

## **Globalization and Growth: Electronic Higher Education in India**

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### **Abstract**

*The present paper discussed the globalization aspects pertaining to higher education. The technological developments especially in the field of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) are reformed the higher education in terms of distance learning through electronic learning and networks. The paper described different concepts such as virtual university, electronic learning, network learning, etc. These developments have made the modern higher education equally accessible to all through any corner of the world.*  
**Kay word** Globalization ,Growth, Electronic Higher Education.

Reference to this paper should be made as follows:

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S.M. ,**

*Globalization and  
Growth: Electronic  
Higher Education in  
India,*

RJPSSs 2017, Vol. 43,  
No.2, pp.277-283,  
Article No. 37 (RJ1953 )

Online available at :  
[http://anubooks.com/  
?page\\_id=2012](http://anubooks.com/?page_id=2012)

### **Introduction:**

Education to an individual means development of various kinds. It leads to social development, economic development, cultural development and many things else. Education gives vision and Vision gives mission. Vision is very much important for the transformation of the Society. The empowerment aspect of the development has an importance. Education is empowerment, what so ever may be the socio economic status of the person, It leads to little or a great deal of empowerment. Even the poorest of the poor is empowered through education. Education gives knowledge; it alone can liberate a person from his miseries and destitution.

As discussed by Knight and Dewit (1997) “Globalization is the flow of technology, economy, knowledge, people, values, ideas... across borders. Globalization affects each country in a different way due to a nation’s individual history, traditions, culture and priorities.. Internationalization of higher education is one of the ways a country responds to the impact of globalization yet, at the same time respects the individuality of the nation”.

As such major boon of the globalization is the Information and Communication Technology applications to each and every part of human life including education at different levels. The revolution in ICTs has profound implications for economic and social development. It has pervaded every aspect of human life whether it is health, education, economics, governance, entertainment etc. Dissemination, propagation and accessibility of these technologies are viewed to be integral to a country’s development strategy. The most important benefit associated with the access to the new technologies is the increase in the supply of information. Information is shared and disseminated to larger audience. The application of ICT to education is known as Electronic Education (e-Education). There is an argument that due to the globalization there is inequality, but it may not be so, in higher education, due to the distance education enabled through Information and Communication Technology (ICT). Due to the introduction through different media every one can access higher education equally irrespective of gender, caste, income level, etc.

### **Electronic Education (e-Education):**

Electronic Education is essentially the same education with the same basic processes of educating, creating, developing and managing which are carried out by individuals, institutions and communities for achieving the goals of education. In the information age it is supported by IT enabled and IT driven processes made accessible through IT tools and techniques to make education globalized, localized and personalized. The outcome of this application of technologies would be in a form of organizations and institutions, which may be quite distinct and different from the

existing institutions. Networked society will require educational system that will be able to offer educational opportunities to all anywhere, anytime. The IT developments and emerging technologies are ensuring such communication. The development processes and activities now supported by IT are driven by market forces and wealth they create. India can become Knowledge Super Power, if it succeeds in offering learning opportunities and necessary education and support of tools and technologies to all people of India. E-Education is expected to fulfill that role of education for all and simultaneously enable people to address many of the issues and concerns faced by the nation..

Any networked society will need. Network with broadband connectivity is linking hardware and appliances at various places for giving access to anyone, anytime, anywhere. Software tools, techniques and applications for enabling people and groups to communicate with others quite intimately. Content needed and shared by groups of people, organizations/institutions, which enables providers to offer services to users and customers. One of the common examples of network is that of railway and air travel network, in which content is the information of places, schedules, services etc. that enable one to make reservation from home for travel from any one place to another. With greater ICT use, now trends are to offer services that would fulfill customer requirements (personalization of services) and ensure customer satisfaction.

Education can now use the networking technologies for developing educational system (e- Education). Electronic Education System requires the following framework and infrastructure:

1. Network with latest hardware and technologies along with broadband connectivity and grid architecture giving network access to anyone, anywhere, anytime.
2. Software tools and techniques that enable creation of databases and information flows, offer facilities to learners, teachers and institutions to receive / give personalized education on a mass scale.
3. Content in e-formats on a knowledge grid that enables teachers and students get personalized curriculum of high quality, relevance and utility.
4. Educational delivery system that ensures quality and developmental relevance of educational offerings (Developmental Education) for individual, institutions and community.
5. Quality Assurance and Certification Mechanism to maintain competitively high and acceptable standards at national and international levels.

The Framework given above can serve as a national and regional infrastructure to support educational processes of any provider institution, individual and organization in India. The five basic educational processes identified above could find their delivery channels through the e-Education Framework for any educational offerings and their management.

**Tools of Electronic Education:**

By using all the media of print, audio, video, animation and simulation, content in e-education can be developed in the formats of:

1. E-lectures
2. Multi-media materials in distance education formats.
3. Interactivity based content out of Questions and Answers, Seminars, workshops  
Assignments and Projects done by students

Content output could be stored on servers at various places in the network. In formal & non-formal systems, content packaging is done through a course of a program, and delivered to a class of students or a group in a college / university. It uses the principle ‘one size fits all’ and does not take into account personal background, needs & requirements, prior learning and experiences as well as outputs and outcomes essential for a learner to be successful in a life and work situations. It is, therefore, essential to store content in such units that it can allow packaging of various units to suit the learner needs. Such methods and technologies are getting developed in e-Education.

**Content Storage- Meta-database:**

In e-education, content has to be developed and stored in such a way that a teacher or learner should be able to combine various small units or granules of contents (reusable content) with definite learning objectives and outcomes. A granule could be conceived as the smallest learning or teaching unit with single definite objective and output /outcome. A granule may contain a large number of content items, often called objects, in the form of texts, pictures, graphs, audio, video, animations and simulation; each one requiring study time of one to fifteen minutes. Each object could be tagged to reuse it in different contexts and at different levels of learning. A database could be created in which a large number of learning objects and granules are created and deposited by all the teachers and experts (universal content contributions) with tags attached to each object and granule. The tags will enable a search engine to select appropriate objects and granules to form a syllabus/curriculum needed by a student. This leads to a personalized syllabus for a student. Database of such a transformed content will be extremely big- meta-databases- and could be

made available and accessible to all learners and teachers. International norms are getting evolved in developing databases (SCORM compliance) so that databases could have wider accessibility, transferability and usability.

**Content Delivery:**

Technologies are essential for offering personalized curriculum to each individual. They are being developed for various customizations. Such Personalization Technologies allow teachers and providers of educations to dynamically recognize the role and profile of each learner and respond according to the needs and requirements of a student. A good teacher will formulate a curriculum for the student (Personalized Curriculum) by prescribing learning (Prescriptive Learning) by identifying learning and knowledge gaps; and setting a correct learning path for the student. This will enable student to build on whatever is known and achieved earlier and reach the objects / goals set for him/her in the curriculum. Such a learner-centricity achieved through educational technologies will ensure success for every student. The e-education framework and infrastructure through personalization technologies will ensure ‘access and success’ in the field of education.

**ICT Enabled and ICT Driven Education:**

Many formal and open universities are at present using ICT for fast communication between institution/teachers and students, and for administration of student and teacher activities. These are the ‘first generation’ technologies and help provider institution to achieve better efficiency, reduce costs and extend outreach and coverage to larger number of students outside the usual jurisdiction of an institution. This may be called ICT Enabled education (enabled by 1st Generation Technologies), since it basically does not change the model of education, and retains the earlier methods and processes of teaching/learning and evaluation. Development of Meta-Database with reusable content granules and packaging of the content to suit individual needs is creating personalization of education enabled only by the use of technologies. The learning technologies developed and used for learner-centricity and personalized education are termed as ‘second generation’ technologies /4/and offer ICT Driven Education. They are changing the methods of content generation, content storage, content packaging and content delivery and hence offer a new paradigm of education.

With appropriate models of development and delivery it is possible to employ ICT driven education to achieve:

1. Access and success to all
2. Substantial cost reduction.
3. Quality education for all
4. Just-in-time education.

5. Learner autonomy

The learner autonomy would employ learner freedom in deciding the goals, content and outcomes of education and the path of development to achieve the goals. Many of the problems and concerns could be addressed successfully by creating National and Regional e-Education Network with a framework and infrastructure. By promoting teachers, experts, educational managements, industries and social and community leaders to use the Network for evolving various developmental models that could addresses the problems of disparities, underdevelopment and disadvantages.

**Advantages of Networked Education:**

Development and extensive use of network would enable to incorporate enabling functionality and related values in the programs of the learning social groups and organizations using the Framework. Networking enables convergences of services offered by various providers. One obvious impact will be the convergence of modes of education. Formal and non-formal institutions – traditional universities and open universities- will be using distributed classrooms and distance education technologies for reaching out to distant learners. Networking and extensive use of ICT enables:

Integration and Convergence

1. Globalization
2. Decentralization and localization.
3. Personalization
4. Transparency and openness.
5. Omnipresence of information and knowledge.

If these principles could be incorporated in the design and development of ICT enabled and ICT driven process of social mobilization and organizations, the nature and character of the emerging society could be different. Such a system can promote culture of participatory democratic decentralization, accountability and local relevance and help in efforts for total development of a locality and local community.

**Virtual Universities:**

During the last few years, many universities and colleges are getting ready to face the impact of globalization and emerging competition in marketing education by forming consortia of colleges and universities. The major approach employed is to partner with other colleges and universities and to offer the best available educational expertise, courses and services to students both on-campus and off-campus. This is also aimed at survival of small institutions against the competition from the big ones; and is using first generation technologies. Many colleges and universities have formed partnerships- virtual universities- by using essentially ‘first generation technologies’

for becoming competitive and earning resources to support their institutional development.

The concept of a virtual university is of a consortium of institutions, enabled by appropriate ICT applications, working together in practical ways to plan programmes, develop the required content and ensure the delivery of those programmes and support services to learners.

Three features of the university need to be underscored:

1. The virtual university is not being proposed as a university in the conventional single institutional sense. It will, in fact, be a “virtual organization.”
2. The virtual university will carry out its functions by optimizing ICT applications, particularly those that enable the creation and deployment of content databases based on learning objects and granules..
3. The virtual university will be as much concerned with “adding value” to conventional on-campus instruction as it is with serving learners at a distance.

**Conclusion:**

There is argument that the globalization policies formed inequality in education. But it is noted that due to the introduction of ICT applications, there is equal distribution of higher education to all the people, irrespective of gender, caste, religion, income, or any other barrier. Hence, the virtual universities and electronic learning has made equal distribution of higher to all the people all over the world.

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