



## Globalization and Higher Education in India: A Study

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### *Abstract*

*Globalization has a multi-dimensional impact on the system of education. It has underlined the need for reforms in the educational system with particular reference to the wider utilization of information technology, giving productivity dimension to education and emphasis on its research and development activities. Higher education is assuming an upward significance for developing countries, especially countries like India which is experiencing service-led growth. Higher education is all about generating knowledge encourage critical thinking and imparting skills relevant to society. The major objective is to make the segment of higher education in India more competitive globally. This paper examines the impact and challenges that the globalization brought to higher education in India.*

**Keywords:** Globalization, Higher Education, manpower

### **Introduction**

India has seen a consistently high rate of economic growth in the recent years. It has now become a major player in the global knowledge economy. Skill-based activities have made significant contribution to this growth. Such activities depend on the large pool of qualified manpower that is fed by its large higher education system. It is now widely accepted that higher education has been critical to India's emergence in the global knowledge economy. Globalization is no more a recent phenomenon in the world's socio-economic system. The impact of globalisation has been uneven and responses to it are varied in terms of its positive and negative dimensions the world over. Initial enthusiasm for globalization as a beneficial set of processes has yielded to an understanding that the phenomenon is largely associated with increasing social inequality within and between countries as well as instability and conflict. Thus, it

is time to assess the impact of globalization on India's economy, as it has not yielded any spectacular outcomes. While it has expedited the pace of development in some areas, it has led to certain absurdities in others. Therefore, it is necessary that steps should be taken to reduce, if not remove, its baneful fall out. Globalization has a multi-dimensional impact on the system of education. It has underlined the need for reforms in the educational system with particular reference to the wider utilization of information technology, giving productivity dimension to education and emphasis on its research and development activities.

Globalization, a key reality in the 21st century, has already profoundly influenced higher education. An academic revolution has taken place in higher education in the past half century marked by transformations unprecedented in scope and diversity. One of the most visible aspects of



globalization is student mobility. It is estimated that around 2.5 million students, several researchers, degrees and universities moving in the globe freely and it is predicted that this number may rise to 7 million international students by 2020. Globalization, as a process no doubt has given importance to decentralized educational governance and control.

The centre has viewed decentralization as a way to increase efficiency by giving more responsibility to local level functionaries, which in turn is expected to increase motivation and accountability. Further it is trying to involve the local community in the very planning and decision making process of education and making them responsible for "the state of the art". Globalization though has contributed for rise in living standards, improvement in health and education and Technology advancement, especially in the area of communication and computers during this period, yet in the recent past, there have been apprehensions expressed in terms of its impact, especially on the people who still live below the poverty line.

During Independence of India, there were close to 19 universities and 591 colleges with around 0.2 million enrollment. Today the no. has changed drastically with 261 universities, over 8,361 colleges and over 8.5 million enrollments. The growth story has been absolutely significant. India claims to have second largest higher education system in the world, however, in view of its vast population (close to 17 per cent of the world's population) India will be one of the backward countries in respect of education, especially higher education.

Higher Education System in India compare to developing / developed

countries needs substantial improvement. The percentage of students taking higher education is hardly about 13 % whereas the same is varying between 28 to 90 %, across the world. The lowest % being 28 % and the same is as high as 90 % in developed countries. Basic education must reach to maximum number of children from different strata of the society so that they are eligible to pursue higher education.

### **Crisis in Indian Higher Education**

India has the third largest higher education system in the world, behind only the US and China, that is churning out around 2.5 million graduates every year. Not only is this just about 10 percent of India's youth but the quality of this output is also below par. If we leave aside the IITs, the IIMs, and some other institutions such as the All India Institute of Medical Science, the Indian Institute of Science, and Tata Institute of Fundamental Research, we will find a higher education sector that is increasingly unwilling and unable to bear the weight of the rising expectations of an emerging India. The Indian universities, which should have been the centre of cutting edge research and hub of intellectual activity, are more in the news for political machinations than for research excellence. Years of underinvestment in higher education and a mistaken belief in providing uniform support to all universities irrespective of their output has made sure that neither the academics have adequate support to provide top-quality education to their students nor do they have any incentive to undertake cutting-edge research. India desperately needs research-oriented globally recognised universities to be able to participate in the modern-day



knowledge-based global economy to its full potential.

It has been pointed out that a process of privatisation of higher education system is underway in India, a result not of some comprehensive programme of education reform but as a consequence of the collapse of the public sector and the withdrawal of the middle classes. This is indeed a worrisome trend and it is hoped that the India realises that just by pumping more money into the system or by building more universities it will not be able to remedy the underlying rot in the system. While the blue-print for establishing world-class universities is the necessary first-step, it will not solve the problem on its own. The focus on quantity is not the correct approach towards solving the problem of declining quality of Indian higher education system. The policy-makers do not seem to have a clear grasp of what it takes to build institutions that can produce the kind of research and teaching that Indian higher education desperately needs.

Higher education cannot be reduced to mere economic instrumentality with its sole focus on equipping students with the practical skills needed by employers. Nor should the purpose of our higher education be simply to produce engineers and scientists able to compete with the Chinese. Reduction of learning to job skills rather than an inquiry into the larger issues of life can be disastrous in the long run. India will have to nurture learning for its own sake and to foster other less quantifiable and profitable – but still valuable features of higher education. If the main goals of higher education are teaching students to think critically, broaden their intellectual

horizons and promote self-awareness, then the Indian higher education system should be considered a comprehensive failure. And it is not clear if the government is interested in an overarching overhaul that can stem the rot in the nation's higher education system.

### **Paradigm Shift in Indian Higher Education**

A paradigm shift in the education system is essential to help students to express their creativity and make teaching-learning process more children centric and interactive. The Indian educational system to face challenges of globalization through Information technology offer opportunities to evolve new paradigms shifts in developmental education. The distinction between formal, non-formal and informal education will disappear when transition from industrial society to information society takes place. The paradigm shift in education is essentially.

### **Impact of Globalization on Indian Higher Education**

Higher education has received a lot of attention in India over the past few years. There are four reasons for this recent focus. First, country's weak higher education system is being blamed for skill shortages in several sectors of economy. Second, reservation quotas in higher education institutions, particularly the more reputed ones that provide access to high status and best-paid jobs became a highly divisive issue, central to the policy of inclusive growth and distributive justice, and hence politically very important. Third, in the backdrop of the first two developments, it began to be argued that the country would not be able to sustain its growth momentum and



maintain competitiveness unless problems with higher education are fixed. Last, demand for higher education continues to outpace the supply due to growing population of young people, gains in school education, the growing middle class and their rising aspirations.

Globalization has a multi-dimensional impact on the system of education. It promotes new tools & techniques in this area like E-learning, Flexible learning, Distance Education Programs and Overseas training. Globalization will mean many different things for education. In the near future, "it will mean a more competitive and deregulated educational system modeled after free market but with more pressure on it to assure that the next generation of workers are prepared for some amorphous 'job market of 21st century'. Globalization is impacting the institutional framework in both developing and industrial countries. It is changing the way in which governments perceive their role in the society. It has also far reaching implications for socio economic development and educational systems of countries all over the World. With abundance of natural resources, India has huge young and skilled man power to excel in every walk of life. The effects of globalization on education bring rapid developments in technology and communication are foreseeing changes within learning systems across the world as ideas, values and knowledge, changing the roles of students and teachers, and producing a shift in society from industrialization towards information based society.

The impact of globalization on higher education provides new dimensions for study and research which will no longer limited by national

boundaries but also wields a subtle treat to national cultures and autonomy. Internationalization has been very prominent at regional and international level. Among the most critical dimensions of change are the convergent impacts of globalization, the increasing importance of knowledge as a main driver of growth, and the information and communication revolution.

### **Challenges for Higher Education in India**

The current globalization of higher education creates both challenges and opportunities. The relationship between universities education and globalization gives special attention. Education will be the answer to many problems raised by globalization. Educational goals are seen to be an area of great concern in the era of globalization.

**Regulatory Structure:** The not-for-profit requirement has restricted corporate involvement, resulting in high fragmentation and the space being dominated by small regional chain which is not professionally managed.

**Quality of Education:** While private sector institutes have grown at a rapid pace over the last decade, quality of education delivered is still suspect in many private institutes. The University affiliation structure enforces central curriculum standards; while this has helped enforce a minimum standard of curriculum to some extent, this has also hindered delivery of updated or differentiated course offerings by private colleges.

**Lack of Vocational Bias:** Indian higher education still lacks a vocational bias with a large proportion of students still enrolling in general courses that do not



provide job-oriented training. Industry demand for vocationally trained individuals is leading to rapid growth in more industry relevant courses and professional education.

**Shortage of well-qualified & trained teachers:** Availability of qualified instructors is a key challenge in the higher education segment and hampers quality of education delivered. Reasons for the shortage include low salaries and availability of higher paying alternatives for qualified professionals. There is also currently no training mandated to enhance communication or teaching skills for college instructors, only a higher doctoral degree in the course of teaching is required.

**Low Access to Student Loans:** The education loan market has been growing rapidly but still caters largely only to students enrolling in leading recognized institutes. With the significant increase in fees witnessed in the space in last five years, easier access to student credit is becoming a necessity for a large proportion of students.

**Need for Checks and Regulations Against Malpractices:** Private investment helps offset the funding crunch in the educational systems but could affect the accessibility of poorer income groups to education. In addition, the privatization of technical and professional education has also brought up issues such as the serious shortage of infrastructure, technical expertise and teaching facilities. Charges of underhand practices in private institutions reinforce the need for effective regulation, transparent systems and the supervision of private education.

**Enhancement of Skills:** The next big thing. Shortage of trainers and ICT based interface are likely to challenge classroom

based coaching models. Private players are expected to focus on technical education and pre-schools. Also, the gulf between formal education and the market's skill requirements is driving demand for vocational education and skill development services.

#### **Future Prospects**

A major challenge developing nations face today is that of creating an environment conducive to the cultural, economic and social development of their people. Historically, education has been a determining factor of the progress of human civilization. The modern world is using education increasingly as an instrument for all round development. There is a growing and welcome realization amongst the developing countries that education is the key to development. Education shapes the destiny of a nation. The quality of manpower in any country ultimately determined the sustainable wellbeing of its people. Education, as a liberating force, losses, growth, social equality and technological progress. Globalization and the emergence of a new society more dependent on knowledge and information technology have further underlined the importance of education in pursuing developmental goals.

Today there is a strong feeling that the skills of graduates' do not match the needs and the expectations of the employment sector. In the developing countries unemployable graduates pose a greater problem than unemployment itself. The five top skills identified by employers and required of the education work force are (1) Time Management, (2) Ability to work under pressure (3) Accuracy and Attention to details (4) Oral Communication skills, (5) Managing different tasks at the sometime. These



skills today are the parameters by which the quality of higher education is assessed. Such education enable, persons, societies and even nations acquire competencies required for living meaningfully in a competitive globalize world. Though these trends communicate a positive picture, the Indian higher education system ails from significant structural shortcomings and faces huge challenges in meeting future expectations. Despite having more higher education institutions than any other country in the world, hardly any feature in the leading institutions in the world.

#### **Conclusion:**

Education in India is seen as one of the ways to upward social mobility. Good education is seen as a stepping stone to a high flying career. Education System in India currently represents a great paradox. Globalization is expected to have a positive influence on the volume, quality and spread of knowledge through increased interaction among the various states. Globalization leads to challenges and threats also. The major concern is to deliver world class education with rationalized curriculum and practical exposure. This is possible only by attracting talented and experienced persons in to academics. At present it is difficult to assess not only the nature and dimensions of globalization, but also what it means to the field of education. The major issues plaguing the higher education sector is the lack of qualified faculty and absence of updated syllabus as per the global standards. To resolve these issues, we have to provide attractive opportunities to young scholars to take up teaching profession and devise the curriculum of the institutions as per the demand of the industry. Offer training programmes and

launch particular venues in which faculty can come together and exchange experiences with usage of software used for instructions.

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