

Chapter 8

Internationalization of Indian Higher Education

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ABSTRACT

The General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS) makes provisions for the internationalization of higher education. India signed the World Trade Organization agreement, including GATS, in 1994. GATS and WTO have the potential to impact the import and export of higher education within India. At the present time, India has begun making appropriate changes in legislation to formalize trade in the higher education sector. This chapter narrates the experiences of India in the internationalization of education. The chapter examines political, economic, socio-cultural, academic, and political issues of cross-nation education in India. The analysis is based on document surveys and critical analyses of the policies of India regarding the internationalization of education.

INTRODUCTION

Internationalization of education dominates the thinking of the academic community in India due to perceived opportunities. This chapter presents a case study narrating an experience of India in the internationalization of higher education. The chapter highlights the expansion of Indian educational institutions abroad, as well as the contribution of foreign higher educational institutions to Indian. India has the world's third largest tertiary educational system; yet 90 percent of Indian youths cannot enroll in higher education.

India is desperate to develop quality education and expand student access to meet the requirements of job markets. Foreign institutions have opportunities to expand into India to quench the Indian thirst for quality education. This need can be affirmed by the fact that India has been ranked first in the world for sending students abroad for higher education. The higher education system of India also has high the potential to attract foreign students. One example of that presence and the market potential is the Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU). This university is a prominent transnational education provider in Southeast Asia and Middle East countries.

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At the present time, cross-nation educational partnerships are limited in India by its socio-political scenario, which is a mix of socialist and capitalist realities. There is tug of war between these two ideologies over the nature and extent of cross-nation trade in education. The Indian government does recognize the need to resolve these differences, if it is to expand educational access to higher education, which is an essential tool to be successful in the global economy. The Indian socio-political scenario is representative of scenarios in other developing countries that may also be potential markets for transnational distance learning in the coming years.

Growth Of Higher Education In the Colonial Period

Higher education was introduced in India as a result of the dispatch of Sir Charles Wood to the East India Company in 1854. Wood's dispatch in 1857 created the University of Calcutta (now Kolkata), University of Bombay (now Mumbai), and the University of Madras (now Chennai). The universities were developed based upon the model of the University of London, which was established in 1836. Wood's dispatch laid down guidelines for university standards for curriculum, norms for prescribing textbooks, examination standards, and regulations for awarding degrees. Higher education in the Colonial Period served the economical, political, and administrative interests of the colonial rulers. Higher education during that period was confined to studies in language, social science, and humanities. The British did not include education in science and technology disciplines. The Colonial system encouraged training of native Indians in regional languages so that administration could be managed easily. Nurallah and Naik (1951) criticized Colonial education for failing to create a truly national system of education. Instead they argued that the purpose of higher education during this period was to produce efficient and loyal civil servants, rather than for the purpose of self-government.

Growth of Higher Education in the Post Colonial Period

Higher education in India was in poor shape at the time of independence in 1947. The Indian government initiated a planned expansion of higher education with the establishment of the University Grants Commission (UGC) in 1953 by an act of the Parliament. Independence intensified the extended higher education into the fields of technology, science, medicine, and management. The political view of education also changed. No longer was education merely an instrument for running administration. Its role had expanded to include being an integral force in the social and economical developments of the nation's society.

At the time of independence, the higher education system of India comprised approximately 500 colleges that were affiliated with less than 20 universities. The total enrollment strength of the higher education system, at that time, was less than 100,000. In the last 60 years, the number of universities has grown by 18 fold, now totaling 383 universities. The number of colleges has increase three fold up, now totaling 16,885 colleges. Student enrollment has been multiplied by a factor of 100, reaching nearly 10 million students. As a result of this growth, the Indian higher education system has become the third largest tertiary education system after China and the United States. The Indian higher education system generates enormous numbers of trained workers, who contribute to the social and economical growth of the country, giving India an excellent economic growth rate. Similarly, Indian professionals make significant contributions to the economies of the United States and other developed nations.

Higher Education System Structure

The institutional framework of the higher education system in India consists of universities established by Acts of Parliament (Central University) and those established by the State Legislature (State University). Universities have the author-

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