

GLOBAL IMPERATIVES IN HIGHER EDUCATION (PERCEPTIONS & CHALLENGES)

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ABSTRACT

The dynamic process of globalization has brought about a major transformation in both social and corporate world. This also heralds a new competitive phase worldwide. It seems to be mandatory for countries to create a competitive base of human skills on the individual, organizational, and community level. This has brought major challenges to the fore for both developing and developed countries' education and learning systems. Information and telecommunications technologies have created a platform "where intellectual work and intellectual capital can be delivered from anywhere—disaggregated, delivered, distributed, produced, and put back together again. On a broader scale, the education investments demanded by the global knowledge economy are straining the economies of both developed and developing regions. The economic, social, and technological factors are stimulating powerful market forces that are likely to drive a massive restructuring of the higher education enterprise and capacity building process. The emergence of a global knowledge economy is driven not only by pervasive transportation, information, and communications technologies but also by a radically new system for creating wealth that depends upon the creation and application of new knowledge and hence upon advanced education, research, innovation, and entrepreneurial activities.

The forces driving change in our world—changing demographics (aging populations, migration, increasing ethnic diversity), globalization (economic, geopolitical, cultural), and disruptive technologies (info-bio-nano technologies)—are likely to drive very major changes in post-secondary education as a global knowledge economy demands a new level of knowledge, skills, and abilities on the part of our citizens. The strength, prosperity, and leadership of a nation in a global knowledge economy will demand highly educated citizenry and hence a strong system of post-secondary education. It will also require research universities, capable of discovering new knowledge, developing innovative applications of these discoveries, transferring them into society through entrepreneurial activities, and educating those capable of working at the frontiers of knowledge and the professions. Yet there are broader responsibilities beyond national interests—particularly for developed nations—in an ever more interconnected and interdependent world. Global challenges such as crippling poverty, health pandemics, terrorism, and global climate change require both commitment and leaderships. Whether motivated by the economic design to create new markets or the more altruistic motives of human welfare, affluent nations have a responsibility to address global issues. Research methodology will engage consultation of primary sources on scenario of higher education in developed as well as in developing countries. The role of new communication technology in transforming the educational map deserves a serious consideration. Field interviews of experts and educational planners will add a realistic touch to the emerging picture in this field.

KEYWORDS: Globalization, Knowledge Economy, Telecommunication, Meta-University, Pedagogical Innovation, Massification