

A Critical Appraisal of the Philosophy of University and Its Debates: The Creation of Disempowered Youth in the Ethiopian Education Sector

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Abstract : This paper focuses on the educational philosophy of universities in Ethiopia and the debates surrounding it. It highlights the contradictory views on the role of universities, with some perceiving them as practical problem-solving institutions and others emphasizing the production and dissemination of knowledge. The aim of this study is to critically explore the debates around the educational philosophy of universities in Ethiopia. It also seeks to examine how the understanding of this philosophy contributes to the marginalization of youth in the country. This research adopts a phenomenological qualitative research design. It aims to understand the impact of socio-economic and political factors on university education and how youth from disadvantaged backgrounds experience marginalization in the job market. The study reveals that the understanding of educational philosophy varies across different contexts and over time. In the Ethiopian context, the philosophy of universities lacks a disinterested pursuit of knowledge and instrumentalist epistemology. Instead, it oversimplifies the philosophy to the point of devaluing knowledge and treating certificates as commodities, even in the absence of formal training. In conclusion, this research highlights the need for a critical appraisal of the educational philosophy of universities in Ethiopia. It emphasizes the negative impact of an oversimplified and commodified approach to knowledge on the empowerment of youth. By bringing attention to these issues, this study contributes to the broader understanding of the role of universities in society and calls for reforms in the Ethiopian education sector to promote empowerment rather than disempowerment.

Keywords : philosophy of universities, marginalized youth, diploma mill, instrumentalist epistemology, disinterested pursuit

Conference Title : ICHEC 2024 : International Conference on Higher Education Counseling

Conference Location : Paris, France

Conference Dates : August 29-30, 2024