Indian Education - Global Relevance

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ABSTRACT

The global economy has undergone a structural transformation: there will be a workforce of 3.3 billion needed by 2020, in the services and capital-intensive manufacturing sectors. This phenomenon is expected to play out in India – by 2020. 90% of India's GDP and 75% of employment is expected to be obtained from the services and manufacturing sectors. Technological advancement shall have several jobs redundant while also creating new job roles. The structural shift in generating employment will increase demand for sophisticated workers, innovators, and thinkers who could thrive in globally-connected and a dynamic economy. India, with a large workforce and an increasing pool of educated graduates, is in a strategic position to reap the benefits of this shift. However, the 'demographic divided' will likely be squandered unless India can create a "globally relevant and competitive" higher education system that serves the requirements of both the domestic as well as global economy. India is prominently placed on the global higher education map in terms of more globally-reputed Indian institutions, significant student and faculty mobility, presence of collaborations with quality international institutions India as a hub for talent that is able to drive competitiveness of the Indian economy and is fit to work in or serve international markets This paper is an attempt to identify the needs of global competitiveness in the Indian students. Secondary data is used in depth to identify the shift needed in higher education.

Keywords: Indian Education system, Global competiveness, Strategic positioning, Current system employability.

1. INTRODUCTION :

The global economy is undergoing structural transformation which requires a workforce of 3.3 billion by 2020, in the services and capital intensive-manufacturing sectors. The phenomena is also expected to play out in India – by 2020, 90% of India's GDP and 75% of employment is expected to be contributed by the services and manufacturing sectors. Technological advancement will make many jobs redundant while creating new job roles. This shift in employment will increase demand for sophisticated workers, innovators, and thinkers who will thrive in a globally-connected and dynamic economy. India, with its large workforce and increasing higher education graduates, is strategically positioned to reap the benefits of this shift. However, the 'demographic divided' will be squandered unless [1] India is able to create a "globally relevant and competitive" higher education system that serves the requirements of both the domestic as well as global economy.

- Low employability of graduates, driven by several factors including outdated curricula, shortage of quality faculty, high student-teacher ratios, lack of institutional and industry linkages, and lack of autonomy to introduce new and innovative courses.
- Low impact research output and patents filed given relatively low government and corporate spending on research, insufficient doctoral students [2], missing research focus and culture in most institutions, and lack of international research collaborations

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- Limited focus on entrepreneurship on campus as reflected in the fact that there are few institutes that offer programs in entrepreneurship and have active incubation / entrepreneurship cells [3].
- Complex regulatory requirements and hurdles, poor institutional governance standards, and lack of professional management [4].

2. LITERATURE REVIEW :

Researchers believe that learning style is a good predictor of an individual's preferred learning behavior (Bostrom, Olfman and Sein, 1993 [5]). Lindsay (1999) [6] found that a match between learning style and teaching style reveals increases in student achievement and satisfaction. Contrary to these findings, Hajizainuddin (1999) [7] found no significant relationship between the information-processing characteristics of learning style and performance. In addition, he found no significant interaction among the factors of learning style, hypermedia's organizational structure and attitude. Desai (1996) [8] indicated that learning style does not significantly influence a subject's learning .While there is plenty of study done on learning styles, there does not seem to be any agreement or approval of any one theory (Bruen and Conlan, 2002) [9]. Furthermore, not all researchers and writers agree with learning style models. A research report from the Learning and Skills Research Center (Coffield et al., 2004) [10] studied many influential learning style models and did a critique of all experimental learning style theories. This research questions the reliability, validity and implication of learning styles in general. In addition, the authors have criticized some of the research that has used these models including the Kolb's learning style model and disagreed with the way they came to their conclusions. According to the paper, Kolb's Learning Style Inventory (LSI) in general 'should not be used for individual selection'. Referring to the validity and reliability of LSI the paper indicated that 'the construct validity of the LSI has been challenged and there is a long public dispute over reliability of LSI'. Furthermore, the paper indicated that, there is no proof that 'matching' increase educational performance in future education and that the findings are inconsistent and questionable. Markham (2004) [11] points out that the research on learning style has to go further than the simplistic effort to show that people differ on a measure and that these differences lead to a definable learning outcome.

Several classifications of learning style and related concepts have been developed through the years. These classifications include Solomon's Inventory of Learning Styles, the Meyers-Briggs Type Indicator, Howard Gardner's multiple intelligences, McCarthy's 4-Mat system, and Honey and Mumford's (1986) [12] social approach to learning. Perhaps the most widely known approach to assessing learning style, however, is that of David Kolb (1984) [13].

According to Kolb (1984) [13] individuals learn in four stages or modes: concrete experience, reflective observation, abstract conceptualization, and active experimentation. However, in different learning situations individuals often use different combinations of learning modes; hence no one mode clearly identifies an individual's learning style. The combination of learning modes forms four quadrants reflecting four learning styles: Accommodator, Diverger, Assimilator, and Converger.

As indicated above, there is a need to accommodate different learning styles and modes. This accommodation requires more than recognizing the students' learning styles, however. Not only does learning style and mode vary by individual, but teaching style varies as well. Ebeling (2000) [14] suggests that there is evidence most instructors use a teaching style that is comfortable to them and this is often the way they themselves learn best. According to Taylor (1998) [15] all instructors need to be able to address a variety of learning styles and Kay (1998) [16] proposes communication is improved by understanding how people learn. There is research to support varying teaching style to match learning style. Roach et al. (1993) [16] examined alternative teaching styles in marketing classes. Filbeck and Smith (1996) [17] looked at both teaching and learning styles along with age and gender. Borg and Shapiro (1996) studied teaching styles in economics classes. Hayes and Allinson (1996) [18] analyzed 19 studies, which examined matching learning style to learning method and found support in improved learning performance. There are also many research results on quality in teaching-learning processes in higher education system [19-58].

3. THE OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY :

- To identify parameters for globally relevant and competitive Higher education system.

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- To understand the Indian higher education system in the same context.
- To evaluate the Indian Higher education system with respect to the performance indicators.

4. METHODOLOGY :

The study is purely based on secondary data. Relevant authentic sources have been used to draw a generic conclusion. Graphical representations are also based on the secondary data. Apart from the secondary sources, in-depth focus group interview was conducted with experts in the area to arrive at conclusions.

5. DISCUSSIONS :

5.1 Basically there are three types of institutions [Diagrammatic representation below]
- Institutions offering a wide range of courses aimed at providing a well-rounded and holistic education to India's masses and imparting skills that are relevant to the local industry/community.
- Institutions offering technical/professional courses, with a focus on producing industry-ready graduates.
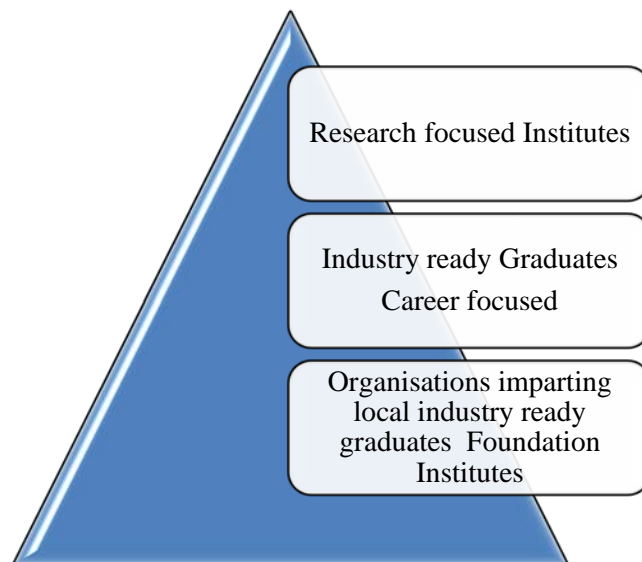- High-quality institutions with research and innovation as the prime focus.

Research focused Institutes

Industry ready Graduates
Career focused

Organisations imparting local industry ready graduates Foundation Institutes

Fig. 1: Three types of institutions in India

The above diagrammatic representation shows that in India there is more number of foundation courses institutions and the number of research oriented institutions is lesser in number. The study reveals that there are a number of institutions which are more focused on a holistic education and India should move towards the first two tiers in the Pyramid.

5.2 India prominently placed on the global higher education map:

Globally reputed Indian institutions: Indian institutions amongst the best in the world. India has a number of well acknowledged institutions. The standards are high. The approach to learning is different and students enjoy learning in these institutes.

The study of the secondary data revealed the parameters include
- India prominently placed on the global higher education map.
- India as a hub for talent.
- Inculcation of a culture of research, innovation, and entrepreneurship that can power high economic growth in the country.

India prominently placed on the global higher education map:

Mobility of International students and faculty: There is mobility of students and teachers on a full-time basis as well as through student and faculty exchange, twinning arrangements, etc. India has a

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large number of foreign students from Third world developing countries coming. The syllabus and orientation to certain courses is gaining importance.

Transnational education: Indian institutions with foreign campuses and global institutes with campuses in India. India is opening doors to foreign education. We see a number of collaborations and tie-ups with foreign institutions.

Deep collaborations between Indian and foreign HEIs: The number of collaborations is increasing year on year.

India as a hub for talent, that is able to drive competitiveness of the Indian economy and meet the needs of international markets:
- Highly employable graduates that can drive the global competitiveness of India's economy.
- Globally fit workforce: Graduates who can participate in international labor markets.

Inculcation of a culture of research, innovation, and entrepreneurship that can power high economic growth in the country:

• Knowledge creation leading to the development of innovative products, services, and business models.

• A conducive entrepreneurial ecosystem to incubate new ideas and businesses that can power economic growth and job creation.

The manpower required is going to increase and India has a skillful employee able workforce. India has the potential to meet the future needs of the world. By 2020 the aging workforce is going to increase and India alone can supply around 47 Million employees. Therefore India's demographic advantage will spread across the globe. Countries like US, China, Japan, Russia, and UK have a population crunch. There is going to be a huge shortage of employable workforce. Brazil, Mexico, and India have a skillful workforce. The below graph is an indicator of the same.
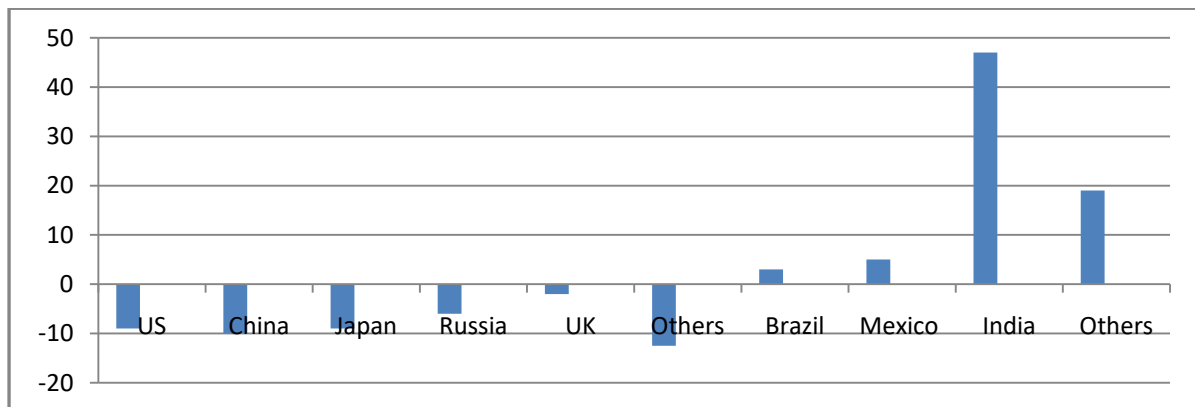

Fig. 2: Indian Potential employment in Percentage

The below graph (Fig. 3) reveals that India has a weak standing in terms of Academic reputation and Employee reputation. In terms of Faculty student ratio citations and international student ratio and staff ratio we need to meet the world Standards. But when we compare this to other developed countries India has a weak standing.
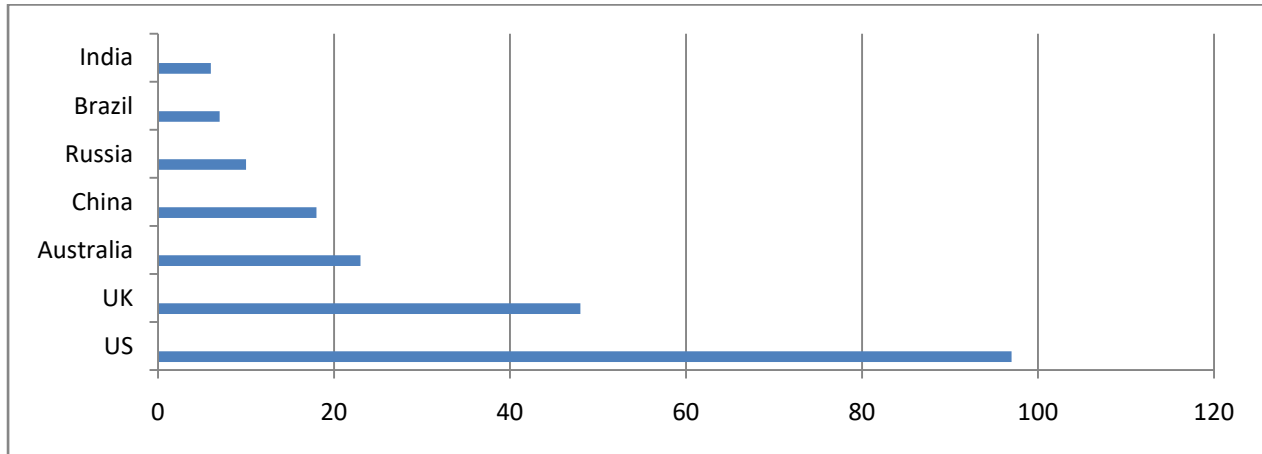
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Fig. 3: India's Academic Reputation in Percentage

5.4 India prominently placed on the global higher education map :
Table 1: India prominently placed on the global higher education map

Performance indicators	Potential root causes
• Very few globally recognized HEI • High outbound student mobility to developed countries and inbound mobility from emerging markets • Low number of Indian campuses abroad • Limited quality international tie ups	• Limited focus on research and innovation • Low brand recognition of Indian HEI • Low perception of Indian higher education • Restrictive and complex regulation

The above table shows the potential performance indicators in India include very few globally recognized Higher education institutes, more of outbound student's lower number of Indian campuses abroad and limited international tie –ups. The reasons for these problems lie because of limited research, low brand image rigid regulations and low perception of India Higher Education.

5.5 India as a hub for talent:
Table 2: India as a hub for talent

Performance indicators	Potential root causes
• Large pool of unemployable graduates • Substantial discrepancy in salaries between top tier HEIs and lower rung ones. • International migration of labor mainly to Gulf Cooperation Countries (GCC) primarily for low- end jobs	• Graduates lacking basic employability skills including soft skills, critical thinking skills, etc. • Outdated curricula. • High student-faculty ratio and shortage of highly qualified faculty. • Very few industry-academia linkages at program level; industry participation limited to placement.

The above table reveals for India to be a talent hub the problems faced are India has a large pool of graduates who are unemployable and the student faculty ratio is less and India does not have strong industry –academia linkage

5.6 Culture of innovation research and entrepreneurship:
Table 3: Culture of innovation research and entrepreneurship

Performance indicators	Potential root causes
• Increasing number of research publications but with low impact [11].	• Low doctoral education capacity. • Inadequate government funding; funding

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• Growing number of patents filed, but meager when compared to China and the US. • Limited number of start-ups.	skewed towards central institutions. • HEIs do not have meritocratic access to government funding. • Limited international research collaborations Incubation centers are limited in number that too in top institutions.

The above table reveals that India has a low doctoral education capacity and needs to have adequate funding and international collaborations.

6. CONCLUSION :

Th**e** study examines the current state of the system through the lens of "global relevance and competitiveness" and identified impediments that are hindering progress. Subsequently, it can further propose measures that key stakeholders, i.e. Government, industry and institutions, could take to make the Indian higher education system truly globally relevant and competitive. The study attempted to identify the problems faced by the Indian higher education system and is an attempt to rectify the problems. Thus Indian education is marching towards meeting world standards. The learning methods need to identify interesting tools to enhance employability.

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