



GATS AND HIGHER EDUCATION

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Abstract

The educational system in India is an outcome of many phases and ordeals. It is the result of the revolutionary changes from “Gurukul” to private classes ... From masses to classes. As a dynamic and vibrant nation we cannot consider tomorrow as an extension of yesterday. But consider it as launching pad for the future. We must innovate how ideas think of new methods, establish new institutions think positively to add everyday “New value” in existing system of education which will enable India to great Nation and leader of the world.

Globalization is the process of global integration of activities related to national markets, economics, technology and related resources for national and international trade with the use of modern information technologies. Countries are becoming interdependent and globe has to monopoly as such. Globalization is now not an optional. The global education market is too big to be ignored for instance the World Trade Organization (WTO) was established. in globalization the education has become a marketable activity. The higher education is treated as market commodity and it is selling at higher prices. GATS have provided global facilities in higher education at local level.

Globalization has two essential components, one market integration, and two the evolution of a global mindset among key decision makers.

Key Words: *Gats, Higher Education*

Introduction

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ORIGIN OF GATS:

There was an increasing interest in international trade in the world after Second World War that results in the United Conference in 1946 to consider as international Trade Organization. This in turn led to the formation of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) in 1947, to increase world trade and reduce barriers to trade. Various agreements were negotiated amongst member nations in different rounds. GATT is a set of rules and multilateral agreements having the main objective of expanding production and international trade. On January 1, 1995, World Trade Organization came into existence. it is the child of GATT. India is one of the founder members of WTO. its rules are applicable to trade merchandise, trade in services and trade in related aspects of intellectual property.

The two agreements of WTO on the priority basis that is the areas of trade in goods and merchandize and trade in services. These two agreements were signed and the related areas were brought under the purview of the WTO. The trade in goods can have a general acceptability among people but trade in services under the control of WTO has some reservations at different levels. “The General Agreement on trade and Services” (GATS) initiated the process of liberalization. It was signed in 1995 and came into force from 1996. initially WTO had 143 members and there has been a gradual rise in the number of member countries. India is one of the founder members of the WTO.

The WTO covers a number of areas and concentrating on General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS) and the education sector.

THE NATURE OF GATS:

The GATS is the first multilateral framework of principles and rules for progressive liberalization of trade in services. it covers all services and all modes of supply including electronic commerce, commercial presence and movement of persons and provides a unique mechanism for developing countries to obtain reciprocal benefits for locking in their policy reforms in the service sector. **The GATS is composed of three pillars.**

- 1) The Agreement containing principles and rules applying to all parties.
- 2) The annexes addressing the specificity of individual service sectors i.e. financial services, telecommunication services etc.
- 3) The schedules of negotiated specific commitments that are annexed in the agreement and form an integral part there of in accordance with article XX of GATS.

The GATS contains 32 Articles and is divided into six parts. Part I covers the scope and definition. Part II deals with the general obligations and disciplines. Part III covers the specific sector commitments, market access, and national treatment; Part IV includes the modalities of achieving progressive liberalization through various rounds. Part V and VI contain the institutional provisions and final provisions providing for the establishment of the council for trade in services to facilitate the operation of the agreement and definition of the key terms.

OBJECTIVES OF GATS:

To establish a multinational framework for services similar to trade in goods involving reduction in tariff and non- tariff barriers to trade covering 161 services activities where multilateral agreement covers 12 specified services include educational services.

The following are the objects of GATS.

To insure free trade with national treatment to all in domestic market.

To remove the obstacles in entering new market.

To bring entire market world under one umbrella.

To maintain complete transparency in transactions and to publish all terms and conditions well in advance.

To accord international status to the entrepreneurs in different countries.

The agreement consists of 12 services, Education, Communication, Construction, Engineering, Trade and Distribution, Environment, Economic Services, Health, Tourism, Sports and Culture, Entertainment and Transportation. the education services consist of five services :

Primary education.

Secondary education.

Higher education (Technical & Vocational)

Adult education.

Others not include in above i.e. certificate courses.

The member countries have three options.

acceptance in one out of five options.

Acceptance in all five.

Non- acceptance of all.

Till today 148 countries have given their consent to participate in this agreement.

FEATURES OF GATS:

The following are the main features of GATS :

Provides legally enforceable rights to trade in services.

No tariffs and other generalized protection measures are applied to services.

Four principles modes of providing international services, i.e. cross border supply, training abroad, commercial presence and movement of natural persons.

Allow members to choose the services and limit the degree of liberalization.

Mutual recognition of qualifications, experiences and skills.

No restriction on transfer of money on account of payment for services supplied.

Permission for governments to negotiate over specific commitments concerning natural persons. Financial services, telecom services, and air transport.

Education is one of the twelve areas covered by GATs.

GATS & HIGHER EDUCATION IN INDIA

History of educational system has a long track record over ages. The stages of education spreading to the rural masses and reaches till the present day varieties like general. professional and vocational education system. With the introduction of World Trade Organization (WTO) in 1995 the field of Higher Education has a lot of challenges on the horizon. The paper throws light on the quality problems and opportunities of higher education in India.

The quality of education provides quality of life. Globalization of Indian higher education proceeds in three ways :

- 1) Earning foreign currency.
- 2) Improving quality of Indian education.

- 3) Spreading Indian culture and values, which are essential factors of entering into world market.

PROBLEMS IN HIGHER EDUCATION :

- a) The present system of higher education is basically functioning as a tutorial institution.
- b) The present education system is based on western education system and is static in nature.
- c) The higher education system prolongs with traditional way to teaching and using old model of technical tools and instruments for demonstration.
- d) The syllabus for certain subjects is unchanged for quite a long time.
- e) The government adopts different reforms in higher education in this regard fund allocation to higher education is reduced a lot.
- f) Autonomous status is given to certain colleges.
- g) Universities run distance mode of education and Open University system of education.
- h) The University is attached with a large number of affiliated colleges and institutions.

Those problems are common in India at this juncture; the higher education needs a change in itself to meet the necessity as per globalization. The expected changes are discussed as follows : i.e. opportunities in higher education.

- 1) Improvement in the rate of enrollment in higher education.
- 2) Higher education should provide best practices for quality education i.e. standard, student's satisfaction etc.
- 3) Improve the financial resources allocation for education.
- 4) Institutions implement the innovative and qualitative education programmes.
- 5) Teachers and students can use the best teaching and learning materials.
- 6) The use of information and communication technology.
- 7) Infrastructure facilities should be improved with updated standard.
- 8) Application oriented research must be encouraged.
- 9) To create capacity for moral leadership colleges need to impart positive values.
- 10) Participation in sports, games, social service activities like N.S.S. and N.C.C. which can be helpful to develop character of the student and shaping young minds.

With the help of above some dimensions the quality improvement of higher education is possible. Economics globalization can be achieved, if Indian educational institutions give due attention on enhancement of skills and up gradation of knowledge in order to match the

human resource to the need of the new institutional scenario where employment opportunities can be created. Above opportunities give the advocates of GATS good reasons for supporting free trade in education. However, there are many negative aspects, which are listed below:

Free Trade education will provide programmes for only those who can afford to pay the market prices.

It will accentuate inequalities.

Privatization of education through foreign institutions will result in erosions of social values.

Institutions may be interested only in those subjects that are profitable to them.

Academic merit will cease to be a criterion for entry to educational institutions.

Money alone will be the consideration for admission.

The government will lose control over administration of colleges and universities.

There is no consensus opinion on the risks or benefits of GATS in higher education. There are more questions than clear answers. But there is a definite consensus on one aspect that is every country must take up the challenge of balancing opportunities and commit to liberalize trade in higher education.

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