GLOBALIZATION AND HIGHER EDUCATION FROM THEORY TO ACTION

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Abstract

Understanding the complex concept of "globalization" and its impact on higher education systems, which is often conceptualized in higher education systems as "Internationalization of Universities", needs to be exanimated in its historical route which constitutes the first section of this article. Then, to develop the theoretical concepts in an action domain, my study re-examines the impacts of this phenomenon on higher education systems in developed and developing countries, and also on some of the action plans recommended by a number of well-known international institutions. Finally, to present more local and applicable findings, a pathological meta-analysis approach is used to discuss the situation of Iranian higher education in international context. This comparative study was done using two main approaches to globalization which distinguish knowledge society from information society.

The findings based on international comparative study suggest a gap between theory and action in the application of the concept of "globalization" not only in some recommendations issued by international institutions, but also in the performance of some higher education systems, particularly in developing country.

1   INTRODUCTION

Internationalization of universities as a response to globalization has provoked a great polemic in the global arena. In spite of these discussions, it seems that there are no unanimous and coherent agreements on this subject which has created great and divers changes in different higher education systems. However, it seems that most of these changes, particularly in the third world, have reduced to fiscal and economic issues of universities and birth of trans-frontier education and particularly higher education actors who are seeking profit.

In fact, the existing perturbation in the global arena, including higher education systems, which constitutes the subject of this study, could be analyzed in two levels. In the first level, it seems that the existing divergence is due to various conceptualizations of different schools of thoughts. In the second level, the created gap between concepts and actions, which has led to dominance of new liberal readings of this concept by acceleration in information technology and communication, seems to be the other driving engine of this phenomenon. This dominant approach to globalization, which has been criticized by many academic scholars, has the following three essential characteristics:

- Reduction of globalization concept to merely an economic process;

- Narrowing the concept of globalization to reproduction of new liberal ideologies;

- And finally, considering anti-globalization movements as the only solution to the problem (Breton & Lambert, 2003:9).

In order to present a clear conceptualization of globalization and its impacts on higher education system, we will first review the archaeology of this concept.

It seems that the appropriate way to start is considering the start of planetary age[1], as Edgar Morin (1999) stated, from the time where "homo Sapian" were dispersed in the entire planet Earth. This was about ten thousand years ago when "historical societies" destroyed a big part of "primitive societies" and by a social metamorphosis turned into citizens enjoying city, agriculture , labour division, social class, war slavery, religion and grand civilizations.

As a historic narration, at the end of fifteenth century, the Ming in China, the Mongols in India were the most important civilizations in the world. Islam was spreading in Asia and Africa and was considered as the most widespread religion in the world. In America, there were two emperors: Inca and Aztec. And splendour Madrid, Lisbon, Paris and London constituted the capital of the young and small nation of the Western Europe which with rush to conquer, adventurism, war and massacre gave birth to the planetary age (Morin, 1999:70).

On the other hand, Colombo, Magellan and Vasco de Gama created a new history which brought about a different globalization. Therefore, two "globalization" phenomena were shaped: one was based on dominance, colonialism, and westernization and the other one was based on humanitarian, liberalization and humans collective wisdom. The consequences of these two kinds of globalization can be easily distinguished in the historical process. The first was leaded to political dominance of colonialism, and its results could be observed today in economic, financial and technocratic effects. The second one, however, was brought about by developing critical thinking which was created in western civilization (Morin 1999:69-73). Kubow and Crawford (2001) also attribute the concept of globalization to the past millennium (p.98).

2 GLOBALIZATION IN HIGHER EDUCATION: INTERNATIONALIZATION OF UNIVERSITIES

Although, in the arena of higher education, universities have always possessed some features of internationalization from their first days of creation, but in the current era it has got deeper and wider dimensions so much as some scholars describe the representation of the complex issue of globalization in higher education as internationalization of universities (Scott, 1998; Enders & Fultom, 2002; Vanderwender, 2002; Tiechler, 2004; Rosenbit et al., 2007; Stromquist, 2007).

Stromquist (2007) emphasize on this belief that internationalization of universities as an effect of globalization on higher education system not only influences the academic planning, faculties and students, but also leads to structural changes (p.81).

But, it seems that the direction of changes, as Fazal rizvi (2007) states, is the most important issue in the process of globalization/internationalization of science-producer institutions in the world:

> *Education is deeply implicated in the process of contemporary globalization. This much has become something of a mantra among educational scholars, even if there is little agreement on the way is which globalization relates to educational policy and practices. This lake of agreement is partly due to the fact that globalization is a highly contested concept employed to embrace a whole range of academic and popular discourses. It is a concept that is used to describe almost any and every aspect of contemporary life, from the complex contours of contemporary capitalism, to the declining power of nation-state, the rise transnational organization and corporation, the emergence of global culture challenging local tradition, and the information and communication evolution enabling rapid circulation of ideas, money, and people. The term **globalization** does appear to be quite useful in capturing some of the changes that have transformed the world over the past three decades* (p.256).

Thinking about existing conceptualizations, on one hand, demonstrates the ambiguity of use of this concepts, and, on the other hand, shows a dual process in the conceptualization of globalization/internationalization of universities. This is why some scholars in this area classify the higher education institutions in two distinctive groups:

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[1] L'ere palnétaire

Liberal education and the cultivation of the human nature constitute the supreme goals of some leading higher education institutions, while professional training and the response to market demands shape the nature of other higher education institutes (Rosenbilt et al., 2007:376).

The reflection of this dual goals and functions of higher education institutions could be easily tracked down in the conceptualization process of internationalization. For example, Jonse (2000) emphasizes on distinction between "Internationalism" and "internationalization". He indicates that "internationalization is a common concept of global community, international cooperation, common international interests and constitutes the international dimension of a "common good" which envelops the promotion of global peace and welfare"(p.31).

Papastephanou (2005) also indicates that there is a distinction between globalization as an empirical and theoretical phenomenon. Lynette Shultz (2007) and redefines it based on the definition of global citizenship, and refers to following three approaches in this regard:

- New-liberal global citizenship approach (active participation in unique capitalist global market)

- Radical global citizenship approach (challenging states and corporate structures creating poverty and oppression)

- Transformational global citizenship approach (trying to connect to people and issues that cross national boundaries).

Rosemary Deem (2001), using different approaches, presents four concepts which influence nowadays higher education systems. Deem, however, did not allude to the internal and reciprocal relations between these four concepts, and so, it is possible, to summarize them in two concepts based on her interpretation: globalization and internationalization. Her four suggested concepts are as follows:

- Globalization: the global expanse of trade of services as an economic, social and cultural key of global market.

- Internationalization: the way for sharing ideas and knowledge and a way to impalement similar things in different countries.

- New manageralism: the expanse of commercial performance and the private sector procedure in public institutions.

- Entrepreneurship in higher education: situation in which faculty members and staffs try to attract private sector resources by enterprising their activities.

It might also be useful to introduce another concept that some scholars consider as one of the consequences of internationalization/globalization of universities: "academic capitalism". It refers to some changes in universities' goals and functions. In the other word, academic capitalism tries to change the original function of universities which is supposed to be in quest of truth to another function following the industrial and market objectives.

Therefore, as some scholars indicate, without a clear agreement about the concept of globalization/internationalization of higher education, it is not possible to study its impacts and suggest a suitable action domain. Mok (2007) suggests six questions to gain a relatively clear agreement about this concept:

- *For whose benefit should higher education be internationalized?*

- *For what purpose should higher education be internationalized?*

- *Why should internationalization be adopted as a major agenda for contemporary universities?*

- *Dose internationalization matter to students and other stakeholder in the society?*

- *For what purposes should contemporary universities exist?*

- What university education should be believe in and commit ourselves to? (p.437)

Responding to these questions, particularly to the last two questions requires a deeper investigation of concepts because these responses could be totally different in different discourses.

In fact, despite of the huge pressures to internationalize universities, there is not yet a common conceptualization about this issue. Jane knight (2003) sates that "the nations interpret internationalization in different ways and there is an amalgam conceptualization about it". Teichler (2004) also believes the nations and the states do not have any clear idea about these "*zation*". De Wit warns against simplifying the complexity of internationalization of higher education. similarly, Roger Goodman indicates that the internationalization has become a fashionable concept in social science discourse accompanying with some other terms such as: "*McDonaldization*", "*Cocacolanization*", "*Transnationalism*", "*Localization*", and "*Glocalization*" but there is less agreement about the exact definition of these new concepts. Victor Turner calls this a "*Multivocal symbol*". These symbols could be interpreted differently in different environment, and by different actors.

It seems that the appropriate question to ask at the end, as stated by Alain Tourain (1974:13), is that "whether the university will become the locus of integration or of confrontation? Keeping in mind that in both cases grave dangers may threaten the creation of new knowledge".

3   METHODOLOGY

Multidimensionality of this study requires using different methodologies. In the other word, to acquire an optimal conceptualization of globalization and its impacts on higher education systems, the following five areas have been studied:

- Reviewing various approaches and discourses about globalization and also internationalization of higher education systems from the past until now.

- Reviewing the recommendations and action plans of some effective international institutions including UNESCO, World Bank and World Trade Organization to acquire a better understanding of the theoretical views and practical suggestions of international institutions. in this part comparative study, based on content analysis was used.

- Experiences of developed and developing countries and their reactions, as well as their performances against the challenges of *globalization/internationalization of higher education,* some of their essential theoretical studies and some of their important documents (e.g. Sorbonne Declaration, Bologna declaration).

- To make the study as comprehensive as possible, using content analysis, the mission states and the latest strategic plans of the world's top ten universities were analysed. Four principal variables were used in this content analysis, namely: goals and missions, functions, approaches and educational strategies, and finally, action domain.

- Then, in order to develop this study to Iranian higher education system in the process of globalization, we use a pathological meta- analysis of Iranian higher education system based on some Iranian studies which follows with a comparative study of these studies in the frame of reference of two paradigms of globalization.

4   RESEARCH FINDINGS

Given the large expanse of research findings, we try to present a summary of these findings in the appropriate order.

4.1   Findings Regarding International Institutions

4.1.1   UNESCO:

Conceptual domain: among the studies and conceptual theories which were published or diffused by UNESCO, there is a relative distinction between "knowledge society" and "information society" and the emphasize goes on knowledge society as an acceptable approach. Even John Daniel, general director for education, emphasizes on "*scientific communism*" as the best academic tradition, and qualifies higher education as a" global common good".

Action domain: in the action domain, UNESCO demonstrates a strange and divergent duality. In other word, some of UNESCO's official documents and its action plans, which contain some recommendations about globalization, represent paradoxical patterns. They directly or indirectly encourage UNESCO members and developing countries to an irregular "*liberalization*" which

translates into unbridled "*privatization*", "*commercialization*", "commodofication" and "*standardization*" of higher education which inevitably leads to academic capitalism.

4.1.2   World Bank

Similar to UNESCO, in conceptualization of globalization of higher education, World Bank also emphasizes on essential notions such as "social and humanitarian dimension of education", "higher education as a global common good", "non-optimality of the investment of private sector in higher education", "the positive effect of higher education in sustainable development process", the danger of "increasing digital gap" and of "inequality of access to higher education and its impacts". These positions bring about rotation in World Bank policies, from investment in elementary and secondary education, towards investment in higher education. However, the World Bank's actions and recommendations demonstrate a large gap between its theoretical concepts and action plans. It seems that World Banks' general approaches and consequently its' executive policies pursue an economic –based approach which emphasizes on growth strategies that are gravely instrumentalist.

4.1.3   World Trade Organization: General Agreement of Trade in Services (GATS)

Even though It seems that this organization conceptually pretends to emphasize on poverty reduction campaigns in the world, but its efforts in generalizing General Agreement of Trade in Services, in which higher education is treated like other goods and services and must pursue the same process of commodofication[1] and commercialization, shows a deep gap between theory and action. In fact, the path designed for commercialization of higher education as a private good or service could be considered as nullifying the world's accepted conceptualization about higher education, and a way to execute the ideal s of new liberal ideology.

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[1] - Marchandisation

Table 1: A meta-Analysis of Pros and Cons of GATS

weaknesses	strengths
• *The risk of quality assurance and accreditation* • *Increasing inequality in access to higher education* • *Threatening and limiting national higher education systems* • *Fading and/or disappearing precious academic traditions* • *Threatening the "global common goods"* • *Threatening academic autonomy, academic freedom and faculties job security;* • *Decreasing motivation for fundamental researches* • *Decreasing motivation for social functions of universities* • *Creating tendency for universities toward instrumentalist supply of market* • *Commercialization and commodification of higher education*	• *Increase in the access to higher education* • *Absorption of foreign investment* • *Increase in students and faculty mobility* • *Increasing the resources of higher education system.*

Source: Javdani, 2008:129

4.2   Findings Regarding Global Experiences:

4.2.1   European Union

European Union's publications, such as Bologna Declaration, demonstrate that the members of this Union try to achieve the internationalization of European universities in order to facilitate the students and faculties mobility, particularly inside European continent, in pursue of diversity, pluralism, critical thinking and innovation, which will in turn attract other scholars and students to their universities.

The content analysis of the statements of the European Union suggests the following as preconditions to commence the globalization process:

*   Quality assurance of educational planning, in a way that could at least lead to a regional competitiveness.

*   Diversification of higher education institutions to increase structural convergence.

*   The need of higher education systems to enjoy more flexibility.

*   The need of development in international interactions

*   Clarifying the role of private and public sector in higher education section.

4.2.2   United States of America

It has been almost four decades since American education planners intended to globalize, as well as internationalize, their higher education system. One of their most important arguments is granting more autonomy to their universities in global and international context. In addition, they annually spend ten billion US dollars for reforming their education system in the path to globalization (Merriman & Nicoletti, 2008:8-11).

The United States, in this process, insists on attitudes, values and belief changes, as well as on changing the mindset of students and teachers. In fact, they think about a kind of "organizational development" in their educational system by:

- Implementation of globalization in educational planning (*environmental education, education on global health concerns, etc*)

- Application of globalization in the classroom (*Human values, global system, global issues and problems, global history*)

- *Providing more on-the-job-training for teachers in global education*

- *Encouraging more educational research on global education*

- *Study of languages (e.g. Arabic , Chinese)*

- *Development of learning communities or network across nations that enable teachers and students to interact*

- *Seeking the assistance of international corporations to promote and strengthen global education*

- *Infusing global topics in traditional courses to help students' global awareness*

- *Using the latest technology and information sources*

4.2.3 Developing Countries: China, Japan, Taiwan, Singapore, Malaysia

The major trends, in studied developing countries, in the process of globalization/internationalization of their higher education systems can be summarized to:

- Top-down changes in their higher education systems

- Tendency toward managerial and structural changes in Asian countries' universities to alter collegial governance into new managerialism;

- Decreasing states' financial supports

- competition in imitation and copying

- Changing educational and learning strategies

- Development of individual integrity;

- Expansion of critical and creative thinking

- Moving toward problem-based education

Meta-analysis of qualitative evaluations regarding the situation of higher education systems in globalization process in aforementioned countries indicates the followings:

- Divergence between states' goals and faculty members

- Lack of understanding and references in conceptualization of globalization/internationalization

- Divergence between national planners and academic communities

- Top-down decision making process and lack of national participation in this process

- The dominant pressure of global economic system on their higher education systems

4.3 Findings Regarding Experience of Top Global Universities

According to content analysis of mission statements and strategic plans of top ten global universities that has been based on their missions, functions and educational and learning strategies are as follows:

- Pursuing the ancient academic traditions, as well as achieving the truth or preferably truths.

- Recognizing the triple functions of universities: education, research and social services (socialization) by emphasizing on local, regional and particularly global social services.

- Giving priority to education and research which is able to secure the local, as well as national and global interests.
- focusing on educational and learning approaches based on academic values, such as "Transformational and critical thinking", "free exchange of idea", "diversity", "pluralism", "academic freedom", "open investigation", "development of individual integrity", "freedom and responsibility", "interdisciplinary approach", "abolition of all kinds discriminations", "respecting human being", and "environment protection".

4.4 General Findings Regarding Globalization/Globalism and Iranian Higher Education Situation

Table 2 summarizes theoretical and empirical findings of this study which suggest a divergence between two conceptualizations of the globalization/internationalization notion that will be illustrated based on two different paradigms: knowledge society and information society. In addition, considering these two divergent paradigms, leading normally to different discourses, the Iranian higher education systems' position is analyzed based on some essential Iranian studies. Table 2 is designed, in a way, to include a large expanse of variables which can influence the higher education systems.

Table 2: A Situational Comparison of Higher Education Systems in Globalization/Internationalization Process, Focusing on Iranian Higher Education System

Concept	Knowledge Society	Information Society	Iranian Higher Education Position
Educational and learning approach	- Questing the truth - Academic freedom - Critical and creative thinking - Pluralism - Diversity - Student-based - Research-based	- Questing the interest - Market oriented - Profitable thinking - Standardization - Uniformity - Profession-based - Industrial-based	- Lack of educational philosophy - Teaching instead of learning - Knowledge accumulation - Non-academic and non-applicable education - Science in submission of traditional bureaucracy - Instructor-based - Ideological
Social and cultural engagement	- Global social interaction - Social coherence - Protection of environment and human health - Cultural diversity - Homo sapien - Civilizations' dialogue - Fundamental liberty	- Instrumental action - Economic competition - Quest for productivity and growth - Cultural standardization - Cultural assimilation - Homo œconomicus - Belligerent civilization - Economic liberty	- Quest for higher degrees - Competition for degree - Ideological culture - Homo imitator - Civilizations' monologue - Quest for a suitable social level
student	- Stakeholder and player in knowledge area - Learner and questioner - Critic and creator - Questing the individual integrity - Future thinker and leader	- Customer, consumer - Future skilled worker - Technical professionalist - Future knowledge worker	- Winner of highly competitive entrance exam - Consumer of an outdated knowledge - Copyist - Skilled exam-taker - Future unemployed
faculty	- Knowledge producer and distributor - Truth seeker - Students companion	- Entrepreneur and knowledge broker - Quest for enterprise and money - Capitalists companion	- Outdated knowledge distributor - Questing for administrative promotion - Lord of students
university	Public institution in the service of local, national, regional and global society	- Private institution in the service of global market - Knowledge enterprise	- State institution in the service of government - High school, but bigger
Higher education	- Public good, quasi public good - For sociability and social service - In the way of national and global benefits - With developmental capability - A way for social justice	- Public good - For finding a job - In the way of the market interest - Expansion capability - An instrument for economic competition/academic capitalism	- Governmental good - For questing a more open social atmosphere - In the way of personal and individual interest - With huge expansion capability - Labor market storage - Labor market delaying

Concept	Knowledge Society	Information Society	Iranian Higher Education Position
Action domain	• Free interaction with scientific institutions in national and global area	• Freedom for new actors of higher education provision	• Isolated, without interaction with other national/international institutions
Accountability	• Accountable to society and their needs	• Opportunistic, accountable to market and industry	• Accountable to government
Financial provider	• Public sector,non-lucrative private sector and benevolent individual or communities	• Market, lucrative private sector, Capitalist global institutions	• Households, public sector, and benevolent individuals or communities
Goals	• Finding the truth • Competing to produce new idea	• Technical innovation, new technology, producing knowledge with no application	• Responding to social demand for higher education
Effectiveness management	• Collegial and ad-hocratic	• New Manageralism	• Traditional bureaucracy
Leadership	• Humboldtian: focusing on social interaction	• Napoleonian :focusing on instrumental action	• Non identifiable: competing for irregular quantitative expansion
Values	• Global common values: more life and better style of life	• Market values: more money, more interest, more income	• Governmental rules and regulation
Internationalization	• Free circulation of knowledge, information and data • Increase in mobility of students and faculties • Increase in global scientific cooperation • Equitable access to knowledge and information • Increase of sexual, ethnical, racial, and cultural diversity	• Emergence of New spaces and new actors • Emergence of new potential markets • Profitable Information circulation • Lucrative scientific cooperation • Knowledge means value added, money • Diversity in higher education supply, particularly trans-boarder And virtual higher education	• Irrelevant expansion of higher education system • Irregular and irrelevant expansion of distant and semi distant higher education • Questing to reach regional and international quantitative indices of access to higher education • Localization of universities • Creation of small and apart university campus • Hard circulation of knowledge and information • Lack of academic- scientific global interaction

5   CONSLUSION

The findings of this study suggest that one can monitor and analyze the issue of internationalization of higher education systems in a dual action process based on two divergent approaches.

New liberal approach of internationalization of higher education emphasizes on "exchangeable" dimensions of globalization concept which leads to dominance of "unique global market" and "the principles of transnational free commerce". In fact, from this point of view, globalization translates into unbridled competition and money. As stated by Lynette Schultz (2007:249), internationalized higher education systems are educating their alumnus so they can successfully participate in the free economy system which is governed by capitalism and technology.

Meanwhile, globalization as an institutional and cultural approach, which is based on "social interaction", Emphasizes on social coherence, cultural diversity, fundamental liberty and environment protection. In this view, the role of university could be more cultural and they are educating their students so they can think globally and act locally.

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