

Higher Education- Skills Add Value

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Abstract - The Indian higher education system commanded awe and respect in the ancient world. Important seats of learning like Nalanda and Takshashila attracted the best students and academics from across the globe. Unfortunately, over a period of time, our higher education system lost its global competitiveness. This is exemplified by the fact that not many Indian higher education institutions feature in the annual world university rankings like the Times Higher Education World University Rankings or the QS World University Rankings.

This gradual decline in global competitiveness can be attributed to a multitude of factors. Let me list some of the more important concerns and the way to redress them. First is the lack of incentives for research. The amount of funding that is currently available for research in Indian universities is meagre by global standards. Apart from increasing the quantum of funds---- and promoting specific research on the state of the Indian higher education system itself -- there is a need for significant reform in the overall policy and management framework of disbursing research grants.

College is a place for being "**inducted into the world of books and ideas**," and "initiated in the disciplines and modes of inquiry that may one day be the guidelines of the student's life. College courses teach students how to think and make certain that they thoroughly and critically think through every aspect of a subject. This is where students are taught how to think for themselves. A student who progresses through their courses will continue to be rewarded, not only through the knowledge they have obtained, but also through the career opportunities that may be presented.

One thing that is compelling students to attend college courses is that they wish to broaden their educational horizons. By attending college, students expand their knowledge over a plethora of subjects, including classes for general education and specialized subjects for specific degrees as well. Additionally, college courses widen a student's range of abilities, such as advancing their ability to think critically and sharpen their decision making techniques. Receiving a higher education also improves a student's proficiency in writing and in speech; skills that will be necessary throughout the course of his or her life.

Nevertheless, among the list of many opportunities that this country has to offer to its people sits the right to receive education. Therefore, it is important to strive to obtain as much as possible out of educational resources, such as schools, colleges, universities, and so on. Without an education it is harder to excel and achieve success. With that being said, higher education, also known as **postsecondary education**, should be a high priority in the lives of those who wish to receive more opportunities and succeed in life.

The higher education so much needed today is not given in the school, is not to be bought in the market place, but it has to be wrought out in each one of us for himself; it is the silent influence of character on character.”

-William Osler

Keywords - Higher Education, Skills, Value, Employability

1. Introduction

Role of Higher Education and Skills required

Experience without education is not worth much in the corporate world. Those who have experience and a lack of higher education tend to frequently switch jobs, as opposed to having a stable career. Many employers prefer to see that a potential employee was determined enough to earn a degree in the career field that he or she has chosen. While real-world experience is an additional favorable attribute that an employer looks for in a prospective employee, higher education is a more complementing factor for employers.

Having a college degree makes one more susceptible to success in the corporate world. “A college graduate, for an employer, is often a person who has a proven academic record, has mastered complex subject matter, has the ability to think analytically and logically, and has been exposed to an intellectually stimulating environment-someone who has demonstrated that [he or] she can rise up .

II. Statement of the Problem: HIGHER EDUCATION- SKILLS ADD VALUE is the stated problem which will be thoroughly investigated, assessed and evaluated through this research work.

III. Objectives:

The major objectives of this research paper are to find out the following;

1. To find out how the Higher Education will benefit with Value added Skills
2. How the Indian students will get more employability with these skills

VI. Hypothesis:

The hypothesis laid down for this research work is to showcase that skills will definitely add more value to higher education, has its own merits, and will set precedence for the education system. Keeping in mind this hypothesis, this research work is taken up.

V. Methodology:

1. This paper is based on descriptive study. It is an elaborative research work. The data for this research paper is collected from the secondary sources, newspaper articles, online reports; etc. The information is also gathered from television/newspaper advertisements. Qualitative approach has been adopted in this research paper.

VI. Significance of the Present Study: Key features of each area

The distinction between each area, and between the different features of the same area, is not always clearly defined. Some overlap exists and many of the skills are also Core Skills or Skills for Learning, Skills for Life, and Skills for Work.

1. Enterprise

Enterprise skills develop individuals for the world of employment in all its diversity, not just for a specific occupation. Enterprise includes entrepreneurial activity and self-employment, encouraging individuals to participate fully in enterprise activities, be innovative in their approach, create opportunities for self-development, and participate in lifelong learning.

2. Enterprise has five main components:

Enterprising values
Experience of enterprise environment
Entrepreneurial activities
Career development
Self-awareness and improvement

3. Employability

Employability skills are a set of achievements, understandings and personal attributes that make individuals more likely to gain employment and be successful in their chosen occupation. Employability includes areas such as effective time management, planning and organizing, the ability to work with others to achieve a common goal, and to manage and be managed by others.

4. The six key components of employability are:

Self-management
Team working
Employer and customer awareness
Problem solving
Communication and literacy
Application of numeracy
Application of IT

5. Sustainable development

Sustainable development is about recognizing our environment and actively working to improve it, both locally and globally. It is about seeking to meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

6. The six key components of sustainable development are:

Interdependence
Carrying capacity
Uncertainty and precaution
Joined-up thinking
Participative working
Reflective practice

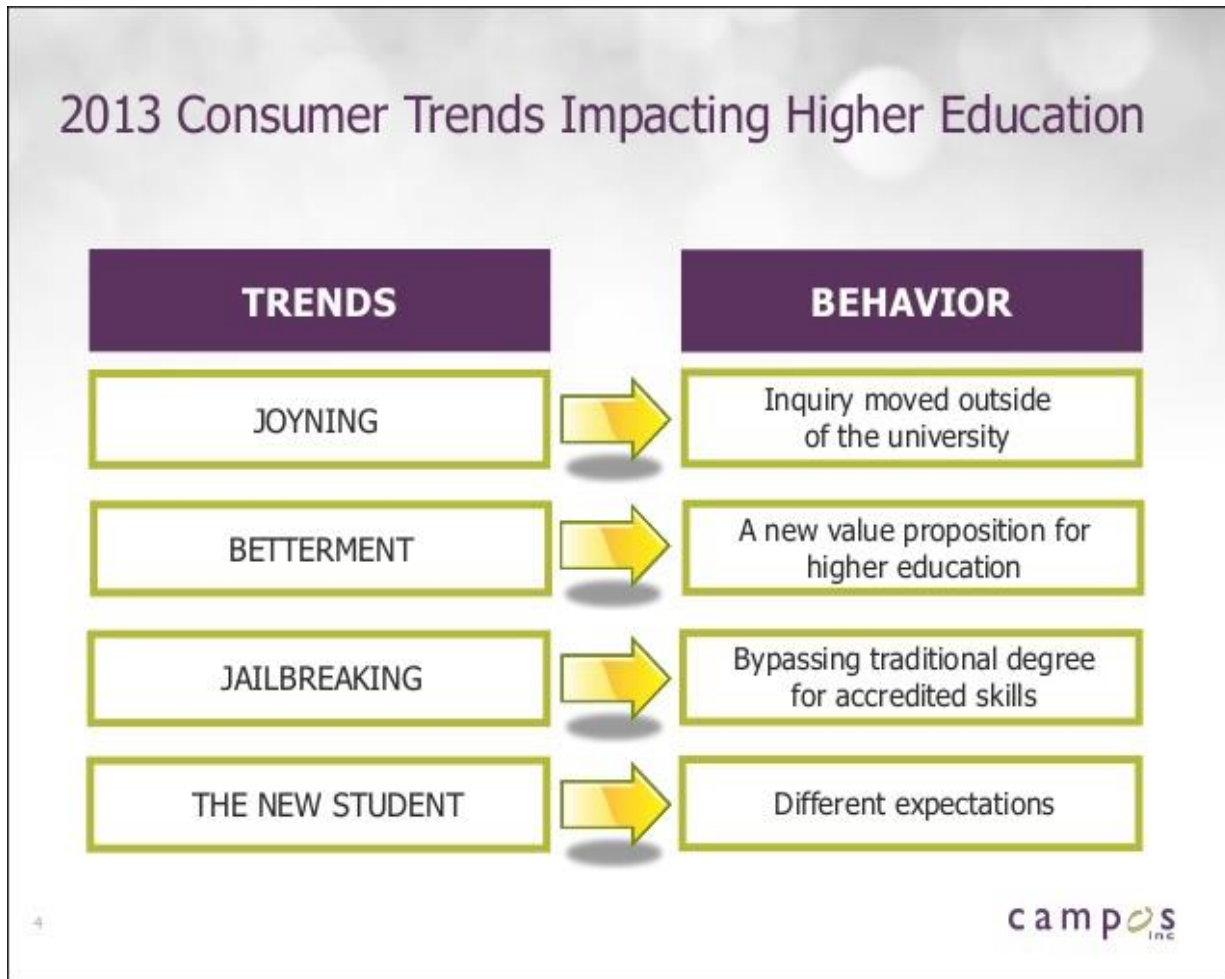


Figure-1

How private colleges are approaching the challenge of educating students for Global workplace is indicated in the above diagram.

It's not easy to be the leader of a small, private college these days. Over the last decade these schools have been under tremendous pressure from seemingly every direction. With high (and rising) tuition, and a centuries-old liberal arts curriculum, these institutions have endured criticism about their value proposition to students, as well as the relevance of their curriculum in today's rapidly evolving, global workplace.

VI. Findings:

1. For example, the existing framework to disburse grants is a multilayered and complex, leading to inordinate delays, frustration and loss of research focus among faculty members who are trying to secure these grants. A pro-active regulatory

mechanism set up by ministries like MHRD can help mitigate these concerns. Further, there is need to attract and retain faculty with good research skills. This will require a review of the current system of faculty recruitment, appraisal, assessment, promotions and rewards based on performance as measured through research contributions and publications.

2. Secondly, we do not have world class training programmes for academic administrators. High quality education administration is one of the seriously ignored aspects of the Indian higher education system. As providers of relevant educational support services, academic administrators form the backbone of any educational institution, especially one that aspires to constantly

improve the academic experience of its students and teachers.

Indeed, a world-class university requires world-class faculty supported by a world-class administration. Unfortunately, there are no comprehensive training programmes for academic administrators in India who deal with different nuances of our higher education system. The gradual decline in global competitiveness can be attributed to a multitude of factors.

Specifically, the lack of managerial training programmes for higher authorities in education administration has compromised the evolution of generic best practices in the sector. Institution-building has suffered and creativity has been stifled as the Indian higher education system continues to be driven by individual persona and the charm of education administrators instead of adherence to sustainable and institution-driven quality assurance mechanisms and innovative processes.

3. Thirdly, we need a more outward-looking approach. One of the strongest critiques of Indian higher education institutions is that they tend to get complacent with little success. Unique socio-political contexts cannot be used to justify the lack of sustained global competitiveness. There is a need for a renaissance in our attitude toward higher education. There is also a need to understand and contextualize global best practices for Indian conditions, for instance, in course design and pedagogy. Indeed, international collaborations in the form of student exchanges, faculty exchanges, joint teaching, joint research, joint conferences, joint publications, joint executive education programmes, summer and winter schools and study-abroad programmes are ways to promote the global engagement of Indian higher education institutions.

4. Fourth, we have failed to appreciate inter-disciplinarily in higher education. There is a dearth of courses and programmes in India that offer inter-disciplinary perspectives. Considering the fact that most of our societal problems cannot be solved by experts from a single academic discipline, there is a need for better coordination and synergy between experts from different academic disciplines to find sustainable solutions to the challenging problems

faced by our country. This will make higher education relevant to both Indian and global society. Thus, specialized training in a particular academic discipline must be complemented by generic interdisciplinary courses. The government should play a pro-active role in setting up and promoting universities offering inter-disciplinary courses in India.

5. Fifth, we seem to have greater tolerance for mediocre institutional standards. A lot needs to be done by our institutions and regulators to restore transparency, coherence and confidence in the higher education system. At the institutional level, a code of self-regulation and self-restraint has to be adopted. Institutions have to lead by example, not only by promoting best practices but also by curbing malpractices. Higher standards of data-sharing and transparency have to be mandated at the policy level, along with empowering prospective and current students to compare institutions.

VII. Conclusion:

The future of INDIA depends on the students in college today. Without successful graduation rates, there wouldn't be opportunity for growth in this country. College matters because the future of our country depends on the scholars all colleges produce. Although dropout rates increase each year in INDIA, application rates are also increasing because graduating high school students feel the need to attend college. Although some people may choose to attend college because their friends are or their parents did, college can turn out to be a complete success for some, or a complete disaster for others. College matters to the growth and development of any society. People who attend college are the individuals that want to make education a significant importance in their life, obtain a successful career, and live a wealthy life.

It is time to shift the focus of the current debate from the ownership structure of schools to how our nation can lead the world in having the most trained and most educated workforce. Let's find a way to really measure success and the value proposition for student success. A good place to begin is to consider the standards a person can use for higher education overall. There are four key factors: graduation rates,

how many graduates are able to secure jobs in their field of study, lifetime earnings of alumni and licensure and certification success.

When we look at the above criteria, we also need to factor in the student populations that colleges serve. Results should be weighted to take into account factors like a college's proportion of students from underserved populations. Once a formula and tracking mechanisms are in place, we can then begin to gauge whether colleges are producing graduates who are able to successfully enter the workforce and obtain the necessary licensures and certification that allow them to thrive in their chosen fields. As time goes on, we'll be able to track their earnings throughout their careers and see the impact that their education truly made on the lifetime of their careers.