

TRANSFORMATION OF HIGHER EDUCATION IN UKRAINE IN THE CONTEXT OF GLOBALIZATION

TRANSFORMAÇÃO DO ENSINO SUPERIOR NA UCRÂNIA NO CONTEXTO DA GLOBALIZAÇÃO

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ABSTRACT

Given the impact of globalization processes on the development of higher education, it becomes an urgent task to identify the key aspects of this impact. Therefore, the aim is to characterize the peculiarities of the transformation of higher education in Ukraine within the framework of globalization trends. The collection of literature was based on a strict selection based on the criteria for its inclusion. The study includes analytical materials, reports, articles, monographs, and book chapters. The data analysis involved the use of methods such as contingent analysis and comparison. In the results, it was determined that globalization has positive aspects: the digitalization of education, student mobility, and greater integration of Ukrainian higher education into the global learning space. In the global learning environment, the tendency to form a narrow-profile specialist contradicts the basic needs of society, which requires professionals who are able to use and effectively synthesize the acquired knowledge and skills. However, globalization also has negative aspects (outflow of human resources, increased competition among higher education institutions). The conclusions emphasize the difficulties of further optimization of higher education, which are primarily due to the lack of funding for higher education. Therefore, creating favorable conditions for the realization of the creative potential of specialists is extremely important. This can be done by increasing spending on higher education and providing support for young talent in Ukraine.

Keywords: higher education, Ukraine, globalization processes, challenges, opportunities.

RESUMO

Dado o impacto dos processos de globalização no desenvolvimento do ensino superior, torna-se uma tarefa urgente identificar os principais aspectos deste impacto. Assim sendo, pretende-se caracterizar as peculiaridades da transformação do ensino superior na Ucrânia no quadro das tendências de globalização. A recolha da literatura baseou-se numa seleção rigorosa baseada nos critérios para a sua inclusão. O estudo inclui materiais analíticos, relatórios, artigos, monografias e capítulos de livros. A análise dos dados envolveu a utilização de métodos como a análise contingente e a comparação. Nos resultados, verificou-se que a globalização tem aspectos positivos: a digitalização da educação, a mobilidade dos estudantes e uma maior integração do ensino superior ucraniano no espaço global de aprendizagem. No ambiente global de aprendizagem, a tendência para formar um especialista de perfil restrito contraria as necessidades básicas da sociedade, que exige profissionais que sejam capazes de utilizar e sintetizar eficazmente os conhecimentos e competências adquiridos. Contudo, a globalização também tem aspectos negativos (saída de recursos humanos, aumento da concorrência entre instituições de ensino superior). As conclusões sublinham as dificuldades de uma maior optimização do ensino superior, que se devem principalmente à falta de financiamento para o ensino superior. Assim, é extremamente importante criar condições favoráveis para a concretização do potencial criativo dos especialistas. Isto pode ser feito aumentando as despesas com o ensino superior e apoiando os jovens talentos na Ucrânia.

Palavras-chave: ensino superior, Ucrânia, processos de globalização, dificuldades, oportunidades.

Introduction

Given the current trends in the development and transformation of the educational system, higher education plays an important role in the system of the national intellectual elite formation. This determines its importance for the development of social, economic and cultural aspects of any country. At the same

time, the scientific works of modern scholars have shown that in the XXI century globalization has influenced and, accordingly, transformed all spheres of public life. Obviously, these changes have also affected the Ukrainian education system.

This issue is relevant and needs to be studied more closely, especially since modern research has shown that Ukrainian education has faced both challenges and opportunities (Oleksiyenko *et al.*, 2023; Sofilkanych *et al.*, 2023). In addition, such transformational changes also affect labor market trends. This, in turn, requires the training of skilled workers who are able to possess relevant skills and knowledge (Tiurina *et al.*, 2022).

Additionally, as Ukrainian educational institutions integrate into the international scientific and educational community, globalization processes have an impact on Ukrainian higher education. This happens in the form of participation in international projects, student exchanges, and cooperation in research. In addition, the adaptation of education to European standards, including the implementation and active development of the Bologna system, is also noticeable.

On the other hand, the active use of innovative technologies is also becoming noticeable, demonstrating the trend toward digitalization in Ukrainian universities. All these aspects make this topic extremely relevant to our study. Accordingly, the topic of this research is to study the peculiarities of the transformation of Ukrainian higher education within the framework of globalization processes.

The objectives of the article are as follows:

1. Characterize the impact of globalization on higher education in Ukraine
2. Assess the adaptation of the Ukrainian system to globalization trends
3. Identify the main challenges to the transformation of higher education in the context of globalization.

Literature review

The proposed problem is partially considered in the studies of scientists who analyzed individual elements of the impact of globalization on educational processes. In general, we are talking about quite diverse assessments, which emphasize both the advantages of this process and certain difficulties that need to be paid attention to. In particular, Altbach and Wit (2017) traced the history of the formation of individual influences of the globalization environment on the spread of certain educational brands. The work of the researchers, written during the reporting period, emphasized the importance of digitization as a current trend in educational development.

The importance of digitization was also highlighted by other researchers who emphasized the duration of this process: it is currently difficult to determine the main consequences of such an impact, since the process is ongoing and will require evaluation in the future (Kornytska *et al.*, 2023; Oharenko *et al.*, 2022). Also, in the focus of our research, attention was given to the problem of philosophical perception of globalization processes, in particular through the prism of European and Eastern philosophy (Lin, 2024; Tolchieva, 2011). Taking into account the peculiarities of the influence of philosophical thoughts on the social structures of today makes it possible to take into account the particularities of the progress of education (Bachynskyi, 2024).

An important aspect on which researchers focused in detail was the drawback of digitalization of higher education, which made it possible to summarize the advantages of using the latest technologies characteristic of globalization in education (Aliyeva, 2023; Bobro, 2024). The proposed evaluations make it possible to comprehensively consider the issues of the article, to single out common and original opinions of scientists. It is important that the proposed scientific literature contains extensive reviews of the works of predecessors, which is an extremely important bibliographic tool for realizing the idea of the publication.

In addition, certain challenges that will continue to accompany modern education on the way to modernization are indicated. Among such problems,

researchers single out a significant gap in opportunities between countries belonging to the global North and South (Hrechanyk et al., 2023). At the same time, Faas and Wasmuth (2019) indicate the importance of creating appropriate cross-cultural circumstances for the successful progress of education in times of globalization in the future. Obviously, such a challenge has its own specificity and has not yet been properly assessed since the development of the educational environment often depends on the specifics of cultural perception of not only education (scientific disciplines) but also the proper attitude towards all participants of the cultural process.

Certain prejudices that exist along this path, as Malimon, Malimon and Tykhonenko (2022) pointed out, develop quite actively depending on the educational policy of the state, especially when it comes to autocratic regimes with undemocratic and chauvinistic managers. Taking such features into account makes it possible to continue the scientific discussion about the visions for the progress of education under the influence of globalization.

Methodology

The realization of the proposed goal requires a qualitative approach. As a result, the relevant professional scientific literature was studied, and scientific publications on the proposed problem were organized. In particular, we analyzed scientific articles published in special publications, expert opinions issued in separate preprints, statistical data from chapters in monographs, and research of chapters in collective monographs. The systematization of the data obtained made it possible to combine information from various sources and to fulfill the principle of objectivity required for the research, given the different understandings of globalization and the role of education in different national scientific environments. It is worth noting that since the authors have repeatedly addressed the proposed issues, the authors had at their disposal 5 scientific publications that fully met all the following selection criteria.

The data collection process took place in several stages. At the beginning of the study, the necessary publications for further analysis were collected. In particular, the relevant search was guided by using the scientific and metric databases Web of Science, Scopus, and Google Scholar. Special keywords were used for the search, which, in addition to the topic of the research, covered the main area of the study. These markers were the following words: innovations in education, global educational trends, cross-cultural adaptation, digitalization of education, educational leadership. As a result, the search yielded 796 results. A preliminary analysis of the titles of the publications was immediately carried out, as a result of which those scientific publications that were repetitive were removed from the relevant list. In total, there were 67 such deleted publications.

At the next stage, a more thorough analysis of the list of scientific literature was carried out. Specific attention was paid to the study of abstracts of scientific papers, which made it possible to determine whether the scientific source was relevant to the topic stated in the proposed article and could be used to address the main objectives of the work. For this reason, 283 papers that did not meet this requirement were removed. The work with the scientific literature also required consideration of the relevance criterion. In particular, a fairly clear date range was implemented for the researched scientific papers, which only occasionally went beyond 2019-2024. As a result, 220 papers written earlier than the specified period were removed.

The next stage involved taking into account additional criteria for selecting scientific literature. In particular, those scientific publications were removed that, although they were made in accordance with the general thematic direction, did not have relevant information about the subject of the study. Thus, the criteria were:

1. Preference was given to English-language studies. Since the problem of globalization requires taking into account current opinions, publications written primarily in professional peer-reviewed journals were selected for further analysis. This criterion resulted in the elimination of many Ukrainian-language papers - 102 in total.

2. Consideration of the research context. Preference was given to those publications that have comparative aspects and can be used to build future research. Based on this criterion, another 84 items were removed.

Accordingly, taking into account the fulfillment of criteria 1 and 2, 37 scientific publications were selected to form further conclusions. The work with scientific publications was carried out using the scientific method of content analysis, which involved an in-depth analysis of the positions of scientists, taking into account current views on the impact of globalization in education, the definition of educational leadership, etc. To summarize the results, a comparison method was also used, which made it possible to identify the main elements of globalization's effect on the advance of modern higher education. Thanks to this, the individual results of the study were summarized and the relevant conclusions from the analysis were drawn.

Results

In the context of globalization events, the transformation of Ukrainian higher education is aimed not only at updating its forms and methods, but also at forming a new content of education as a lifelong learning experience focused on the implementation of personality-oriented approaches. The transition from a knowledge society to a society of life-competent citizens became crucial at this time (Soysal & Baltaru, 2021). The key trends in the development of national education systems within the framework of globalization include the formation of an internationalization strategy, when multilateral ties between higher education institutions in Europe are being established, the expansion of student and teacher mobility, and the introduction of modern technologies and teaching tools (Oleksiyenko *et al.*, 2023; de Wit & Altbach, 2020).

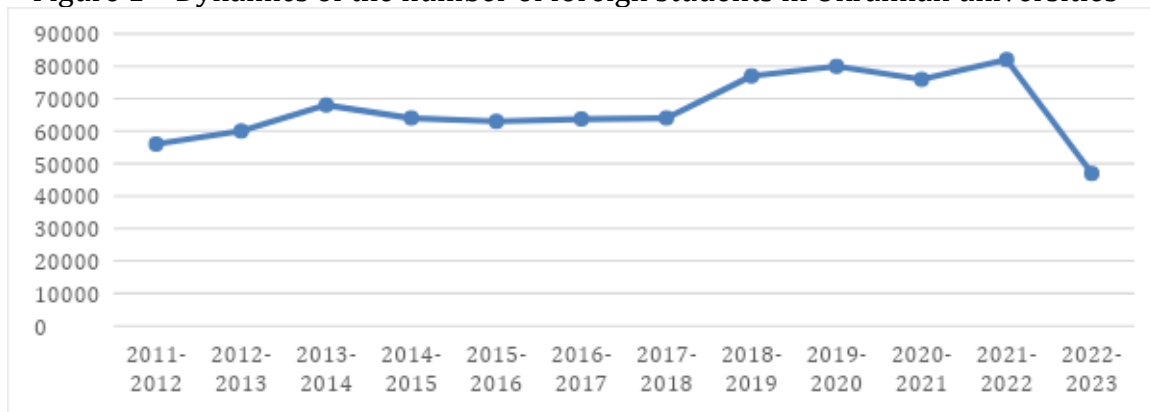
All of these trends are aimed at one thing: ensuring mutually beneficial cooperation and quality education and employment opportunities. Furthermore, a positive development in higher education in the context of globalization is the replacement of the traditional, knowledge-transmission-based classical education

system with a creative one that emphasizes the development of practical skills (Guàrdia et al., 2021; Giesenbauer & Müller-Christ, 2020).

Within the Ukrainian educational system, globalization has influenced the internationalization of education. In particular, globalization processes, which are becoming more and more popular, contribute to the active participation of Ukrainian universities in international educational programs and research projects. This is reflected in the mobility of students and faculty, as well as in the conclusion of cooperation agreements with other foreign universities, and the formation of international projects and conferences (Sheremet & Suprun, 2022).

In this way, students have the opportunity to gain experience in communicating with foreign scholars and professors, conducting joint research, projects, or conferences with students from other countries. Obviously, the Russian-Ukrainian war has had an impact on the fact that fewer foreign students are starting to study in Ukraine. However, before the full-scale invasion, there was a noticeable increase in the number of international students (Migration Data Portal, 2024) (see Figure 1).

Figure 1 – Dynamics of the number of foreign students in Ukrainian universities



Source: Migration Data Portal (2024).

Another aspect concerns the wider implementation of European educational standards in Ukrainian higher education. In particular, Ukraine's accession to the Bologna system in 2005 was an important decision within the framework of globalization. Since then, there has been an active reform of higher education in line

with the main European standards and values. This included the introduction of a credit-module system, degree-based education, international recognition of Ukrainian diplomas, and increased transparency in the system of knowledge acquisition. Such actions enable Ukrainian graduates to be competitive in the European labor market.

Another important trend is the access to global educational resources. Digitalization, which is noticeable all over the world, promotes the development of online education, remote collaboration between teachers and students, which opens up new opportunities for Ukrainian applicants (Kaputa *et al.*, 2022). They have access to the world's leading educational resources, online courses, digital libraries, and scientific databases.

All this allows them to conduct highly effective research and communicate in a digital learning environment (Krap *et al.*, 2024; Leišytė *et al.*, 2023). This is evidenced by Ukraine's high performance in e-participation. Integration of innovative technologies into the learning process, electronic administration of universities, and access to global educational resources are significantly optimized thanks to a developed electronic infrastructure (Pyrohovska *et al.*, 2024; Okolnycha & Kostenko, 2022).

In particular, the e-Government Development Index ranks Ukraine 30th among 193 countries. At the same time, Ukraine ranks 1st in the world in the e-participation index. Ukraine achieved this ranking in 2024. This means that Ukraine is making the most of digital tools for the development of all social spheres. It also makes Ukrainian universities more accessible to international students and teachers, which affects academic mobility and improves the quality of education (see Table 1).

Table 1 – Indicators of Ukraine's digitalization development

2024 Ukraine	2024	2022	2020	2018	2016	2014
EGD Index rank	30	46	69	82	62	87
EGD Index value	0.88407	0.80290	0.71190	0.61650	0.60756	0.50316
E-Participation Index rank	1	57	46	75	32	77
E-Participation Index value	1.00000	0.60230	0.80950	0.68540	0.74576	0.43137
Online Service Index value	0.98536	0.81480	0.68240	0.56940	0.58696	0.26771
Telecommunication Infrastructure Index value	0.84278	0.72700	0.59420	0.43640	0.39677	0.38016
HC Index value	0.82402	0.86690	0.85910	0.84360	0.83895	0.86160

Source: UN-E Government Knowledgebase (2024).

Thus, the Ukrainian higher education system has been able to adapt to global trends in some aspects, despite the current challenges posed by the Russian threat. Figure 2 outlines the main ways globalization impacts Ukrainian higher education.

Figure 2 – Main positive ways globalization impacts higher education



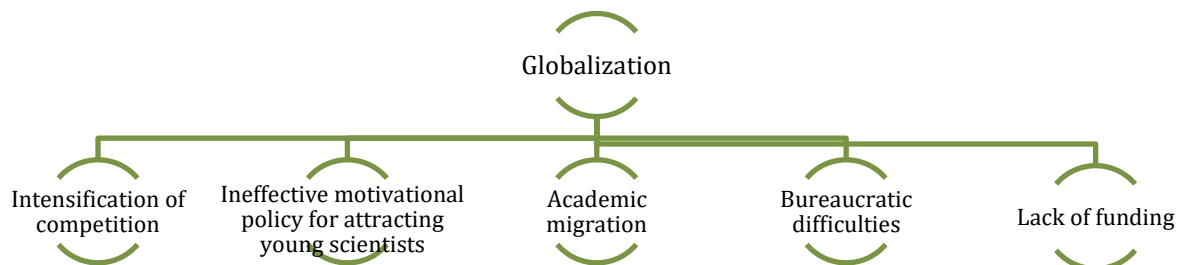
Source: Authors' development.

The key principle of education in the global world is “lifelong learning”. This means that those professionals who have received the maximum of basic knowledge in their education are able to retrain and adapt to new skills dynamically and without difficulty (Chuprinova *et al.*, 2019). At the same time, the basis of professional knowledge is the study of the exact, social, and natural sciences, presented in a single, comprehensive philosophical context as a worldview dictum (Puhach *et al.*, 2021). Thus, the trend towards a “narrow profile” specialist contradicts the basic needs of society, which requires professionals capable of using and synthesizing diverse knowledge.

However, contrary to global trends, Ukraine does not formulate a motivational policy to attract young scientists and talented students to the research and education sector, which results in the loss of talented scientists. However, state funding also makes it difficult to modernize infrastructure and introduce new technologies in higher education (Chuprinova *et al.*, 2019). This limits the opportunities for developing research projects and improving working conditions for teachers.

As a result, the phenomenon of academic migration is becoming noticeable, which negatively affects the country's fiscal system. This process results in direct losses for the country's budget. Thus, the human capital formed in Ukraine works to increase the economic potential of other developed countries, which can provide wider opportunities for the development of researchers and teachers (Chuprinova *et al.*, 2019). In addition, despite the existence of various international programs, there are some bureaucratic difficulties related to the recognition of diplomas and limited exchange opportunities.

Figure 3 – Key problems of the Ukrainian education system in the context of globalization



Source: Authors' development.

However, it is worth recognizing that it is impossible to slow down the process of “brain drain” from the national research and education sector by repressive measures. Of course, establishing the right environment in Ukraine to enable experts to reach their full creative potential is a crucial first step. This suggests more funding for postsecondary education, robust support for science, and the development of conducive environments for gifted youth to fulfill their creative and scientific potential.

In addition, it is necessary to introduce proven mechanisms for financing universities through government grants and private investment. This will improve the infrastructure of the academic institution and create favorable conditions for research. In addition, in order to improve the quality of education, curricula should be constantly updated in accordance with European standards and more practically oriented disciplines should be introduced.

Discussion

Modern globalization transformations in education are aimed not only at updating forms and methods, but also at creating new ideas about the content of education as a lifelong learning. In this regard, the purpose of this article was to study the transformations of higher education in Ukraine in the context of globalization.

The proposed results demonstrate that the defining formula of education has become the transition from a knowledge society to a society of life-competent citizens. The impact of globalization has affected the formation of an internationalization strategy, the expansion of student and teacher mobility, and the introduction of modern technologies and teaching tools. These trends are aimed at mutually beneficial cooperation. It is shown that globalization has influenced the internationalization of education within the Ukrainian educational system.

This is confirmed by the findings of researchers who consider the international activity of Ukrainian higher education institutions to be a manifestation of active participation in global processes (Soltys, 2022; Lokshyna *et al.*, 2021). In addition, this direction can be determined by the difficult circumstances of Russian aggression, when cooperation with international partners is an opportunity to ensure sustainable development. At least, this scenario is known from the experience of educational policy in Latin American countries (Cerdá Suárez *et al.*, 2021). Taking this aspect into account will require additional evidence, but is generally possible given the needs of educational development in extreme conditions.

The results showed that another aspect is the implementation of European educational standards in Ukrainian higher education. This conclusion confirms the opinions of researchers who believed that joining the Bologna system generally has a positive impact on the development of higher education (Connell; Malik, 2021). This is especially true for post-Soviet countries that are going through a long path of adaptation in the European and global arena (Malykhin, 2021).

Digitalization has become an important global trend, which is noticeable around the world and contributes to the development of online education. The results show that the Ukrainian higher education system has high rates of e-participation. This confirms the conclusions of scientists regarding the tangible educational potential of Ukraine, which manifests itself even in the context of active hostilities (Levchenko *et al.*, 2022). As a result, the country's post-war reconstruction opportunities are growing, and increased international cooperation is turning into real recovery steps.

At the same time, the results show that the basic principle of education in the global world is lifelong learning. It is difficult to agree with the conclusions of scientists that this principle is being implemented as successfully as possible in Ukrainian realities (Zakharchuk, 2020). As shown in the study, one of the serious problems on the way to this is that Ukraine lacks a motivational policy to attract young scientists and talented students to the scientific and pedagogical sphere. Thus, we should agree with the conclusions of other scholars who see serious motivational difficulties in ensuring an adequate level of lifelong learning (Bohomaz *et al.*, 2023; Prokopiv; Stynska, 2023).

One of the consequences of the lack of motivation is the phenomenon of academic migration, which has a negative impact on the country's educational system. The results show that in this way human capital works to increase the economic potential of other developed countries. This confirms the findings of researchers that in the modern world, an educated person is a tangible investment, so the importance of protecting Ukraine's national interests will also be to allow human capital to develop freely (Miller, 2019). Obviously, this trend of globalization of higher education will be a tangible marker of development in the future.

The proposed methodology has certain limitations that should be taken into account when working with the results. First of all, we are talking about the use of theoretical methods for research. Working with scientific publications had the risk of not taking into account certain opinions that are influential in the scientific community. In particular, primarily English-language works were selected for the analysis, which creates a certain risk that some relevant opinions on the impact of

globalization not contained in English-language publications could be left out. In addition, the analysis was based on recent research, while the issue of the impact of globalization on educational processes has a certain tradition in research, which was manifested in scientific studies earlier. Accordingly, such risks do not negate the results obtained but are certain perspectives for further research.

Conclusions

Hence, Ukraine's participation in the Bologna Process served as a commentary on the contemporary trends of globalization and European integration. The integration of the Ukrainian learning environment into a larger educational and scientific background and student mobility are the fundamental elements of the reform of Ukraine's higher education system in the context of globalization trends. Another important trend is the access to global educational resources, which is expressed in large-scale digitalization.

The paper shows that this trend is being effectively implemented in Ukrainian education. Ukrainian students have access to the world's leading educational resources, online courses, digital libraries and scientific databases, which enables them to conduct highly effective research. However, the paper also identifies that professionals who acquire broad basic knowledge are more likely to adapt to new skills and retrain, and the tendency toward narrow specialization contradicts the needs of modern society, which requires professionals who can synthesize different knowledge. Globalization has also intensified competition among universities, forcing Ukrainian institutions to improve the quality of educational services and modernize their facilities.

Other difficulties include insufficient funding and academic migration, which translates into an outflow of human resources. For this reason, an important solution is to create favorable conditions for the realization of the creative potential of specialists, which is expressed in increased spending on higher education, strong funding of the scientific sphere and the creation of a sorting of direct conditions for the realization of the scientific and creative potential of young people in Ukraine.

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