

Globalisation of Education: An Indian Distance Learners' Perspective

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Abstract

This article is an attempt to present the perception of distance education students towards the aspect of the globalisation of education which in due course will affect the lives of all citizens whether in advanced countries or in less developed ones. It is expected that the suggestions provided though this will serve as a valuable guide for policy makers in the field of education planning.

Abstrak

Artikel ini cuba mempersembahkan persepsi para pelajar pendidikan jarak jauh terhadap aspek globalisasi pendidikan yang lambat-laun akan mempengaruhi kehidupan kesemua warganegara, sama ada di negara-negara maju mahu pun di negara yang kurang maju. Dijangka bahawa cadangan-cadangan yang diajukan melalui artikel ini akan menjadi suatu panduan yang bernilai bagi pembuat polisi di dalam bidang perancangan pendidikan.

Introduction

Globalisation is a phenomenon that has left its footmarks in every conceivable field of economics and politics. However, it is rare that one imagines that the same can be a major determining factor in the field of education. India has also been at the receiving end of the trends in globalisation of education. This study gives a bird's eye view about globalisation of education in the Indian scenario and more particularly in the case of Indian Distance Education.

Anita Dighe (2001) stated that globalisation has altered the map of the whole world and has had its associated impact on the social sector. On the one hand there is growing affluence and on the other hand there is greater deprivation. Globalisation has sparked an information revolution that has of course brought about global connectivity but at the same time created a widening gap between the information rich and information deprived. The author goes on to state that the power of modern technology can be harnessed to effectively build learning communities.

Richard and Robin (2001) stated that globalisation has made it possible to understand open and Distance Learning as re-mapping of education. However, it is also stated that the process of re-mapping does not necessarily mean that more power is put in the hands of the learner. What has definitely happened is that there has been a blurring of disciplinary boundaries.

Terry and Daryl (2001) stated that globalisation cannot only be analysed in terms of economic aspects but also in social, political and cultural terms. They state that English language has played a vital role in globalizing distance education in the English speaking nations of the world. The rise of information and communication technologies and their incorporation by educators, has further strengthened the globalising power of distance education.

Alistair Inglis (2001) considers web-based education as the main medium of globalisation of distance education. The introduction of web-based education has altered the way in which education has been disseminated. This development has forced people to look at the process of globalisation of education from a new perspective.

Pandav Nayak (2001) focuses on the negative side of globalisation of education. He states that excessive dependence on info tech for the spread of distance education will merely make it a mechanical carrier of neo-liberal market ideology and may not serve the purpose that ODL was intended to achieve.

J.M. Parekh (2001) disagreed that the present era is an era of globalisation of education. The author in turn states that it is infact an era of universalisation of capitalism. Though the author agrees that ODL system is not a product of the globalisation per say, it is perhaps the most vulnerable to come under the grip of capitalism.

Madhu Parhar (2001) stated that there are two major players in the globalisation of education:

1. The Traditional Universities and
2. The Open and Distance Learning Institutions. The author highlights the importance of Market segment assessment, programme identification, instructional delivery, etc. in globalising IGNOU's programmes.

Saugato Sen (2001) stated that the process of globalisation is likely to have a mixed effect on Open and Distance Education. On the one hand globalisation is likely to enhance access, increase dialogue and reduce structure, while on the other, globalisation may threaten the notion of community and alter the notion of time space and community due to the increased use of electronic technology.

Sharma (2001) stated that highly populated South Asian countries like India, Pakistan and Bangladesh are the most likely targets for international collaborative efforts for the dissemination of education through distance mode. This is basically due to the surge in demand for educational products in this part of the world and the consequent high financial returns for the provision of these products. The paper also highlights the limitation of international collaborations.

Madhulika Kaushik (2004) identified some important issues pertaining to quality assurance that are important to open and distance education systems with regard to cross border trade. They are:

- Issues regarding customisation and standardisation

Dr. Kaushik regarded standardisation of programmes as the major reason for cost effectiveness of the distance education system. In order to cater to the needs of an international audience and to ensure quality relevant to their local perspectives, the distance education systems need to customize their products. The challenge is to customise without compromising on quality and cost-effectiveness.

- Quality and governance issues

The maintenance of the quality of the curricular components of an ODL system in foreign countries through its local partners working under different socio-economic-political systems is a major challenge to these institutions. Therefore the policies that govern the functioning of these institutions in foreign countries is of paramount importance for institutions that try to establish their foothold in other countries.

- Tutor training

To ensure the quality of student support services, all ODL systems have to maintain quality of their counselling services. Therefore it is necessary for all ODL systems to engage in continuous training of their tutors available with their overseas partners. However, this is one aspect that needs maximum financial investment and identification of infrastructure.

The Current Trend in the Globalisation of Education:

The current phase of globalisation of education is closely associated with the General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS). Therefore it would be pertinent to see the stipulations laid down by GATS.

MODE 1: It covers the aspect of Cross-Border Trade; this covers all those activities in which a producer exports a service from its own territory to a consumer in a foreign country. For example, an educational institution in India provides an on-line educational programme to students in another country.

MODE 2: It pertains to consumption abroad. This takes care of all those cases where a consumer goes abroad to obtain a service. For example if a patient goes abroad for treatment it is a case of a service consumed abroad or a student from one country visiting a foreign country to obtain a degree.

MODE 3: It covers within its ambit the aspect of commercial presence. This implies that a service provider from one country sets up business subsidiary or branches in another country. For example, if IGNOU establishes its branches in foreign countries, it indicates the commercial presence of IGNOU in that country.

MODE 4: It deals with the Movement of Natural Persons. In this case a member of the service-providing firm goes to the domestic territory of another country to provide a service there. Such movements are only for a short period of time. For example, a Distance Learning institute of India sends its administrative officer to Dubai to manage the affairs of its branch there for a period of five years.

GATS enjoin upon its members certain obligations that can be grouped under two categories:

- General obligations
- Specific obligations

The General obligations are those that apply to all the service sectors irrespective of whether a country has made commitments on them or not. These can be noted as follows:

1. Most Favoured Nations Treatment (MFN): GATS stipulate the acceptance of Most Favoured Nations Status (MFN) in the case of services too. The MFN status stipulates that any commercial advantage provided to one of the signatories on a particular product must be provided to all other signatories who export a like product to the country. For example, if government of India permits Anadolu Open University to run its programmes in India, the same facility must also be extended to Singapore National University if the latter requests the government of India for the same.
2. Obligations related to rule framing and implementation: GATS enjoins its members to internationally notify/publish changes in laws, rules and regulations that have a bearing on international trade in services. Similarly, any regulation that the members frame to deal with business relations between service providers, especially those dealing with Foreign Service

providers must be based on objective criteria and must be applied equally to all service providers (Friends of Earth, 2002). Further Paragraph 4 of Article VI of the GATS calls upon the Council for Trade in Services to develop new disciplines to ensure that non discriminatory measures relating to qualification requirements and procedures, technical standards and licensing requirements and procedures do not constitute unnecessary barriers to trade. As part of the implementation of this provision, the Services Council established the Working Party on Professional Services (WPPS) with the mandate to develop such disciplines in the area of professional services and designated the sector of accountancy as priority (www.itd.org/leollelwt06_18.htm#note1).

3. Rules related to the working of Monopolies: The GATS signatories should ensure that working of monopolies for providing services should not in anyway violatet the working of the country's MFN obligations (Friends of Earth, 2002).

On the other hand Specific Obligations apply only to those service sectors in which a country has made commitments. They are

1. Market Access Obligations: As regards the market access obligations of member nations, GATS is very categorical in its approach. It states the following:

“When a member undertakes a commitment it must indicate for each mode of supply what limitations, if any, it maintains on market access. Article XVI:2 of the GATS lists six categories of restrictions which may not be adopted or maintained unless they are specified in the schedule. All scheduled limitations on market access therefore must fall into one of these categories. They comprise of four types of quantitative restrictions as well as limitations on foreign equity participation and on the types of legal entity permitted.” (www.itd.org/leollelwt06_27.htm#note2)

National Treatment Obligation: GATS in its National Treatment obligation “under Article XVII requires members to accord to services and service suppliers of any member treatment no less favourable than that it accords to services and service suppliers of national origin” (www.itd.org/leollelwt06_27.htm#note2)

Educational services have been grouped internationally in the following pattern according to the Central Product Classification of United Nations as given under.

Sectoral Classification List	Relevant CPC No.	Definition/coverage in provisional CPC
C. Higher education services	923	<p>Technical and vocational secondary education services: Technical and vocational education services below the university level. Such education services consists of programmes emphasising subject-matter specialization and instruction in both theoretical and practical skills. They usually apply to specific professions.</p> <p>Technical and vocational secondary school-type education services for handicapped students: Technical and vocational secondary school-type education services specially designed to meet the possibilities and needs of handicapped students below the university level.</p> <p>Post-secondary, technical and services vocational education services: Post-secondary, sub-degree technical and vocational education services. Such education services consist of a great variety of subject-matter programmes. They emphasise teaching of practical skills, but also involve substantial theoretical background instruction.</p> <p>Other higher education services: Education services leading to a university degree or equivalent. Such education services are provided by universities or specialised professional schools. The programmes not only emphasise theoretical instruction, but also research training aiming to prepare students for participation in original work.</p>
D. Adult education	924	<p>Adult education services n.e.c: Education services for adults who are not in the regular school and university stem. Such education services may be provided in day or evening classes by schools or by special institutions for adult education. Included are education services through radio or television broadcasting or by correspondence. The programmes may cover both general and vocational subjects. Services related to literacy programmes for adults are</p>

Sectoral Classification List	Relevant CPC No.	Definition/coverage in provisional CPC
E Other education	929	<p>also included. Exclusion: Higher education services provided within the regular education system are classified in subclass 92310 (Post secondary technical and vocational education services) or 92390 (Other higher education services).</p> <p>Other education services: Education services at the first and second levels in specific subject matters not elsewhere classified, and all other education services that are not definable by level. Exclusions: Education services primarily concerned with recreational matters are classified in class 9641 (Sporting services). Education services provided by governess or tutors employed by private households are classified in subclass 98000 (Private households with employed persons).</p>

Source: United Nations, Provisional Central Product Classification, 1991.

Objectives of the study:

The study was aimed at studying the following aspects.

- To investigate the level of general awareness among educated masses about globalisation of education.
- To ascertain the general perception regarding the impact of globalisation of education
- To assess the mood of the general educated public regarding the operation of foreign distance education institutions
- To analyse the public mood with regard to international recognition of distance education degrees
- To examine the public perception regarding the lacunae existing in the Indian distance education system.

Method of Study:

The investigator conducted a survey to elicit the views of the educated people regarding the aspect of globalisation of education by administering a questionnaire at the 15th convocation held at the Regional Centre. Care was taken to ensure that only people with at least a graduate degree were included in the survey. 42 students returned the fully filled in questionnaire. The division of the students involved in the study is given as follows:

Post Graduate Diplomas	Computer Programmes	Bachelor Degree Programme	Bachelor of Education	Management Programme	Total
2	15	10	5	10	42

The questionnaire put the following questions to the students.

1. Are you aware about the general agreement on trade in services?
2. What do you think would be the impact of globalisation of education?
3. Should foreign institutions be allowed to operate in India?
4. Where would you prefer to study-Indian or foreign education institutions?
5. In which aspect do Indian distance education institutions lack?
6. Would you like to go abroad for higher education?
7. Should Indian Distance Education be subsidised?
8. Should foreign educational institutions be given the same treatment as Indian ones?
9. Should there be world wide recognition of distance education degrees?

The data obtained was put to rigorous analysis using statistical techniques.

Results of the study:

Programme wise analysis of the data:

1. Post Graduate Diplomas (sample strength = 2 students)

Table 1 Are you aware about the general agreement on trade in services?

Yes	No
2	0

It is significant to note that 100% of the responses from the post graduate diploma students indicated that they are aware about the general agreement on trade in services. This aspect in itself indicates the importance that the educated segment attaches to GATS.

Table 2 What do you think would be the impact of globalisation of education?

Good	Bad
2	0

Both the entries in this category indicate that the students believe that the impact of globalisation of education will be positive.

Table 3 Should foreign institutions be allowed to operate in India?

Yes	No
2	0

The students of post graduate diplomas have indicated strongly that foreign institutions should be allowed to operate in India. This cent percent verdict augurs as an impetus for globalisation of education.

Table 4 Where would you prefer to study-Indian or foreign education institutions?

Indian Institutions	Foreign Institutions
2	0

The most important result that has come to the fore is that though the students are in favour of allowing foreign institutions to operate in India, they prefer to study in Indian institutions.

Table 5 In which aspect do Indian distance education institutions lack?

Research	Programme Content	Support Services
0	0	2

These students of distance education stream indicate that Indian distance education institutions lack most in the aspect of student support services.

Table 6 Would you like to go abroad for higher education?

Yes	No
2	0

A factor that has been noticed in favour of consumption abroad is that cent percent of the students of Post Graduate Diploma Programmes indicate their interest in going abroad for higher education.

Table 7 Should Indian distance education be subsidised?

Yes	No
2	0

In what should be indicated as a verdict against the National Treatment clause, the students of Post Graduate Diploma Programmes have indicated a clear need for subsidising indian distance education institutions.

Table 8 Should foreign educational institutions be given the same treatment as Indian ones?

Yes	No
2	0

However on another clear parameter of National Treatment, the students have explicitly stated that there is a need to provide the same treatment to foreign institutions as Indian ones.

Table 9 Should there be world wide recognition of distance education degrees?

Yes	No
2	0

The respondents have made a strong case for cross border recognition of degrees. All respondents have stated that there is a need for cross border recognition of distance education degrees.

2. Bachelor Degree in Education

Table 1 Are you aware about the general agreement on trade in services?

Yes	No
2	3

As far as the students of Bachelors Degree in Education are concerned it is noticed that 60% of the respondents indicated that they were not aware about the General Agreement on trade in Services. This is a cause for concern because being educational practitioners; they are supposed to form the pressure group, which would influence the policy makers on globalisation.

Table 2 What do you think would be the impact of globalisation of education?

Good	Bad
4	1

80% of the respondents in this category believe that the impact of Globalisation of Education will be good. This can be seen as a positive indicator.

Table 3 Should foreign institutions be allowed to operate in India?

Yes	No
3	2

60% percent of the respondents in this category indicate that foreign institutions should be allowed to operate in India. This can be considered to be a major groundswell in favour of Market Access to foreign firms.

Table 4 Where would you prefer to study-Indian or foreign education institutions?

Indian Institutions	Foreign Institutions
3	2

Inspite of the fact that more students prefer market access to foreign firms, they still prefer to study in Indian Institutions. This is indicated by a 60% verdict in favour of Indian Institutions.

Table 5 In which aspect do Indian distance education institutions lack?

Research	Programme Content	Support Services
3	0	2

The students of B.Ed programme have indicated that they feel that Research (60%) is the area in which Indian distance education institutions lack the most, while 40% students feel that Indian distance education institutions lack in the field of Support Services.

Table 6 Would you like to go abroad for higher education?

Yes	No
4	1

80% of the students in this group have indicated their desire to go abroad for higher education indicating a great groundswell in favour of consumption abroad.

Table 7 Should Indian distance education be subsidised?

Yes	No
5	0

All respondents in this group indicate a need for Indian distance education institutions to be subsidised.

Table 8 Should foreign educational institutions be given the same treatment as Indian ones?

Yes	No
3	2

60% of the respondents indicate that foreign institutions shall be given the same treatment as Indian ones. This can be seen as an opinion in favour of National Treatment.

Table 9 Should there be world wide recognition of distance education degrees?

Yes	No
5	0

Cross border recognition of Degrees has been strongly approved by all the respondents in this group.

3. Management Programme:

Table 1 Are you aware about the general agreement on trade in services?

Yes	No
6	4

The Management Students have shown reasonable level of awareness about GATS (60%).

Table 2 What do you think would be the impact of globalisation of education?

Good	Bad
10	0

All the respondents of this group indicate that the impact of globalisation of education will be good.

Table 3 Should foreign institutions be allowed to operate in India?

Yes	No
9	1

90% of the respondents have indicated their opinion in favour of allowing foreign firms to operate in India.

Table 4 Where would you prefer to study-Indian or foreign education institutions?

Indian Institutions	Foreign Institutions
8	2

An overwhelming number of the students (80%) have indicated their desire to study in Indian rather than foreign institutions even if foreign institutions are allowed to operate in India.

Table 5 In which aspect do Indian distance education institutions lack?

Research	Programme Content	Support Services
4	0	6

An overwhelming proportion of the target group indicated that Indian Institutions lack in the area of Support Services (60%), while 40% of the respondents indicated that it lacked in Research.

Table 6 Would you like to go abroad for higher education?

Yes	No
8	2

It is interesting to note that 80% of the respondents of this group have expressed their preference to go abroad for Higher Education.

Table 7 Should Indian distance education be subsidised?

Yes	No
7	3

Majority of the respondents in this group have indicated their opinion in favour of subsidising Indian Distance Education Institutions (70%).

Table 8 Should foreign educational institutions be given the same treatment as Indian ones?

Yes	No
5	5

Among the students of this group, there is an equal split (50% each) for providing as well as against providing equal treatment for Foreign Educational Institutions.

Table 9 Should there be world wide recognition of distance education degrees?

Yes	No
9	1

The near unanimous decision of this group is that there should be worldwide recognition of Distance Education Degrees.

4. Other Bachelor Degree Programmes

Table 1 Are you aware about the general agreement on trade in services?

Yes	No
6	4

The other Bachelor Degree Programme Students have shown reasonable level of awareness about GATS (60%).

Table 2 What do you think would be the impact of globalisation of education?

Good	Bad
10	0

All the respondents of this group indicate that the impact of globalisation of education will be good.

Table 3 Should foreign institutions be allowed to operate in India?

Yes	No
8	2

80% of the respondents have indicated their opinion in favour of allowing foreign firms to operate in India.

Table 4 Where would you prefer to study-Indian or foreign education institutions?

Indian Institutions	Foreign Institutions
8	2

An overwhelming number of the students (80%) have indicated their desire to study in Indian rather than foreign institutions even if foreign institutions are allowed to operate in India.

Table 5 In which aspect do Indian distance education institutions lack?

Research	Programme Content	Support Services
5	2	3

The Students of Other Bachelor Degree Programmes have indicated that Indian Distance Education Institutions have to improve in all three areas. 50% of the respondents indicated that improvements have to be made in the research component of these institutions, 20% felt that improvements have to be made in their programme content and 30% indicated that improvements are needed in Student Support Services.

Table 6 Would you like to go abroad for higher education?

Yes	No
10	0

It is interesting to note that all the respondents of this group have expressed their preference to go abroad for Higher Education

Table 7 Should Indian Distance Education be subsidised?

Yes	No
9	1

An overwhelming majority of the respondents in this group have indicated their opinion in favour of subsidising Indian Distance Education Institutions (90%).

Table 8 Should foreign educational institutions be given the same treatment as Indian ones?

Yes	No
5	5

Among the students of this group, there is an equal split (50% each) for providing as well as against providing equal treatment for Foreign Educational Institutions.

Table 9 Should there be world wide recognition of distance education degrees?

Yes	No
10	0

The unanimous decision of this group is that there should be worldwide recognition of Distance Education Degrees.

5. Computer Programmes:

Table 1 Are you aware about the general agreement on trade in services?

Yes	No
13	2

86% of the respondents in this group have indicated their awareness about the General Agreement on Trade in Services.

Table 2 What do you think would be the impact of globalisation of education?

Good	Bad
15	0

The unanimous opinion of this group is that the impact of globalisation of education would be good.

Table 3 Should foreign institutions be allowed to operate in India?

Yes	No
15	0

There has been an overwhelming opinion in favour of allowing Foreign Institutions to operate in India.

Table 4 Where would you prefer to study-Indian or foreign education institutions?

Indian Institutions	Foreign Institutions
10	5

66% of the respondents have indicated that they would study in Indian institutions rather than foreign ones even if the latter is allowed to function in India.

Table 5 In which aspect do Indian distance education institutions lack?

Research	Programme Content	Support Services
7	4	4

46% of the respondents have indicated that the Indian Distance Education Institutions have to improve on their research component 27% each have indicated that programme contents as well as support services need improvement.

Table 6 Would you like to go abroad for higher education?

Yes	No
15	0

There is an overwhelming view in favour of consumption abroad. This is indicated by the fact that 100% respondents indicated that they would prefer to go abroad for higher education.

Table 7 Should Indian Distance Education be subsidised?

Yes	No
11	4

An overwhelming majority of the respondents in this group have indicated their opinion in favour of subsidising Indian Distance Education Institutions (73%).

Table 8 Should foreign educational institutions be given the same treatment as Indian ones?

Yes	No
8	7

The proportion between those who propose National Treatment and those who oppose it is nearly the same for this group (53:47).

Table 9 Should there be world wide recognition of distance education degrees?

Yes	No
15	0

The unanimous decision of this group is that there should be worldwide recognition of Distance Education Degrees.

Combined results of the student responses:

In what follows, the responses of the students under the various streams that is presented in the preceding pages is presented in a composite pattern below.

Table 1. Are you aware about the general agreement on trade in services?

Yes	No
29	13

An overall picture is presented here by taking the views of all the students who took part in the exercise. It is indicated that the level of Awareness about GATS is quite high at around 70%. This reveals the fact that decisions taken on the aspect of globalisation by the decision-making bodies would be fairly debated by informed public opinion.

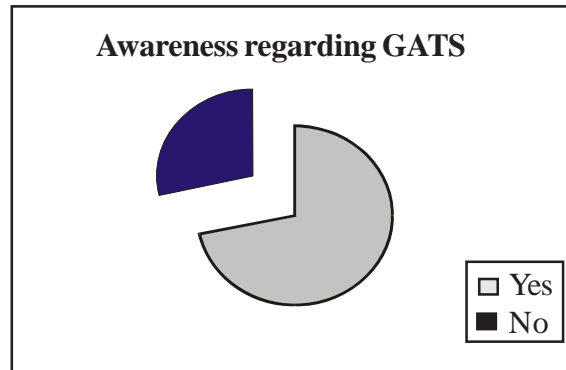
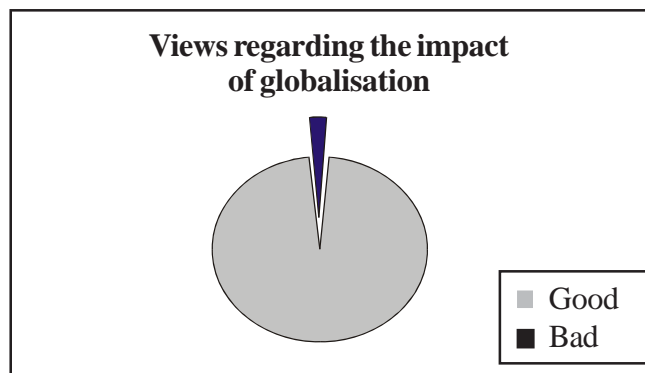


Table 2 What do you think would be the impact of globalisation of education?

Good	Bad
41	1



It has been noticed that there is a very strong opinion among the educated people that the impact of globalisation of Education will be good. This is indicated by the fact that over 97% of the target group think so.

Table 3 Should foreign institutions be allowed to operate in India?

Yes	No
38	4



On the vital question on whether market access be allowed for foreign educational institutions in India, an overwhelming 90% of the respondents answered in the affirmative. This is one aspect that the policy makers should take adequate note of. Going by the current policy leanings of the government, it should be presumed that the trend is in favour of allowing foreign institutions to operate in India on a limited scale. The two compilations that are presented below point towards a medium range presence of foreign institutions in the country. Though the element of direct presence is minimal, foreign institutions have mostly taken the route of instituting franchisees and arriving at twinning arrangements.

Compilation 2: Commercial Presence of foreign education providers in India

SL.No.	Country	2001			2004		
		Universities	Others	Total	Universities	Others	Total
1	United Kingdom	9	1	10	16	7	23
2	Australia	3	-	3	2	4	6
3	United State	9	3	12	16	3	19
4	Canada	-	1	1	2	1	3
5	Others	-	1	1	4	6	10
TOTAL		21	6	27	40	21	61

Source: Powar (2004)

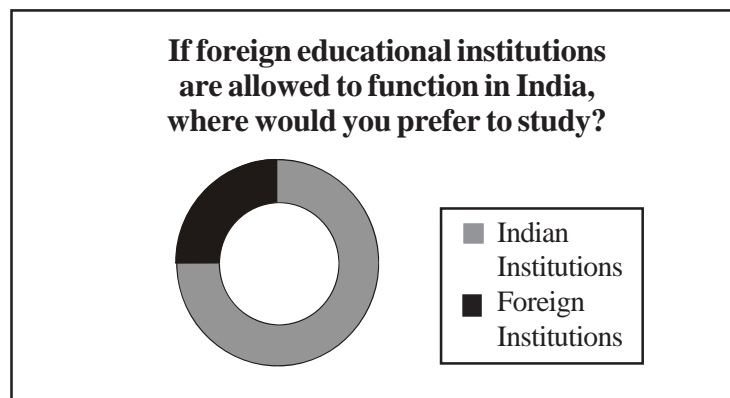
Complication 3: Country-Wise presence as well as the location of the franchisees in India

Country	University/Institutions	Location of Presence
United Kingdom	31	Delhi, Mumbai, Pune, Bangalore, Kolkatta, Indore, Chennai
USA	18	Delhi, Mumbai, Pune, Bangalore, Kolkatta, Indore, Chennai
Australia	2	Delhi, Mumbai
France	6	Delhi, Mumbai, Pune, Bangalore,
Canada	4	Delhi, Mumbai

Source: NIEPA (2004) Report on “Consultative meet (15th June, 2004), on Foreign Education Providers: Issues and concern”

Table 4 Where would you prefer to study-Indian or foreign education institutions?

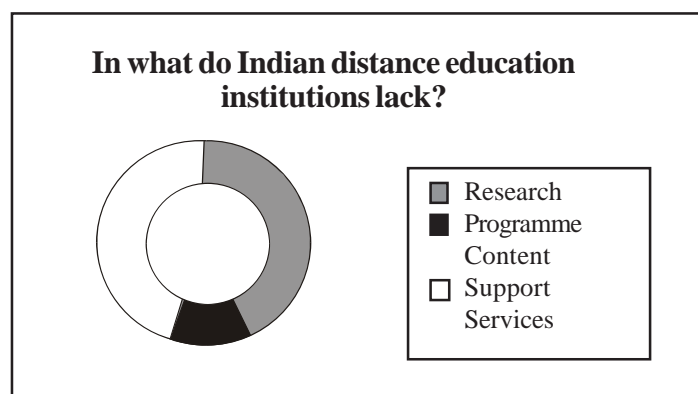
Indian Institutions	Foreign Institutions
31	11



However, when queried on where the respondents would like to pursue their studies, if foreign institution is also allowed to operate in the country, 73% of the respondents indicated that they would like to study only in Indian institutions. This attitude may have more to do with the distinct lack of cross border recognition of degrees across the world.

Table 5. In which aspect do Indian distance education institutions lack?

Research	Programme Content	Support Services
19(45%)	6(15%)	17(40%)



The results regarding the question regarding which aspect was seen to lack in Indian Distance Education Institutions, it was seen that 45% stated that Research was the component in which Indian Distance Education Institutions lacked the most. On the other hand an equally significant proportion (40%) seemed to think that Indian Distance Education Institutions lacked in the field of research. A small proportion (15%) seemed to think that these institutions lacked in the field of Programme Content. The high percentage of students reporting the inadequacy in student support services has also been corroborated by another study, published in the year 2002, pertaining to the IGNOU which came up with the following results.

Compilation 4: Problems associated with student support services in IGNOU

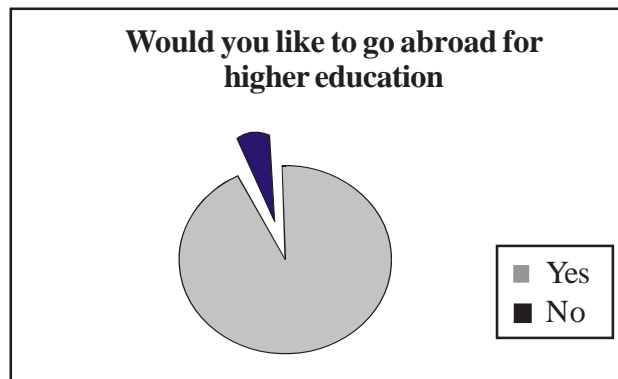
SL.No.	Issue	Problem Faced	Problem not faced
1	Getting Exam Forms	79(88.77%)	10(11.23%)
2	Filling up Exam Forms	80(89.88%)	9(10.11%)
3	Receiving Exam Hall Ticket from the university	58(65.16%)	31(34.84%)
4	Obtaining Result	46(51.68%)	43(48.32%)
5	Receiving latest grade card from the university	40(44.94%)	49(55.06%)

Source: Student Support Services and Academic Problems in Distance Education: Learners' Perspective.

This study also revealed that students were facing difficulties related to student support services and hence the result in this survey is not surprising.

Table 6. Would you like to go abroad for higher education?

Yes	No
39	3



On the question pertaining to **Consumption Abroad**, that is whether, the respondents would like to go abroad for higher education, it was seen that an overwhelming majority (92%), preferred consumption abroad. This pattern is corroborated by the current outflow of Indian students to major countries. The following table is quite illustrative in this regard. It is interesting to note that the outflow of students to USA alone is 74603 and is quite substantial in the case of other countries.

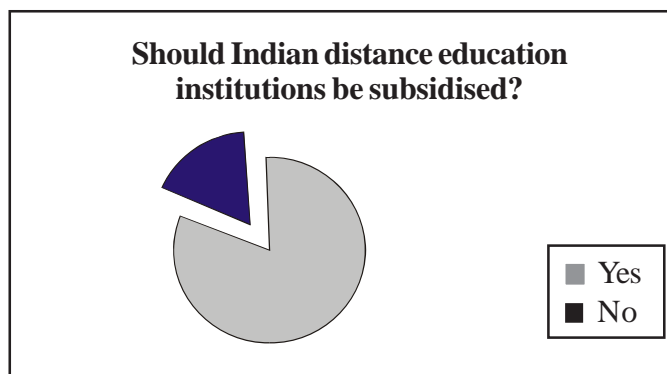
Compilation 5: Outflow of Indian Students

	Destination	Numbers of Students
2002-2003	United States of America	74603
	United Kingdom	14000
	Australia	11280
	Canada	2600
	France	1000

Source: NIEPA (2004) Report on “Consultative meet (15th June, 2004), on Foreign Education Providers: Issues and concerns”

Table 7. Should Indian distance education be subsidised?

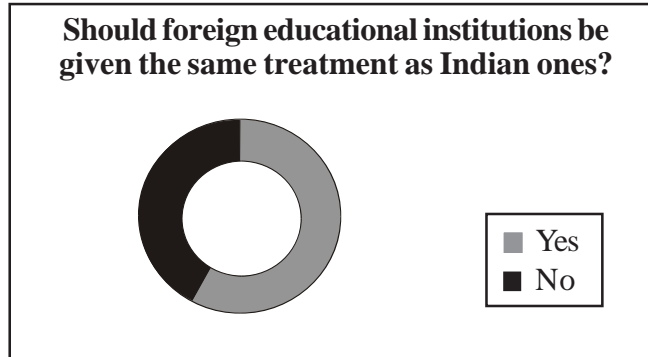
Yes	No
34	8



It has been revealed by the study that over 80% of the respondents feel that there is a need for Indian Distance Education Institutions to be subsidised. This has basically to do with the fact that there is a perception that Indian educational institutions are still in their infancy and hence need to be subsidised.

Table 8. Should foreign educational institutions be given the same treatment as Indian ones?

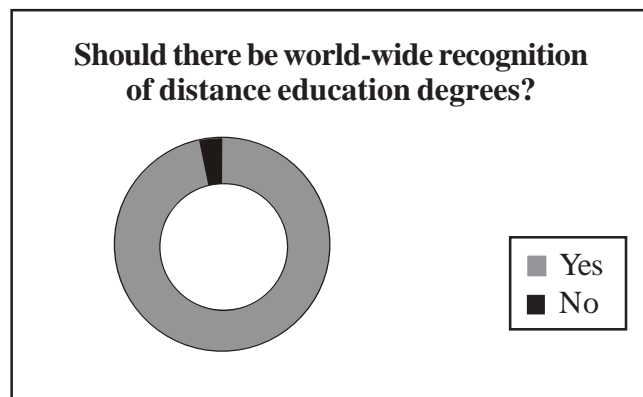
Yes	No
23	19



It is strongly felt among 55% of the respondents that National Treatment needs to be provided to the foreign Educational institutions. This can be viewed as a strong endorsement of GATS and globalisation.

Table 9. Should there be world wide recognition of distance education degrees?

Yes	No
41	1



There is an intense and strong opinion in favour of cross-border recognition of degrees. Nearly 98% of the respondents have voiced their opinion in its favour. This can be seen as a strong recommendation for enhancing labour mobility along with globalisation of education.

Recommendations of the Student Community to make Indian Distance Education more competitive:

The respondents gave the following opinions, which according to them would help in making Indian Distance Education more competitive.

- More and more job oriented programmes should be added to make the system more relevant to the needs of the modern day.
- The syllabi of the Indian Distance Education institutions should be brought in conformity with the syllabi of other comparable universities of the world.
- Periodic updating of the programme contents should be undertaken to ensure programme relevance.
- The rural spread of the Distance Education institutions should be broadened.
- The approach towards the dissemination of education should be more multi-media oriented.
- The practical component of IGNOU programmes should be broadened.
- The monitoring of study centres by the authorities must be strengthened.
- Stress should be laid on interface with industries and industrial organisations like FICCI, CII etc.
- Campus interviews may be organized by interacting with commercial and industrial houses.
- Indian Distance Education Institutions should open their study centres more in countries with similar conditions and should expand their network.
- These institutions should concentrate on launching programmes in more languages other than Hindi and English so that they can extend their market reach.
- Feedback time for academic activities should be shortened.
- Support Services like Counselling, Assignment Evaluation, result declaration etc should be improved upon.

Conclusion

The study has revealed a few pertinent aspects that policy makers may need to take note of while deciding upon globalisation of education. The study reveals that the educated public opinion is overwhelmingly in favour of providing National Treatment and market access to foreign educational institutions in India. On the other hand, they are also in favour of continuing subsidies to Indian distance education institutions. The general opinion is that there should be worldwide recognition of distance education degrees to facilitate greater labour mobility. To sum up, it should be stated that the general inclination of the educated populace is in favour of globalisation of education.

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