



Globalization and Indian Higher Education

KEYWORDS

Education, Globalization, University and New Millennium

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ABSTRACT *The advancements in the field of digital network, Internet and satellite communication systems have promoted communication at a mind-boggling speed. This advancement in the field of information technology has given birth to globalization. Globalization can be explained as the growing interdependence and interconnectedness of the modern world through increased flow of goods, services, capital and information. The term globalization is used to sum up the contemporary world order. Globalization refers to the assimilation of all the continents of the world and makes one capitalistic political economy operating under a neo liberal free market ideology governed by one set of rules. The process of trade, exchange and communication is totally revolutionized. In such a global scenario, the roles of the universities have to be redefined. Globalization has resulted in higher education being thought of as a commercial product, with dealings in it being governed essentially by market forces and the principles of marketplace. The present era is called an era of academic globalization as the number of students aspiring and seeking foreign education is increasing. With the increasing globalization of economics, the globalization of higher education is inevitable. The paper entitled "Globalization and Indian Higher Education" is an attempt to know the concept of globalization and impact of globalization on Indian higher education system.*

Introduction

Globalization can be explained as the growing interdependence and interconnectedness of the modern world through increased flow of goods, services, capital and information. The term globalization is used to sum up the contemporary world order. Globalization refers to the assimilation of all the continents of the world and makes one capitalistic political economy operating under a neo liberal free market ideology governed by one set of rules. The United Nations Development Program (1999) observes "Globalization is not new, but the present era has distinctive features. Shrinking space, shrinking time and disappearing borders are linking people's lives more deeply, more intensely, more immediately than ever before". However, in the context of growing spirit of internationalization, when cultures are being merged, services are marketed, ideas and views are exchanged and international mobility is taken place in a very high magnitude, it is essential to have a deliberation on the concept of globalization, the process involved in globalizing the economy, culture and education and the difference of relationship of globalization with internationalization. Yeat (2001) defines globalization "as an extensive network of economic, culture, social and political interconnections and process which routinely transcend national boundaries". At least two major concepts of globalization emerge out of this definition. Firstly, it is an extensive network of economic, culture, social and political interconnections. Secondly, it transcends the natural boundaries cutting across the natural and artificial barriers as well.

Globalization has resulted in higher education being thought of as a commercial product, with dealings in it being governed essentially by market forces and the principles of marketplace. The present era is called an era of academic globalization as the number of students aspiring and seeking foreign education is increasing. With the increasing globalization of economics, the globalization of higher education is inevitable.

Present Scenario of Indian Higher Education System

Today, India has the largest systems of higher education in terms of number of institutions. This has increased to 677 universities and university level institutions (43 Central Universities, 295 State Universities, 154 State Private Universities, 130 Deemed Universities, 50 Institutes of National Importance plus other Institutes, 5 Institutions established under

State Legislature Acts) and 35,539 colleges. There has been tremendous growth in the enrolment also. During the academic year 2010-11, the total number of students enrolled, in the formal system, in the universities and colleges has been reported to be 16.98 million. Similarly, there has also been growth in different programs in Technical Education as such; during 2010-11 about 10364 Technical Programs were running. There has also been growth in the intake in technical education and for the year 2010-11 the intake has been 2.62 million. The Open and Distance Learning (ODL) system initially witnessed slower growth in respect of enrolment, however, the same has now gained momentum and during 2010-11, 3.75million (estimated) students got themselves enrolled in ODL system.

The study of existing trade in higher education shows that the country is already quite deeply involved in this trade. Approximately 96,754 students from India are enrolled in USA through the modes of consumption abroad, virtual university and franchise and twining programs. The process speeded up after 1991 with the adoption of liberalization policies. Delegates from foreign universities now generally visit India to market their education. Indian agencies and agents are also hired to recruit students. There is increasing trend towards setting up franchise and twining programs especially in collaboration with American and British universities. More than 30,000 Indian students were getting education in 1995-96 in the USA alone. As far as export of such service of India is concerned i.e. foreign students coming to India for study, the current prospect is not too bright. India already gets some 27,531 international students from neighboring countries. Even though IGNOU programs are offered in some Middle East countries, the response is very limited. However, getting students from developed countries, even from East European countries would be very difficult, as our standards of campus facilities are poor in general. As far as establishing institution of higher education is concerned, India's competitiveness is very much in doubt, as it needs address the core issues of capital expenditure requirements. In fact, instead, domestic higher education problems are addressed first to stay import competitive. However, one exception must be brought to our notice. The Central Institute of English and Foreign Languages (CIEFL), Hyderabad successfully lunched English Language Teaching (ELT) program in Kirgizstan. The institute won the contract in succession although there was

strong competition from other countries. India must capitalize from such experience and duplicate the efforts elsewhere.

The Indian Institute of Management, Ahmadabad started, although recently, a two year Global MBA program. It also has a successful exchange program for students. More than 45 students go abroad for a term for which they do not have to pay fees. One must also remember that fees in western countries are much more than those in India. Promoting such exchange, the program on reciprocal fee-waiver basis will certainly be useful to India both in terms of not losing foreign exchange and in up gradation of their facilities and infrastructure of the institutes in the near future. And with that, the institutes can also attract foreign students for their post graduate program in long run.

Once India makes commitments for trade in higher education under WTO policy regime, and allows market access, the commercial presence mode will be strengthened. Thus India must realize the impending threats of trade in education and try to convert these in to opportunities. With many more countries waiting to tap this lucrative sector, India has to take the lead on behalf of the developing countries by using WTO (world Trade Organization) as the forum and a world-class education sector as the weapon to demand its due share of the colossal education market.

Globalization and Indian Higher Education

With the onslaught of globalization the Indian higher education has undergone a metamorphic change. There has been a shift from a traditional or conventional type of campus based university to an internet based virtual university and from time specific and space confined education to a more flexible, continuing (life long) and perceptual education. The very objective of higher education has also under gone a corresponding change. The traditional objectives like free and unrestrained pursuit of knowledge and its dissemination, developing skills, inculcation of values and developing leadership qualities etc. have been superimposed by marketization, commoditification, and commercialism have become priority. To cope with this new objective the institutions of higher learning have gone far away in making structural adjustments and systematic changes. Considerable importance has been given to quality aspects in order to attract more foreign students and earn more foreign exchange. Globalization of higher education in India has been operated in following four modes:

- Operation of educational institutes on the foreign land by granting franchise or agreements by making arrangements with the educational institutes of the host countries.
- Establishing the campuses/centers of the foreign universities in host countries.
- Establishing centers by the government of the countries abroad for promoting education programs offered by their universities/institutes with multiple objectives to enroll more and more international students.
- Operating through virtual campuses by using satellite and information super highway (Paliwal, 2002).

Impact of Globalization on Higher Education

Sungoh (2003) while assessing the impact of globalization discusses three models within the framework of which the entire process of globalization operates:

Hyper globalization Model which predicts that the global market will replace obsolete nations and the decisions are supposed to be taken by the market to correspond the raising demands, rather than the governments.

- Global Skeptics Model which argues that trade is increasingly located within transnational economic blocs which in practice exclude more nations than they embrace. The

developed nations are becoming even richer at the expense of the under developed nations who can not afford the membership fee to the new global club. In fact the global skeptics recognize hyper globalization as a political doctrine but an economic reality.

- Transformational Model which insists that global markets are not replacing the nations, but are transforming the relationships within and between them that we have lived with for so long.

From the view, though it is difficult to substantiate the characteristics of globalization but its effect on various sectors such as economy, agriculture, general services, culture and education are well felt.

The economy sector has been affected as the multinational companies have been allowed to market their products in other countries. The entries of foreign multinational companies have put questions on the survival of the indigenous companies which are basically smaller than them in terms of investments, technology and quality of products etc. Though the economies have received a great Philip; the competitions between Indian enterprises and multinationals have been uneven and tough also. The agricultural sector has been affected as the entries of foreign companies have affected the price and quality of various agricultural products. Similarly a lot of changes have been witnessed in the service sector. With the development of economy, the foreign companies have opened their franchising centers, which provide the customers a wide variety of choices with reasonable prices. In cultural sector also the impact of globalization is distinctly visible. It brings forth more standardization and cultural homogeneity. The education sector being the most fragile one has noticed a perceptible impact. There has been high degree of student mobility and opening of educational campuses in other countries. Institutional collaborations, networking, establishing educational campuses and franchising the educational institution abroad for running foreign programs and awarding foreign degrees etc. have gained considerable momentum.

Present Status of Globalization of Higher Education

Though India is getting international students from about 100 countries to pursue their higher studies, the reasons of their coming here may be concluded to be other than their expectation of getting high quality education. Such reasons may be discussed by categorizing the foreign students coming to India into two categories.

- Economically strong and technologically developed countries (e.g. USA, Canada, U.K, Australia, countries of European Union, Japan). The NRI's and expatriate students from these developed countries come to India mainly for: (i) professional courses as self financing students in private, medical and engineering colleges due to lower cost of education and easier access because of reservations for NRI's; (ii) programs in India studies on either Government of India scholarships or self financing.
- International students from less developed countries come in practically every discipline due to comparatively lower educational and maintenance cost in India, greater relevance of Indian higher education in their developing countries, culturally similar environment and English as the medium of instruction in many higher education institutes.

Tasks before a University in the New Millennium

The challenges and tasks before a modern university are multifaceted in nature. The tasks before the university will be much different and challenging.

- There is a growing close and effective relationship between higher education and economic performance. A university has to accept the new role of economic cata-

lyst in the context of globalization, in information age, rapid distil economy and multifarious political developments.

- No country can isolate itself from various global developments. Non-participation and non co-operation at international platforms would mean loss of numerous opportunities of advancements. Universities play a lead role as a leader in the fields of information dissemination and exchange of creative ideas.
- The future universities are looked upon as key player in the economic development of their region. They will be the true centers of policy formulation, and will play a key role in attracting investments, gearing up of total economic activity and employment.
- Rapid technological waves of change, the advent of the Internet and globalization have propelled us from an industrial economy to information driven digital economy. This development is giving birth to a new class of knowledge workers. This demands a new set up of educational system, with a digital university education system.
- The universities that produce these knowledge workers can logically contribute to higher GDP and a balance of trade. In a globally competitive world with an increasing emphasis on high level skills and innovation, universities will play a pivotal role in the economic growth of the country.

Conclusion

The basic objective of globalization is to enhance productivity and to make educational system an instrument for preparing students who can compete in the world market as productive members of society. An important component of globalization in relation to education is the need of producing manpower of high quality that can successfully face competition in the world market. The new identity of Indian graduates as promoters of economic growth at a global level and affordability of Indian families to spend more money on education coupled with liberal policy of government for giving foreign exchange for education has made India a prime destination for developed nations. They are looking at India as a good 'education market'. It is interesting to see that consumption abroad i.e. through the presence of students abroad, is at present, the most important mode of trade in higher education. But now other modes like cross border supply (distance education mode) and commercial presence (setting of the campus in other country) are becoming equally important.

New trends in the area of multinational education are leading to such benefits as large profits to institutions involved and satisfaction to students in the form of obtaining a foreign degree. Since foreign education is already popular among Indian students and such popularity is increasing, the need of the hour is to make Indian higher education popular and desired among students of foreign origin. The best approach for this is provided by total quality management of our higher education.

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