


Chapter 5

Post–Globalization and Education: Redefining Access and Equity in a Technological Era

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ABSTRACT

In the wake of globalization's waning influence, a new era is emerging—one where educational access and equity must be reconsidered through the lens of technological transformation. This chapter explores the post-globalization landscape and the evolving role of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) in shaping the future of education. While digital tools have expanded access to knowledge, they have also introduced new forms of exclusion and inequality, particularly in underrepresented and marginalized communities. By interrogating how access is defined, who benefits from educational technologies, and what forms of equity are truly being pursued, this chapter offers a nuanced analysis of the intersection between technology and justice in education. Drawing on global examples and critical theory, it argues for a human-centered approach that reclaims education as a public good and not merely a digital service. Ultimately, it calls for systemic reform that aligns technological advancement with inclusive, ethical, and equitable educational futures.

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INTRODUCTION

The promise of globalization once gleamed with optimism. It envisioned a world interlinked by open markets, global citizenship, and unprecedented flows of knowledge. In the realm of education, globalization ushered in a period of rapid transformation—cross-border collaborations, the digitization of curricula, the expansion of English as a lingua franca of academia, and the hopeful rhetoric of democratized access (Voronkova et al., 2023). But behind that optimism, beneath the sheen of policy papers and development reports, cracks began to show. The benefits of globalization were unevenly distributed. The myth of borderless learning masked deep-rooted inequities. And then, somewhere between rising geopolitical rifts, economic realignments, and a global pandemic that redefined the meaning of distance and proximity, we entered what many now describe as the post-globalization era. This shift—more tectonic than transitional—is not merely political or economic. It is epistemological. It challenges how we conceptualize access, belonging, and participation in knowledge systems. In education, this demands a radical rethinking of the frameworks that have guided our assumptions for decades. The post-globalization moment is not just about the end of something—it is also the beginning of a complex negotiation with new forms of technological mediation, socio-cultural fragmentation, and the reassertion of national and regional identities in knowledge production.

At the heart of this negotiation lies the role of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs). No longer confined to the realm of innovation, ICTs are now woven into the very fabric of how education is delivered, assessed, and imagined (Roy & Swargiary, 2023). Yet, despite their ubiquity, these technologies are far from neutral. They are imbued with cultural assumptions, political agendas, and economic interests that shape who can access them, how they are used, and what kinds of futures they make possible. For all the talk of digital inclusion, the reality remains jarring: while some students learn in fully immersive virtual environments with real-time feedback and adaptive AI tutors, others struggle with spotty mobile data, power outages, or a lack of culturally relevant content. Access, therefore, cannot be reduced to a question of infrastructure—it is fundamentally a question of equity, justice, and voice. This chapter emerges from this tension. It seeks to explore how the collapse—or reconfiguration—of globalization impacts the landscape of educational access and equity in a technological era. It asks hard questions: What does it mean to have access to education when the very definition of education is in flux? How do ICTs amplify existing inequalities under the guise of innovation? And can we envision a post-globalization ethic of education that foregrounds human dignity, social justice, and epistemic plurality over digital uniformity? Drawing on a range of global contexts, this chapter argues that educational equity in the post-globalization

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