

UNIVERSITY OF HYDERABAD
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY
UGC – SAP - Conference on
EDUCATION STATE AND GLOBALISATION:
Issues and Challenges
4 – 5 February 2010
(Concept Note)

As we move through the new millennium, the discourse on globalization has become one of the most dominant in social sciences. The impact of globalization is multidimensional which has far-reaching implications for economy, polity, and culture across the countries. Particularly, the education systems and policies all over the world are witnessing transformation driven by both the neo-liberal forces and the internal social demands and pressures. However, recent trends in education in many countries highlight the reform oriented structural adjustment policies and practices to cope with rapid global changes. Education at different levels has been undergoing a change and is forced to adopt reform agenda to meet the global challenges. In countries such as India, the tremors of such reform agenda could be seen in the pronouncements of the new government in power. The rapid call for reforms in education are said to be due to the emergence of new modes of knowledge production, which demands entrepreneurial culture as a strategy to promote international competitiveness in education.

Privatization of Education at various levels ranging from primary to higher has generated a mixed critical evaluation from academic community and policy makers. One group of scholars vehemently opposes the private takeover of education on the grounds of equity, curriculum, and pedagogic practices and highlights the withering of welfare state in the context of developing countries. This group of scholars reclaims the state and state sponsored education model. On the other, the hyper globalist strongly supports privatization of education at different levels and argues that privatization is the only option and solution to the perils of public education. The supporters of reform agenda equate privatization with equity and quality in education. There is a third group which now calls for a 'middle path' by calling for the Public Private Participation (PPP), which is more driven by the Private sector as it can now have the leeway to control the management of public education with public funds. The basic underlying argument of this group is that the state had failed in providing educational services and the failure lies in its lack of expertise in managing resources – human as well as financial.

All three models co-exist in India and other South Asian societies though the latter two are receiving greater support from the state and corporate organizations and is reflected in shifts in policy and the 'opening up' of the education sector to private interests. What is increasingly clear is that these changes have not received the attention of researchers and little is known about the educational and social implications of these changes. It is important to bring together scholars and researches from different regions to understand the sweeping changes in education and society, share experiences and set out an agenda for research that incorporates a comparative perspective.

The proposed conference aims to discuss the continuities and changes in the Indian context by bringing together researchers from various institutional locations. It seeks to

encourage discussion on the political economy of globalization of education and its impact. The objective of the conference is to provide a platform for scholars to carry out a critical evaluation of the political agendas and policy reflections on education in South Asian countries. The rationale for choosing South Asia as a geographic space for scholarly deliberation is that though the region is characterized by diversity in relation to political establishments and economic development there are socio-cultural similarities that are reflected in educational agendas.

The conference also aims to examine the challenges to societies and educational systems in the backdrop of demands for globalization, national agendas and local aspirations. The conference will provide a platform for sharing the diverse experiences of countries with the process of globalization. The idea is to reflect on the variety of societal and state responses to globalization and its impact on education. The underlying objective is to focus on the nature and extent of globalization effects on the various dimensions of educational organization and processes and also to see to what extent the social structures have been able to respond to these changes.

Some of the themes proposed for the conference are as following:

- Conceptual issues in State, Society and Globalisation
- Globalization and its impact on the educational systems
- Imperatives of privatisation in the educational sector
- Transformation in curricular and pedagogical processes
- Educational governance and societal responses
- Educational changes and their impact on the social, religious and cultural realms
- Questions of Equality and Access in Education
- Education and social change in a comparative perspective.

Few eminent sociologists and social scientists from India and other countries will be invited to contribute papers for the Conference. Besides, we welcome proposals for 20-25 -minute presentations. You may send your Abstract (300 words), together with your contact details to the seminar Coordinator, before October 15, 2009. The invitees will be notified by November 1, 2009. The final papers are expected to reach by January 1, 2010.

Date and Location:

February 4 – 6, 2010. Department of Sociology, School of Social Sciences, University of Hyderabad, Central University post- 500046, Hyderabad, Andhra Pradesh, India.

Accommodation and Travel:

We shall have pleasure of extending local hospitality during your stay at the university campus. Travel support will be extended to the authors of the accepted papers subjected to the availability of funds.

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