Navigating Commercial Higher Education and Quality/Equity Debt: A Philosophical Inquiry

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Higher education faces the dual challenge of commercialization and ensuring quality and equity. This study delves into this interplay, drawing from Dewey, Michel Apple, and Nussbaum's philosophical perspectives. It analyzes the philosophical underpinnings of commercial higher education and quality/equity debt, aiming to understand their impact on educational values. By examining insights from these philosophers, the study bridges the gap between ideals and practical solutions, offering guidance for modern higher education challenges. The methodology employs a multi-dimensional approach. It begins with an in-depth analysis of Dewey, Apple, and Nussbaum's works to extract educational insights. An extensive literature review explores the effects of commercial higher education on quality and equity. Complementing this, empirical data is collected through surveys and interviews with educators and students, providing real-world perspectives on challenges and solutions. Dewey's emphasis on experiential learning lays the foundation for transformative pedagogy. Infusing project-based learning, interdisciplinary studies, and collaborative inquiry counteracts education's commodification, fostering engaged learners. Apple's critique of educational inequities emphasizes proactive measures for equitable access. Need-based scholarships, faculty diversity, and inclusive curriculum align with Apple's vision of education as empowerment. Nussbaum's capabilities approach underscores holistic development. Prioritizing student well-being, mental health support, and character education addresses quality/equity debt by nurturing contributors to society. Integrating these insights enables institutions to transcend commercialization and quality/equity debt challenges. This aligns with Dewey, Apple, and Nussbaum's ideals and propels higher education toward justice, inclusivity, and enlightenment. As higher education evolves, this study guides the bridge between ideals and practicality, ensuring education's transformative impact.

Keywords: Dewey, Higher Education, Nussbaum, Quality/Equity debt