



Challenges of Globalization on Indian Higher Education

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Abstract

Higher Education has attained a key-position in the knowledge society under a globalised economy. However, the challenges faced are immense and far-reaching its impact on the clients of an organisation, Individuals, Institutions, Systems and Societies is not only net-clear but unclear also not comprehensible at this moment unless it is viewed in the context of various other factors that are simultaneously operating on the higher education system. Some agree that the erratic rapid cross national flows of people, goods, capital and information may dissolve the nation State, push-institutions (university is the one) into a common mould whereas others disagree. It is assumed that globalization promises dramatic and rewarding change to the higher education systems, of societies, which are relatively stable in their political, social and institutional makeup, while for the others, it may threaten the very stability needed to build well performing higher education system, It is also true, that so far globalization has given the advanced economies a huge advantage as they had made enough preparation prior to its launching while others are caught in the trap without any preparation.

Keeping the above in view, present paper deliberates on the following:

1. The impact of Globalization on Indian Higher Education System in general and institutions in particular, and also when combined with WTO & GATS.
2. The effect of the resultant outcome of the above on achieving the stated goals of higher education and the pronouncements made in the Constitution such as Access, Relevance, Quality and Equity etc.
3. The Globalizations limited access and its commitment to different groups of people viz geographical, social, economic, political, lingual, age group and such other groups.
4. The above three issues affect the higher education policy, program, structure and function, structure function relations and the needed restructuring at the center, state and Institution levels.
5. Its influence on the stake holders decisions and actions and the resultant outcome and in turn its impact on the society at large.
6. All these in the present context of changed economic and other policies such as privatization, liberalization, Industrialization, Resource Crunch, invasion of new communication etc. and finally
7. The impact of all these on nations development and identity and the individuals safety and security

Key words: Higher Education, Globalisation,



Introduction

Globalization

As it is known globalization, no doubt, promises drastic and rewarding change to the higher education systems of the developed countries. Whereas for the developing and the underdeveloped countries, where the system is facing the scarcity of resources, it threatens the stability needed to build the well performing system. Developing countries often have to adjust willingly or unwillingly both to the quickening pulse of international change, and accordingly, reform on several fronts simultaneously, which may not be possible under the given resource status of higher education.

In spite of continued debate and discussions on this issue, still it is not clear whether this new global policy would keep in view the interests of global capitalism or the needs of particular societies in general and disadvantaged groups in particular. The fear that the process of Globalization Policy may apparently shape the perspectives of educational reforms in favour of those who have already benefited from the system as they are in the position to influence the policy is haunting those who are not in a position to influence the policy

Globalization is expected to be a process through which an increasingly free flow of ideas, people, goods, services and capital would lead to the integration of economies and societies. It is characterized by an accelerated flow of trade, capital, and information, as well as mobility of individuals, across geographical borders. It reflects a more comprehensive level of interaction than that has occurred in the past, suggesting something beyond the word "International" . It implies a diminishing importance of national borders and strengthening of identities that stretch beyond those rooted in a limited locale in terms of particular country or region. It can also be defined as the intensification of worldwide social relations which link distant localities in such a way that local happenings are shaped by events occurring at any distant place and vice versa. It is this construction of time-space compression that has given rise to popular notions of "One-World" "Global Village", etc.

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 and the question that is being raised repeatedly is "will they also equally share the benefits?" if not equal, then "what will they get"? More than these "What is that which is typical Indian and is known to be precious and pride of the country that both the groups i.e. "haves" and "have nots" have to lose?

In other words, the concerns expressed are with regard to:

1. Benefits of globalization to the different sections of the society - it is believed to be "far uneven".
2. Its role in creating greater social stratification and inequality widening the gaps between the "haves" and "have not's"
3. Its role in destabilizing and distorting the indigenous culture, tradition and values.
4. Its role in alienating the youth from its own place by uprooting and at the same time not sure of providing a landing space.
5. More than these, its role in facilitating the rich countries to grow richer by drawing the resources from the poor.

The thrust of Globalization is expected to push Higher Education to face far-reaching challenges According to the Spanish sociologist, Manuel Castells, one of the leading authorities on Globalization states, "effects on the university will be more drastic than industrialization, urbanization and secularization combined. It is the biggest challenge that the University has ever faced for more than a century and a half."



Guy Neave and Frans Van Voght suggest "there was a neo-Keynesian consensus in higher education operating from the end of the war to the late seventies. This consensus saw higher education as having an economic aspect in the advancement of resource development through public investment, a political aspect in raising the overall level of education, and a social aspect in the provision of access and opportunity. This consensus has now broken down due to a greater emphasis on the need for higher education to respond to industry and ensure national economic survival." Robert Cowen makes a similar point in relation to an ideological shift in what he identifies as "the transition from modern to late-modern education systems, whereby the strong political and civic motives of the former are replaced by the dominance of global economic paradigms in the latter.

John Smyth argues "the globalization of world capitalism has had a significant impact on higher education policy and produced changes in the sector. In particular, globalization has caused a major restructuring of the economy, and the government has reacted within a corporatist and technocratic framework to create new technology-based industries. This has created moves to reform higher education in order to produce the necessary technocrats. This strategy will not succeed, and that when it fails, higher education will be the scapegoat

Globalization, as some argue, redistributes exclusion across countries and within the country. In their view, "society splits into two types of people: those 'at the social core' and those who hang on with their finger nails to the 'social periphery' even in the world's richest economies. A recent estimate suggests that no more than 20 percent of students currently in higher education will be at the core of the rising Knowledge Economy. The remainder will be a 'subordinate social layer'. This is not a recipe for social cohesion." "Societies on the fringe of the global economy unconnected are the fashionable word face exclusion even more devastating than their present difficulties"

Globalization - Challenge or an Opportunity

Two of the strategic and long-term questions that Globalization poses to the higher education system are: (1) Commodification the use of knowledge as a purchasable and saleable good. (2) Alternative providers with the profit motive of higher education's landscape that are engaged in the transmission of knowledge using Information and Communication Technologies.

Displacing and reinterpreting knowledge raises fundamental questions to the Universities, more so, in the area of autonomy and academic freedom. They also pose questions with regard to the very objectives of the Higher Education system in terms of its ethical obligation to make knowledge freely available to those who seek it. The apprehension is that globalization may herald a basic change in the very role that the Universities play in society. Defining universities simply as 'service providers' and changing their responsibility to the society for the shorter gains, may in the long run, ruin the very objectives with which the universities were established. The dynamics of Globalization is no doubt a challenge as well as an opportunity.

Higher education today, Globalization or no Globalization, is no more constrained by geographical boundaries. Innovative forms of translocation and transnational education have become a possibility. Multi campus institutions, "franchised institutions learning centers providing university degree, off campus education, distance learning, internet based distance education, virtual universities merging of part studies to combine into a whole for obtaining national as well as international degrees are only few models as examples. As far as higher education is concerned, an enthused and well-informed student has umpteen choices, for the first time in the history of education, to access a "global marketplace". Yet, the matter of the fact is, this access remains only as availability. Who can reach it and how? What alternative provisions are made for those who cannot afford to reach is the crux of the matter.



Challenges of WTO and GATS

WTO was established on January 1, 1995 by replacing GATT at the Uruguay Round. According to the European Commission "the GATS is first and foremost an instrument for the benefit of business". GATS has two components (i) The framework of agreement containing 29 articles and (ii) a number of Annexes, Ministerial Decisions etc., as well as the schedules of commitments undertaken by each Member government, which bind them to allow market access and/or remove existing restrictions to market access. This agreement in general covers all the services including the education services. This is a first multilateral agreement, which provides "legally enforceable rights to trade in all services. Only the services provided entirely by the government do not fall within the GATS rule. Whereas the services provided either by the Government partially, or some prices are charged, as happens in Education or provided by the private providers shall fall under GATS rule. Some people argue that any institution that requires payment, like fees, should fall under GATS as it currently exists.

Commitments Under GATS

The general procedure of commitment under GATS is that countries submit their schedules under five sub-sectors of education and four modes of supply of education" The five sub-sectors are: Primary Education; Secondary Education; Higher Education, Adult Education and Other Education. The four modes of supply of education are Cross-Border Supply, Consumption Abroad; Commercial Presence/Franchisee and Twinning Programmes

The The idea behind this is the creation of an open, global marketplace where services, like education, can be traded to the highest bidder. GATS cover the educational services of all countries whose educational systems are not exclusively provided by the public sector, or those educational systems that have commercial purposes. Since total public monopolies in education are extremely rare, almost all of the world's educational systems fall under the GATS umbrella. In India, we cannot get exemption in education from the application of GATS because education at all levels, particularly at higher education level, is not entirely free i.e. some fees have to be paid.

Present Scenario of Higher Education In India

As of today we have more than 300 universities, institutions of higher learning and deemed universities, out of which 95 deemed to be universities, 13 institutions of national importance, 19 central universities, 203 state universities, 5 institutions established under state legislation act and about 16,885 colleges including 203 Autonomous colleges. The education system has increased fourteen-fold in terms of the number of universities and thirty three-fold in terms of the number of colleges, in comparison to the number at the time of Independence. At the beginning of the academic year 2004, the total number of students enrolled in the formal system of education in universities and colleges was 99.53 lakh-12.97 lakh (13.3 per cent) in university departments and 86.57 lakh (86.97 per cent) in affiliated colleges and 4.37 lakhs teaching Faculty employed making India's system of higher education the second largest in the world. "To finance this expansion, the Government of India has consistently increased its share in the total expenditure on higher education-from 49.1 per cent in 1950-51 to more than 90 per cent today. It is significant that despite these impressive statistics the system caters to hardly 6 per cent of the relevant age group, as compared to more than 80 per cent in the developed countries. This is partly because the expansion has been often caused by the growth of the population . Nevertheless, the fact illustrates how difficult it is for developing countries to bridge gaps and to keep pace with the developed world. Massification of higher education has rather been responsible for this expansion, resource constraints are severe, and the quality of education available to most Indian students is questionable in terms of its ability to face the challenges posed by further education as well as the employment market. The situation is further complicated by the rigidities of the higher education system, the political pressures from regional, religious and caste-based groups, and related problems.



The Centre, State, Institutions and Regulatory Bodies have taken initiatives in order to face the challenges of globalization. The National Policy on Education 1986 and the revised policy, POA 1992 has made no reference to the operating of foreign universities in India or promotion of Indian Higher Education abroad. In fact there is a need for evolving a clear policy on these aspects of transnational education. However, in the recent past an attempt has been made to work out the possibility of regulating the entry of the foreign universities. UGC has recommended that foreign universities to offer their programmes in India; they should be accredited in their respective country; Degree awarded to the students should be valid for India as well as in the country where degree-giving institution is located; There should be reciprocal arrangements for Indian Universities to operate in those countries from where the institutions/programs have come to India.

Government of India M/HRD (DOE) has evolved a mechanism to screen the applications of such institutions for approval and promotion of internationalization of Higher Education through COFIE. COFIE is also expected to promote Indian higher education abroad. The scheme is expected to grant approval to only genuine foreign universities to operate in India.

On behalf of GOI already there are several schemes operating which are offered by various regulatory bodies concerned with higher education such as travel grants, seminar Grants, research Grants etc. These schemes support bilateral exchange of academic staff from India to foreign countries. There are also similar programs offered by UNESCO, UNICEF, UNDP, French, German, Canadian, etc. embassies and Commonwealth and such other organizations. All these are aimed at bilateral transaction and aimed at Quality improvement

CUGO UGC provides financial assistance to universities and colleges for establishment of computer centers and up-gradation/augmentation of computer facilities in the center in order to use computers in research and training. 130 universities have been provided grants for setting up computer centers. 135 training programmes were approved for training teachers in the use of computers. Each programme covers 15 colleges. Computer assistance to the college development council of 64 universities has been provided. All the ASC's are equipped with computer facilities. In addition, 4219 colleges have been given financial assistance on setting computer facilities."

CA An ambitious IT Action Plan with 108 specific recommendations was submitted to Parliament and immediately approved in July 1998". Three general objectives were specified: to build a world class infrastructure; to increase software and IT services exports to \$50billion by 2008; and to make IT available to all Indian citizens by 2008-"IT for all by 2008. Never has so much been promised to so many. Despite this explosion of interest and dramatic growth in use, the glaring fact is that the Internet has had a negligible effect on most Indians, as only 5 percent of the population of one billion can be considered Internet users. Demographic breakdowns demonstrate disparities common to most countries only more extreme. 72% of the users are male, and 42% are between the ages of 15 and 24. Only 27 percent are above 35. Nearly 85 percent of the user base is in eight cities.

The plan launched "Operation Knowledge" with a series of recommendations aimed at accelerating the spread of computers and IT use. Special financial schemes to make computers affordable to students and teachers were promised, along with a commitment that computers and the Internet would be made available in every school, polytechnic, college, university and public hospital by 2003 All universities, engineering colleges, medical colleges and other institutions of higher learning, as well as research and development organizations, would be networked for distance education programs to improve the quality of education. Virtual institutes would be set up in different parts of the country for distance education. Various initiatives to promote IT literacy were indicated, including a "Teach the Teachers" program. Connectivity is coming to Universities, and distance education is making available new learning opportunities.

To protect the constitutional provisions with regard to access, equity and equality, suitable policies have been formulated in the education sector To equalize access, the policy of providing opportunities for higher education to all those who aspire to it has been enunciated by the center To serve this commitment, facilities have been massively expanded. Further to cater to the disadvantaged the reservation policy of reserving particular quota of



seats for SC/ST. Backward Class and Physically Challenged students in colleges and universities have been in operation for quite long. Reservation in employment, both in teaching as well as in administrative posts, is also one of the major components of this policy.

Besides these, several other policy interventions have been made in various Five Year Plans of the country and by the UGC to improve access, retention and better performance of the disadvantaged groups. These include Reduction in fee charged at the time of admission Scholarships and Freeships, Book Banks and Book Loan Facility etc: Boarding and Lodging Facilities, Reservation of seats for SC/ST in general bestes, in addition to the provision for separate hostels for SC/ST, etc. Bounding and Lodging facilities are also provided for two and Physically Challenged, Relaxation in admission criteria Le, such as lowering of minimum marks and increasing of maximum age; and Exemption in respect of duration of course, papers, marks etc.

For improving performance of these groups in colleges and at competitive examinations, institutions of higher education also make provision for remedial teaching, pre-examination coaching facilities, preparation for competitive examination, counselling facility and finally to monitor the implementation of various programmes and initiate action, there is provision for setting up Human Right Cell, SC/ST Cell, Women Cell in the universities and colleges

For removing disparities and regional imbalances, the UGC has relaxed norms for giving development grants to colleges located in educationally backward, rural or border areas and to colleges catering to SC/ST students and women

Status of Human Rights in selected Universities and Colleges

Co To assess the availability of various policies, programmes and facilities in higher education. There is an urgent need to access and find out from the students their awareness and utilization of facilities, as also to cross check the availability of the facilities in institutions where they are enrolled Analyses of different policies such as institutions following the policy of reservation; level at which this policy is being followed for academic and non academic staff, concessions, provisions and exemption for disadvantaged section; availability of special infrastructural facilities for women, disadvantaged and physically challenged; status of remedial teaching, pre-examination coaching facilities, counselling centres and special cells in the universities and colleges: and provision for inclusion of disadvantaged in decision making bodies. The findings reveal that they are not at all satisfactory. If this is the status of various policies and programmes initiated by the government. than what will be its status under globalization. Under these circumstances the impact of GATS' WTO and globalization needs to be viewed and reviewed with great care.

WTO on Higher Education in India

The proposed WTO initiatives are expected to bring pressure on the universities worldwide into sharp focus. It is believed that academia would be significantly altered if higher education worldwide were subject to the strictures of the WTO. The viewpoint of University serving as a broad public goods would be altered, and in turn would be subjected to the commercial pressures of the marketplace guided by the international treaties and legal requirements. Subjecting academia to the rigors of a WTO-enforced marketplace may destroy the very objectives of the higher education system in general and universities in particular. which were established with great hopes of contributing towards achieving the goals of national development and identity. The implications are many fold and hardly understood. "It is especially alarming, but not surprising to learn, that the U.S. Department of Commerce's Office of Service Industries is behind the effort to commercialize higher education in the United States and worldwide."



As far as the quality, access, relevance and equity of higher education is concerned little is yet known about the consequences of GATS. Also to the extent of GATS' influence on the national authority to regulate higher education systems, and unforeseen consequences on public subsidies for higher education. There is this fear of the unknown with regard to the impact of WTO and GATS on the Higher Education sector that is haunting the minds of those concerned with higher education in India.

The impact of globalization and WTO & GATS on the Higher Education would be multidimensional, it would be on:

1. the higher education policy, programmes and its implementation;
2. the very system of higher education;
3. the structure, functions and structure-function relations;
4. the accreditation and assessment of higher education;
5. the role of regulatory bodies;
6. the individual institutional policy and programmes; and finally on
7. the acts and statutes of universities and state education acts.

If higher education becomes a part of the WTO it necessitates restructuring of the higher education system, not only to cater to the new set of international regulations, but also to cater to the international market place, which means universities are to guarantee market access to educational products and institutions of all kind kinds.

The trade in education is probably the most complex one due to its complex nature and its long-term benefits. Nevertheless, efforts are now under way to develop guidelines and regulations to institute free trade also in higher education. The WTO is expected to facilitate academic institutions and other education providers, without controls to set up branches in other than their own country, export degree programs, award degrees and certificates with minimal restriction, invest in overseas educational institutions, employ instructors for their foreign ventures, set up educational and training programs through distance mode etc) Glimpses of different models operating in India at present are:

- 1) Consumption abroad information dissemination and recruitment of students through:
 - a) Information centers of various countries set up by embassies
 - b) Private Agencies
- 2) Commercial Presence / Franchisee
- 3) Twining programmes
- 4) Cross border supply universities
 - a) Campus of A country university in B country
 - b) Distance mode of Learning/Virtual University.



An analysis on the operation of foreign universities in India reveals that the programs offered range from Diploma, UG to PG courses such as: TV Production Technology, Business, Hotel, Tourism Management, Science Media, Hospitality and Communication. Graphics Design, Engineering, Architecture, MBBS, Dental Surgery, BBA, MBA, Agriculture, Science, Humanities Honors courses, Social studies, Human Languages, Bachelor and Masters in Information Technology. Duration varies from 4 months to 4 years depending on the types of courses. There are also Institutions and centers assisting in the operation of foreign universities in India and Indian Universities abroad.

Impact of WTO on India would be different from the developed countries: the countries that are yet to achieve 100% literacy, yet to provide access of higher education to its large number of age group population, which is yet to establish institutions for promoting different types of programs of interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary nature, yet to introduce credit transfer system, internal assessment system, semester system, impact of WTO is different from those where all these are taken care off. The ignorant parents and students may fall prey to the attraction of foreign courses and programs that provide all these facilities and in the process may get uprooted from their own national links to the employment and higher education sectors and may not be competent enough to compete in the world market. India's requirement is not in terms of quality alone but also access to the academic institutions that can contribute to national development. There has been concern expressed on its impact on the nature and quality of research and its relevance to the local needs, which is supposed to contribute to strengthening civil society. Once universities are subject to an international academic marketplace regulated by the WTO, they would be swamped by overseas institutions and programs intent on earning of profit and not or less concentration on national development.

WTO is expected to facilitate educational products of all kinds to be freely exported from one country to another. Copyright, patent, and licensing regulations, which are already part of international treaties, would be further reinforced. Those wishing to engage in such imports and exports would have recourse to international tribunals and legal action. However, it would become very difficult to regulate the trade in academic institutions, programs, degrees, or products across international borders. At present the jurisdiction over higher education is entirely in the hands of national authorities.

As of today, out of the 514,000 foreign students currently studying in the US, more than 54 percent are from Asia. Seven of the top ten "sending countries" of international foreign students to the U.S. are Asians, while not a single Asian country is represented among the top ten destinations for American students studying abroad. India alone accounts for more than 79,736 students representing 13.9% of the total number of international students in the United States compared to only 703 Americans who studied in India during the 2002-03 academic years. Worldwide student mobility data, compiled annually by UNESCO confirm similar imbalances in student exchange between India and other industrialized countries.

According to a recent survey conducted by EduWorld, an Australian research firm, states that "It's the quality of education and the perceived value of an overseas degree which appears to be the most significant factor in influencing student decisions to study outside India. and for more than one-third of such students, a major motivation was their desire to broaden their experience by living and working in another country.

Globalization: Opportunity or Threat?

As a result of Globalization the opportunities in India in the field of Higher Education now, appear to be immense, and areas are diverse. The remarkable development in information technology has promoted learners' method of learning in both the formal and distance modes Globalization is simply putting 'the space - time compression' (Evans, 1995) which brings together nations, cultures, economies and at the same time increasing Inter-dependency. Interaction is expected to improve the quality of education. Changes in the Indian education system that pervade the core appears to remain the same only the notion of change and the rate at which it takes place varies virtually and spatially and in field operations. Distance education and virtual Institutions, that is commonly



regarded to be an industrialized form of education, is now taking place in India, which is proving to be more cost effective.

With one global world, the aspiring students who are left out and failed to secure their seats in India's premiere Institutions can now go abroad to fulfill their aspirations. With the fast growing Information and communication technology the availability and flow of academic resource materials is providing input to the academicians to compete with their counterparts anywhere in the world.

It assists in avoiding of duplicacy in research and inspires the Indian academicians for research and publications on issues that are of international importance in order to make their mark in their respective disciplines.

The envisioned policy reform has facilitated in opening up space for establishment of private universities, easing and eliminating research restrictions, and entry of graduate students. encouragement for "foreign collaboration" in the university sector and joint ventures in academic activities as it now exists in private industries.

System-wide higher education reform and incremental approach to liberalization of higher education may help India to take advantage of opportunities in the new global environment. Policy makers in India might have to be concerned with increasing adult participation in continuing education and training, particularly in relation to enhanced employability. It is expected to facilitate new international orders centering on lifelong learning and the "learning society".

Globalization, 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".

It has been realized that the role of the Internet is as an interactive medium with potential global reach. It has the capacity to bring knowledge and prosperity to isolated and marginalized individuals and nations. But Unequal access to the Internet, the "digital divide," creates inequity that exacerbates other inequities. No developing country has benefited more from the digital revolution than India, and in no country is the digital divide wider or deeper. On the other side of the digital divide are the 45 percent of the population who cannot read or write (57 percent of the female population), the 44 percent who survive on less than Rs. 50 per day, and those who live in the 370,000 villages where there are no telephone connections."

Budgetary restraints in most of the states in India have placed increasing emphasis on improving cost-efficiency in educational provisions. This has led to widespread interest in new forms of quality control and performance evaluation at all levels of education which is giving more avenues to private education and in turn affecting the equity consideration. The major concern of globalization has been "how to fulfill the national objective of equality"?

As a part of the liberalization policy, it has been suggested that education should be progressively privatized and that access to it should be made subject to the payment of appropriate prices. The government, therefore, encourages the establishment of a larger number of private institutions and even private universities are being encouraged. Simultaneously a mechanism to cater to the needs of those who cannot afford payment of high fees is also being evolved.

The process and effects of economic and cultural globalization are becoming evident in our educational Programmes and are expressed by teachers and students with particular reference to the ways in which the global media (such as television media and internet) are deployed in the construction of knowledge. The threat is the possibility of erosion of national values by imbibing the alien culture. The changes that are taking place in the country, even at the bottom level of the country, seem to be a shift in the power relations and consciousness at



various levels of civil societies. The macro change brought by international capital, technology and mass media has brought new culture, but to what extent the new cultural assertions of identity will enable the people of various regions to face the new capitalist order, remains to be seen. The threat is for the national cultural values.

In India, during this period of globalization, much of the contemporary thought has gone into the issues of programmed learning, multimedia teaching, macro-micro-teaching, distance learning and other problems related to curriculum. No subject has been so much neglected as has been done to the development of humanistic values, creativity, cultural, moral and spiritual dimensions in the teaching-learning process. The threat is for the erosion of rich and old culture of human values.

The ideologies of the states and of multinational agencies brought the technological revolution. The process has been promoted by the transport system, communication network, and it has increased the Economic activity, but Globalization does not necessarily result in homogenizations; on the contrary, it is leading to the strengthening of the ethnic identities both at local & regional levels (Edward, 1994). - The threat is to the nation's integrity.

Apprehensions

As we have seen, globalization is both an opportunity and a threat. The issue still remains with regard to: (i) the quality of the Indian universities when the cream of students and staff opts for Global choices; (ii) the choice that universities will make towards the poor who cannot afford the global choices; (iii) the standards of universities and the capacity to compete with the world market. Our universities will raise standards and employ all those business tricks to attract foreign students to our universities. (iv) the political complexities impinging on the higher education system and the possibilities under given circumstances; (v) the state of the art resource condition and its impact on the infrastructural, library and laboratory conditions; (vi) the computer facilities and Internet access etc. are only a few to be mentioned.

Under these circumstances the so-called India's elite institutions and their capacity to attract and retain world-class faculty and students in the face of attractive offers from foreign universities, research institutes and multi-national corporations is the main issue. The cream of students hitherto the prerogative of these elite institutions might have to choose amongst the second and third level. The apprehension that haunts the Indian mind is that universities and students in India might be the losers in the game of global higher education.

It would be equally interesting to view globalization as a real opportunity for India and can benefit significantly from the global revolution in higher education. Obviously, it would require major policy reforms with regard to university structure, function, structure function relation, funds and the way universities are regulated. It would require closer links between industries and institutions especially in the growing technology-based sectors, and an entrepreneurial style of leadership to head the Indian universities. Given these inputs, India might be able to capture the benefits of globalization. No doubt, the country has potential and individuals are capable, yet "ifs and buts" appear to be the crux of the matter. The matter is "how to achieve the concrete gains from existing higher systems, competing with Global trends without sacrificing national goals of higher education and development and without abandoning its commitment to Indian tradition and cultural values is a real challenge.

With the liberalization of the country's economy, global market forces have generated new fears and dilemmas for higher education in India. In order to take advantage of the low cost of educated labor, multinationals have been locating many of their labor-intensive operations here. While institutions of higher education are moved to produce full or mode skilled manpower to suit their requirements. Nobody is clear about what is its contribution to the country's economic growth and to the society at large.

Commercialization of education may in turn penalize the participation of brilliant students coming from poor backgrounds. In nation building an overwhelming emphasis on commercialization and competition also involves risk of undermining the inculcation of higher values of sacrifice, service and commitment to the country, a loss



that may be difficult to overcome; It may contribute to materialism and self-centeredness converting students towards self-centered personalities. Already there is a belief amongst villagers that education alienates persons from their grass roots.

In addition to the above, there are other issues, which need consideration in the context of globalization of the Indian higher education system. The issues can be classified in Socio-Economic, Political and Academic categories. Much has already been said in the socio-economic category, however there are political dimensions to trade in services. The sovereignty of the state to take decisions with regard to free provision of these services, as well as location of these services in difficult areas even if economically inefficient is the issue. Education being on the concurrent list, the states acceptance becomes essential this would call for amendments in the Education Acts of the states and universities. Internationalization of higher education where mutual sharing of knowledge, skills and research generally takes place with the objective of mutual benefit and also aimed at national and global development? In this globalization process the issue of the relevance of programmes is questioned in terms of relevance to whom?

What would be the mechanism of mutual recognition, global and national certification?

What are the mechanisms for accreditation and quality control? What would be the structure of accrediting institutions and similarly their functions?

All these would obviously bring in the issue of roles of various regulatory bodies in terms of its already defined functions and needed changes.

No No doubt, it is an opportunity for those who are aware of the benefits, who has the information, who knows from where to get the information, who has the where wit-halts to get this information and has the inquisitiveness to get more and more and take benefit from that in India a very small percentage of population is getting all the benefits and yet demanding for more and more. It is a threat for those who are ignorant and have no information, and no means to get this information, and not even know from where to get this information and to the extent not even known that they do not have the information, and the impact of this status on them. This group, which is large enough to ignore, would remain the sufferers. To convert the threat into an opportunity it is essential to concentrate on:

1. Urbanization of Rural areas ie. provide all those facilities to rural mass.
2. Nationalization prior to Globalization.
3. Equalization of access and opportunities
4. Decentralization of powers to the stakeholders.
5. Qualification of existing institutions to the international standards.

With these preparations, probably the impact of globalization would be positive.