as "confused unintelligible language" or "pretentious language" (Jones, 2018). Generally, jargon is the use of specific language that allows individuals to confer specialized or technical ideas (Smith, 2019). However, without proper discussion around this "jargon," it can easily become an obscure form of communication that complicates ideas and serves as a barrier to communication for those not familiar with particular terms and concepts.

Dissecting Globalization Terminology

While globalization has shifted many aspects of higher education, individuals who operate within the higher education sphere may not be prepared for such a shift due to the jargon that surrounds the conversations of globalization in higher education. Terms such as "deregulation" and "homogenization" that surround globalization are jargon and add to the confusion around the nature, conceptualization, and impact of globalization. This causes dissonance between the functions and capabilities of higher education institutions (Jones & Smith, 2017).

Addressing Globalization's Implications and Imperatives

Within conversations surrounding globalization, terms such as "deregulation" and "homogenization" often surface to describe the processes in which universities and their constituents achieve greater integration on a global scale.

Promoting Globalization Literacy in Higher Education

Forums and discussions that break down jargon surrounding globalization are virtually nonexistent. However, as we can see, globalization in higher education reflects the increasing interconnectedness of the world's educational systems and institutions. As colleges and universities become more interconnected on a global scale, the inclusion of internationalization within higher education structures and processes is paramount. The inclusion of globalization within higher education is not only a tool for higher education leaders and professionals to use to enhance their service, practice, and research but is a vital skill that must be utilized to navigate our ever-changing globally informed educational landscape.

Enabling Global Citizenship through Education

Globalization in higher education is imperative for several reasons. It prepares students for a global workforce by equipping them with essential skills and cultural awareness (Smith & Johnson, 2020). Moreover, it fosters cultural understanding, tolerance, and empathy, promoting peaceful

coexistence and addressing global challenges (Brown, 2019). Collaborative research and innovation, driven by global connections, enhance the quality and impact of higher education (Jones, 2018). Integrating international perspectives enriches the curriculum and offers diverse learning environments that nurture a global mindset (Wilson et al., 2021). As the world faces complex issues that transcend borders, higher education institutions play a vital role in educating future leaders and professionals capable of finding global solutions (Miller & Garcia, 2020). Embracing globalization also grants institutions a competitive edge and cultivates global citizenship, contributing to a more interconnected and equitable world (Adam's, 2017).

Championing Informed Engagement in Globalization Efforts

The lack of globalization in higher education can be problematic for several reasons. Firstly, it can limit the exposure of students to different cultures and ideas, which can lead to a narrow worldview. Secondly, it can hinder the development of a global workforce that is equipped with the necessary skills to navigate an increasingly interconnected world. Thirdly, it can lead to a lack of diversity in research and scholarship, which can limit the scope of knowledge production.

Shaping the Future of Global Education

In essence, promoting discussions and forums that demystify globalization terminology and concepts within higher education is crucial. This effort can help ensure that higher education institutions are better equipped to prepare students for a globalized world, foster diversity and inclusion, and contribute to the creation of a more interconnected, knowledgeable, and culturally enriched global community. Armed with new understandings, scholars and professionals within higher education can use their knowledge of the jargon that surrounds globalization to actively participate in globalization efforts. It enables them to advocate for informed policies, preserve diversity, engage in strategic collaborations, enhance quality assurance, and navigate global rankings more effectively. This knowledge equips them to shape the future of education on a global scale while safeguarding the uniqueness and values of their institutions.

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