

CONSEQUENCES OF A PARADIGM SHIFT IN HIGHER EDUCATION

Vinnitsia National Technical University

Abstract

The article surveys the concept of a paradigm shift. Types and reasons of it are given. Higher education is changing but is still very important. JetIQ is being introduced in VNTU.

Key words: Higher education; paradigm shift; JetIQ; university; VNTU.

Анотація

Дана стаття вивчає концепцію зміни парадигми. Тут наведені основні види і причини цього. У вищій освіті відбуваються зміни, проте вона й досі дуже важлива. JetIQ запроваджується у ВНТУ.

Ключові слова: Вища освіта; зміна парадигми; JetIQ; університет; ВНТУ.

A paradigm shift is a radical change in the core concepts and practices of a given domain, discipline or field. The field of education, at both the basic and higher education levels, has undergone tremendous change since World War II. This change has been caused by unprecedented demand for high quality and meaningful education at all levels across the globe.

The concept of paradigm shift comes mainly from the work of Thomas Kuhn in the context of revolutions in natural science. This concept is now used more broadly to describe fundamental changes that occur in any field. When a paradigm shift occurs, the worldview that previously dominated the domain is changed or even replaced with a new worldview.

A paradigm shift causes the entire domain to think and act in new ways.

Paradigm shifts may happen relatively quickly (that is, in a revolutionary way) or they may happen relatively slowly (that is, in an evolutionary way) or they may be both revolutionary and evolutionary in that the change occurs over a long period of time but is marked by periodic revolutions. The latter phenomenon is perhaps more typical of paradigm shifts, especially if the field is highly diverse in which case the different parts of the domain may not change to the same degree or in the same ways.

Paradigm shifts may be the result of new knowledge being introduced into the domain through new evidence or as a result of new ways of conceptualizing or thinking about a problem or as a result of fundamental changes occurring in society (for example, major technological inventions like the printing press in the 15th century or computer technology in the 20th century or major political-economic-social changes like the industrial and democratic revolutions of the 18th century).

The primary macro forces driving the demand for higher education, include:

- 1) globalization-internationalization process;
- 2) political-legal educational reforms;
- 3) socio-economic changes;
- 4) technological innovations.

As a result of these macro forces, higher education has experienced the following micro level factors:

- 1) the emergence of universal access to higher education;
- 2) the emergence of more effective forms of teaching and learning;
- 3) the emergence of a rights-based approach to higher education.

As a result of these forces and factors, three major paradigm shifts have occurred in higher education in recent years:

- The development of lifelong learning as a human right;
- The global democratization of knowledge;
- The development of the global knowledge society.

These changes are challenging higher education leaders, faculty and researchers to fundamentally rethink the nature and purpose of higher education and thus, how it should be provided. As a result, some educators now believe that higher education needs analyzing and changing from a humanistic and human rights perspective.

A growing number of public and non-profit colleges and universities in the United States are attempting to make higher education more affordable for more of their students. For instance, the State of New York offers tuition-fee-free public higher education for qualifying students. The University of the People provides tuition-fee-free higher education and they are one of the largest providers of higher education to refugees. Students attending the New York University School of Medicine no longer pay tuition. These examples prove that people now see affordable lifelong education as a moral imperative. While tuition-fee-free higher education may not eliminate all the costs (for instance, living costs and opportunity costs) associated with getting a higher education, it put students another step closer to realizing their educational and life aspirations [1].

Since 1970, the world's population has essentially doubled. That's a striking figure in itself, but there's another to set alongside it: enrolment in the world's universities has increased six-fold.

In China, Africa, India and Latin America, new universities are being established and increasing numbers of young people are flocking to them. Participation in higher education in China has risen to over 45%. In South Korea, perhaps the world's most technologically advanced economy, it's above 70%. The world is becoming more educated.

These are serious and important issues, but they should not divert us from the wider problems. It's worth saying that some graduates in some disciplines will do financially better than others, but going to university still makes sense for young people.

The worldwide evidence we have suggests that graduates earn more, enjoy better health, and live longer. They have a positive impact on their communities, contributing economically, culturally and socially.

At the beginning of the academic year, with the nation facing greater uncertainty about its future than at any point in most of our lifetimes, it's important to reassert the importance of universities – the way we shape futures, create knowledge, lead locally and engage globally.

If the 19th century was driven by coal and the 20th century by oil, this century will be driven by ideas and our ability to explore and exploit them. Universities will be the lifeblood of this economy, and their research will lead to the innovations that shape our lives.

Universities are also training the professionals who will staff public services as they respond to demographic, economic and social change, demanding radically different services.

And universities now drive regional economies through their work with students and close relationships with employers, which are radically reimagining higher education through programs such as degree apprenticeships [2].

When my kids were small we really enjoyed reading a children's story "The goat that learned to count" by Alf Proysen. The goat manages to count all animals he meets on his way. They get embarrassed and chase him for being counted. When they arrive to a river the goat jumps on to a boat with all animals after him. The skipper of the boat panics, because it can take only ten passengers. The goat is the only one who can count all the animals. They are ten, so they are safe. But if there were more, the boat could have sunk. Here, at VNTU a new system called JetIQ is being introduced. The idea seems to be great, 'cos all necessary information about educational process is under your fingertips, from schedule to textbooks and documents, electronic register to examination

sheet. But there is one challenging point in it – tests. Every teacher is supposed to create tests on the subject he teaches and upload there. When a session comes, a teacher has to conduct an exam or credit in a computing center classroom. For this pilot project humanities have been chosen. English is learned for two years and four terms correspondingly. At the end of the second year a successful student should have from 60 to 100 to get “P”/pass. In a syllabus is written that it is possible to obtain 25 points every term, thus 25 multiplied by 4 equals a hundred. Nevertheless, the teachers are pushed to conduct a credit and they are to decide about uncertain number of extra credit/exam points to be got then and questions as well. Besides, all students having 35/FX and more must take it. Some of my smart students can have total 85-98 points. The question is: “How much is 90+25?” Isn’t it more than maximum 100? May it drown us? Where is logical reasoning or is it just a tribute to modern trends?

In the whole world countries are proud of their universities. There’s never been a time when universities have been more important to more people than they are now. Our future depends on them. But present economical situation in Ukraine can make many universities go bust and lose its potential. If it’s not too late, it’s time to reset the agenda.

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Magas Liudmyla Mykolaivna, teacher of foreign Languages Department, Vinnytsia National Technical University, Vinnytsia, ludmag71@gmail.com

Магас Людмила Миколаївна, викладач кафедри іноземних мов, Вінницький національний технічний університет, М. Вінниця, ludmag71@gmail.com