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THE EVOLUTION OF INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS EDUCATION: THE MERGER OF GLOBALIZATION MEETS DIGITALIZATION

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Abstract

Welcome to the new age of education. Just like an episode from the Twilight Zone, I imagine Ron Sterling would say, "In a time not long ago, pedagogy was books, paper and pencils."

Times have changed and necessitate changes in international business education to meet the demands of the international business sector. As international business evolves and more countries sign international contracts and trade agreements, in addition to multi-national corporations' expansion into new territories and the continuous, rapid exchange of information through artificial intelligence, social media and other outlets, international business education must also evolve. Revisions to program curriculums and pedagogies must include computer information system courses combined with international business courses, focusing on analyzing data on a macro scale. Didem Gürdür Broo et al. 2021 presented the options of "developing as an advanced nation or get stuck with a stagnant economy" when referring to the challenges faced by South Korea involving the emergence of new technology. Post secondary institutions offering an international business education must consider these same options, develop an advanced educational program or become stagnated in an outdated, pre-artificial intelligence curriculum, resulting in graduates not being prepared for the digital workforce.

The evolution of technology requires post-secondary institutions, current students, recent graduates and professors to become adept in the rapid progression of technology.

Keywords

Artificial Intelligence, Higher Education, AI Governance, International Business

Introduction and Purpose:

Villasenor, J. (2023) wrote, "colleges should offer all students, regardless of field of study, opportunities to learn about AI in a manner contextualized for their disciplines and interests."

This paper will focus on how international business education will need to evolve as international business shifts to automation and AI, resulting in new pedagogies being created to incorporate Artificial Intelligence in International Business Education programs. Didem Gürdür Broo et al. 2021 writes of "an amalgamation of information, communication and artificial intelligence is taking place, defining the new industry as fifth industrial revolution, Industry 5.0."

The purpose of this paper is to place urgency on a critical issue, requiring immediate action of all international business programs. International Business programs should no longer request syllabi modifications because the world is no longer on the horizon of artificial intelligence but are basting in AI sunlight, otherwise known as digital transformation. The pedagogy professors once relied on and implemented for the last decades will need to halt and create new pathways.

Literature Review

In the twenty-first century, Artificial Intelligence is being implemented and taught at several higher education institutions within many disciplines. International Business programs must adapt as well if students are to be prepared for the digital workforce. Brynjolfsson & McAfee understood the importance of preparing International Business students for the future of artificial intelligence.

First, higher education institutions must understand the importance of using artificial intelligence. Wu, C., et al. emphasizes higher education institutions must create policies and guidelines for usage of artificial intelligence by their students and the institutions itself. Building on this, Huriye, A.Z. explained higher education institutions must also be ethically responsible by teaching students how to utilize artificial intelligence as a tool and not to abuse its usage by allowing artificial intelligence to complete assigned tasks, but as a way of enhancing a student's own creativity.

In pre-covid times, virtual learning and using artificial intelligence were slowly being implemented. Due to remote learning after the educational institutions closed their campuses, virtual learning and artificial intelligence became more prominent. Post-covid, when educational institutions opened again, virtual learning became a norm. Students and instructors who once were against virtual learning, adapted, with some preferring virtual learning over traditional learning. May, O. S., et al. supported artificial intelligence believing students can only be prepared for the digital workforce if educational institutions implemented different pedagogies, such as simulation problem-based learning. Binh, N. T. H. et al., supported this idea, introducing a pedagogy named meta-verse. Experimental pedagogies, such as virtual service learning are being introduced as education continues to evolve.

Despite these contributions, there are gaps such as inaccuracies within artificial intelligence and its ability to apply false information when information is not available, leaving users researching and verifying unreliable data. We must also consider gaps with higher learning institutions implementation of ambiguous policies and guidelines, leaving faculty and students confused.

Industry Metamorphosis

Brynjolfsson & McAfee, 2017 writes AI as reshaping industries, economies and organizational strategies. Bautista, R. G., et al. 2025 agrees with this statement and further explains along with reshaping of industries, workforce digital readiness, adaption of new systems by employees, is required and proposes the alignment of "technological investments with human capital development to maximize organizational outcomes in the digital era." The first action should be to ensure human capital development is aligned with post-secondary education programs. These post-secondary educational programs are meant to train a future employee to be ready for a specific industry, such as international business. Thus, there should be a mergence of AI and international business to prepare recent graduates for the international business workforce.

AI Governance in Higher Education Institutions (HEIs)

Wu, C., et al., 2024 studied AI governance in HEIS and noted that many HEIs have implemented policies and guidelines relating to AI usage, which include academic integrity, and proper usage of AI. The findings were ambiguous for students and placed the responsibility with faculty for communicating AI governance.

Huriye, A.Z., 2023 examines the ethical factors of AI and found issues that are thought to be concerns of AI usage in developed countries: bias, privacy, accountability and transparency. The research found key leaders in corporations, government, research and communities need to ensure policies and guidelines are created to ensure the concerns above are addressed and followed, emphasizing a human-centered approach and social good.

AI usage at Higher Education Institutions

AI usage in post-secondary educational institutions has been both in favor of and against. Wu, C., et al., 2024 writes of the advantages of AI in HEIs, such as favorable educational allowing students to obtain a personalized learning experience. Furthermore, it can automate administrative tasks. Villasenor, (2023), who allows students to use ChatGPT in writing assignments, reinforces usage of AI tools by encouraging students to use AI as a writing tool to save time and labor. Villasenor (2023) writes educational institutions should not focus on the fact that AI is being used, but instead how it is being used. Using AI in an ethical

and productive manner will prepare students competitively, as well as provide students with necessary skills to enter the twenty-first century AI driven workforce. In a previous commentary, Villasenor, J. (2019) wrote, "To help promote the productive growth of AI and to mitigate its risks, colleges should provide students with opportunities to engage with its technological, legal, ethical, economic, social, and political implications."

While HEIs can find AI to be beneficial in almost every position from teaching to administrative tasks, there are disadvantages, such as AI information can be inaccurate and currently requires research time to ensure there are no errors in calculations, plagiarism or false generated content, not to mention the legal issues currently being addressed or have yet to be addressed.

Pre-Covid

In 2018 per *China Today*, China's statistics showed over 1,000 AI education companies. The article spoke of transition of teachers' responsibilities from teaching a subject matter to guiding intelligent classroom teaching. As international business education evolves, the role of teachers in the educational system will change as well.

Post-Covid

Munn, L. 2022 briefly writes of online learning and the corporate side of post-Covid. This article will focus on the educational side and its effects on post-secondary educational institutions. Ditta, A. S., 2023 gives us a better insight on the shift to online education.

International Business Education and AI Merger

Villasenor, J. (2023) believes HEIs should be creating curricula that incorporates new AI-related courses, and sub-topics. International Business courses must be adopted. Albarracín Vanoy, R. J. (2023) highlights the globalization of logistics, in particular, automation and data-driven decision-making. The findings of his research conclude, "There is consensus on the role of AI in improving educational quality, highlighting its usefulness in optimizing processes and personalizing learning." The article concludes, AI usage in an international business education will be crucial in preparing students for the labor market, in which innovation and technology have become a way of business.

Simulation Problem-Based Learning (SPBL):

Due to the evolving industries and the integrating of artificial intelligence, automation and cyber-technology, graduates must meet new requirements. International businesses need new hires to have the ability to analyze and interpret complex issues. New job demands require a new way of thinking of international business; thus, international business education requires a new way of teaching. Graduates must have critical thinking skills coupled with problem-solving skills. May, O. S., et al. 2024 suggests the need for SPBL as a pedagogical solution for students to become ready to enter the digital workforce. This pedagogy uses simulations from real world problems for students to analyze and solve. Implementing SPBL is the key to preparing the new generation of students.

Meta-Verse in International Business

Binh, N. T. H. et al., 2024 explains comprehension improves with the implementation of metaverse pedagogy. Binh, N. T. H. et al., 2024 believes by engaging students in virtual reality pedagogies will increase comprehension, encouraging motivation, building trust, and augmenting their ability to complete learning outcomes. Binh, N. T. H. et al., 2024 suggests by adopting metaverse technologies, global business students and instructors will have the capability to be successful in an evolving digital age. This pedagogy uses avatars and virtual reality to prepare the student for the digital workforce.

Virtual Service Learning(vSL)

Before we discuss vSL, we must first define service learning (SL). SL, an experimental learning pedagogy taught in a traditional in person environment, in which students develop an understanding of a particular discipline through classroom knowledge and real-world experiences in the community. vSL has the same definition, however, teaching components are taught fully online. Sahatjian, Z. et al. (2026). vSL can be seen as a bridge connecting students with barriers to opportunities to learn from nonprofit organizations, both locally and globally. While vSL is new and research is continuing, it can be beneficial to a student in

an International Business program. Using this same pedagogy in an International Business program, students would be able to gain experience of working with international businesses virtually, while applying what they have learned in their online courses, at any location.

In the future, International Business programs must transform from a traditional pedagogy to a pedagogy infused with AI learning. AI will not only play a pivotal role in what students learn but how students learn the information. Not only must higher learning institutions integrate AI into the curriculum by offering additional courses or sub-topics but must be willing to teach ethical usage of AI. AI has become an integral part of world and will not only aid international business students, but the international industry as well.

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