

NEP 2020: A Catalyst for Internationalization of the Indian Higher Education System

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Abstract

India has a cherished custom of welcoming and embracing foreign students with open arms, and this tradition of India gives birth to the concept of “Internationalization”. With a long history of enrolling students from other developing nations in Asia and Africa, India's higher education system provides these "source countries" with a way to strengthen their human capital bases, and the purpose is to promote international relations. The demand for international education is increasing constantly. To improve the internationalization of the postsecondary level, several initiatives and policies are implemented. Through a descriptive and critical synthesis of published literature and the new education policy, the article explores the current topic at hand. In this piece of literature, the significance of an evolving situation tied to higher education's internationalization is discussed. It also covers various issues that are pertinent in higher education in relation to internationalization and discusses some recommendations as envisaged in NEP-2020 and the University Grants Commission (2021) to encourage the Indian higher education system to go global.

Keywords: Internationalization, Higher Education, UGC, and NEP 2020.

Introduction

The radical shift in collegiate education is Internationalization. The idea of internationalizing the education emerged in order to create a global knowledge society. It makes Indian education system more accessible to students from other countries. However, the concept of internationalization is not new. It is as old as education itself. It has come from a long journey from studying at home to “Internalization at home”. It has its roots in ancient civilization. It was there in ancient times when students from abroad

came to India for studying at universities like Nalanda, Takshashila, and Vikramashila. The “Viswa Bharati” of Rabindranath Tagore also is a reflection of internationalization in modern times. Some people also claim that internationalization is the result of globalization. One of them is Dr. Hans de Wit. According to him, “Internationalization as a concept and as a process started around the 1990s in response to the increase in globalization of societies at the end of the Cold War.” So, it is originated from the concept of Globalization. It came into focus only after the 1990s when Globalization emerged.

Internationalisation in higher education is nothing more than a response to 'Globalisation'. Its purpose is to raise educational standards and align curricula to acquire the kinds of skills needed to boost productivity in a globally competitive economy. For graduate students also, to successfully navigate the increasingly interconnected world, this is equally significant. Globalisation and internationalisation are thus related but also differ in many aspects. Globalisation is mostly an unchangeable occurrence, whereas internationalization necessitates actions at the individual, institutional, and macro-economic levels. It is true that higher education is becoming more globalised, and as a result, academic and economic trends follow their footsteps. This global system of education has become more inclusive and advanced quickly since the emergence of globalization. The promotion of international education is one of the ways in which India's education policy will strengthen its soft power strategy. The internationalizing function of academia has also absorbed greater interconnectedness as the importance of global interdependence in economic, political, and social dynamics has been acknowledged. The expansion of the service sector of the economy and

globalization-related policies supported the internationalisation of higher education. Governments from numerous nations, as well as institutions like the World Bank and UNESCO, gradually began to promote it. Education became a more significant and crucial topic as the world's need for it grew. Today, it has developed into a significant tool for both the international involvement of individuals from many nations and the progress of human education. In India, more international students are expected to enlist. By the year 2024, 500,000 foreign students are expected to enroll (Varghese; 2020). Many Indian higher education institutions (HEIs) are now dedicated to increasing their ability to recruit international students, academics, and financing as these opportunities are developing to increase their global outreach.

The Philosophy of Internationalisation at Higher Education Stage

The institution of higher learning has begun to be substantially transformed by internationalisation in both developing and developed countries. When used in its literal sense, the term "Internationalisation" refers to any cross-border relationship between countries or between specific institutions operating inside various national systems. According to Knight, J., "Internationalisation is a

process of introduction of international constituents in research, educational, and administrative to the function of higher education." Thus, a process of incorporating a worldwide viewpoint into education is consequently known as "Internationalisation". It is a path that emphasises the importance of the global environment while also focusing on a diverse and dynamic external environment.

Internationalization: Local to Global Mode of Education

To pursue higher education in the global context has now become an important need that will help us think globally and act locally as well as globally. There are streams that wave towards internationalization and these streams have two major components.

1. The first component is domestic in nature which refers to the international and intercultural specifications at home. Here, the students can continue their education while remaining in their nation of origin or without ever leaving it.
2. The second important component has to do with the cross-border mobility of the participants. This type of education, often known as cross-border education, has blossomed significantly, particularly at higher education levels. According to Knight, J, the Cross-

border mobility programme is defined as "The movement of individual education or training courses and programmes across national boundaries through face-to-face, distance learning, or a combination of these".

Steps to attract International Students to the Indian Higher Education System

1. *Scholarships*: Scholarships play a crucial role in making India an appealing destination for foreign students. Through the Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR), India offers approximately 3,940 scholarships to international students each year to promote intercultural understanding, and it has also signed cooperation agreements with 54 other nations in the area of education (Varghese & Mathews; 2021).
2. *GIAN*: GIAN stands for Global Initiative for Academic Networks was introduced in 2015 in the higher education sector. It is an initiative of the Ministry of Human Resource Development. It fosters international cooperation among researchers, entrepreneurs, and students. It was effective in magnetizing more than 1,283 scholars from 56 countries to Indian higher education institutions

between 2015 and 2019 (Varghese & Mathews; 2021).

3. *Connect to India*: The Ministry of Education launched Connect to India programme. This encourages international students to study in India. A value-added scheme called "Connect to India" would give 200 US students the chance to travel to India each year and enroll in a 4–6-week study programme at one of 15 prestigious Indian colleges. This plan would provide summer school-style short-term courses to educate US students about the key developments occurring in multiple sectors.
4. *Study in India program*: In 2018, the Ministry of Education unveiled its flagship project, the Study in India (SII) scheme. The project was designed to make it easier and more appealing for foreign students to enroll in top Indian universities.
5. *C.V Raman Fellowship*: In order to promote scientific cooperation between India and Africa, the Indian government also grants the CV Raman International Fellowship for African Researchers each year. Under this, eminent Indian Research and Development (R & D) institutions will accept Egyptian scholars to perform scientific and technological research

there. This will pave the path for Egyptian academicians to carry out their research in India.

Recommendations of NEP-2020 for the Internationalization of Higher Education in India

India has historically and still is portrayed as a top-tier educational destination that offers education at a reasonable cost. In addition to the historic Nalanda and Takshila institutions, universities in India currently enroll more than 40,000 overseas students from 164 different nations. However, this number's rise has recently decreased compared to a decade earlier. In order to help India regain its standing as a "Viswa Guru," the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 calls for the development of an action plan. It motivates Indian higher education institutions to priorities meeting domestic concerns including access, equity, quality, affordability, and accountability while putting more focus on meeting international standards. In compliance with the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 directives, a number of initiatives have been launched to strengthen the internationalisation of higher education, including:

1. Establishing FBCs (Foreign Branch Campuses) in India.

2. Offering high-quality education at a reasonable price.
3. The establishment of an office for international students at each HEI that would house the foreign students and serve to organise all activities designed for assisting and supporting newly recruited international learners.
4. Enabling partnerships between top-tier worldwide institutions for research and education.
5. Make a special effort to promote teacher and student liaisons between Indian institutions and foreign ones.
6. The mutually beneficial MOUs must be signed with foreign nations.
7. The most promising Indian institutions will be encouraged to open campuses worldwide.
8. It would consequently be made accessible to the top 100 universities of the world to operate in India.
9. As and when necessary suitable and in accordance with each HEI's standards, credits acquired at foreign universities can still be utilized as credit towards the award of a degree.
10. A legislative framework that facilitates the entry of such students will be set up, and such universities will be granted specific exceptions to the regulatory, governance, and content

standards that are applicable to other autonomous institutions of India.

UGC Guidelines on Internationalization of Higher Education

In accordance with NEP-2020's recommendations, the University Grants Commission (UGC) began taking action at the beginning of 2021 to foster the worldwide expansion of higher education in the nation. It included parameters that will provide Indian higher education institutions an opportunity to connect with people all around the world.

1. *Setting up Alumni Connect and Office for International Affairs:* In order to enhance their brand and encourage alumni interaction, higher education institutions in India must develop a culture that encourages alumni interaction. In order to accomplish this, colleges must establish an office for foreign affairs and an Alumni Connect Cell. This will make it easier to implement practical strategies like keeping an extensive database of graduates living abroad (both Indian and international).
2. *Credit recognition under twinning arrangements:* In a twinning arrangement, Indian students enroll in an Indian higher education institution but complete a portion of their programme at a partnered college in

another nation while adhering to local laws. However, only Indian higher education institutions are permitted to award degrees under twinning agreements. This twinning relationship will implement Credit Recognition in accordance with NEP-2020. Credit recognition and transfer refers to the recognition, quantification, and inclusion of 'Credit' awarded by a foreign higher education institution in the credit criteria for a programme being provided by an Indian higher education institution under a mutual twinning interaction.

3. *Global citizenship approach and engaging with foreign alumni:* Fostering a global ethos within the universities and turning students into "Global Citizens" is one of the foremost qualitative improvements in the Indian education system. A global citizen is someone who actively works to make our planet more equal, fair, and sustainable. They are aware of and understand the wider globe. Hence, a Global Citizenship Approach may be adopted by higher education institutions to foster global needs.
4. *ICT-based Intervention:* With its expansion, the Information and Communication Technology (ICT) has practically touched every facet of

college and university education, and it will be vital to the globalization of education. ICT has the power to completely transform the education industry. According to the University Grants Commission, ICT can aid in the creation of e-content, increase the accessibility of online courses, and solve concerns with access and equity through the use of MOOCs (Massive Open Online Courses).

5. *Academic and research collaboration with foreign universities:* Academics and research in HEIs across the globe must address a number of complex and connected global concerns, including those related to infectious diseases, energy security, and food security. Top most universities must work together to solve these problems. This will advance our Indian institutions more quickly and raise educational standards. HEIs are encouraged to engage in collaborative activities while adhering to the necessary standards and laws. The following might be some of the most significant initiatives: short-term Educand-exchange programmes, Educator-exchange programmes, semester abroad programmes under twinning agreements, planning academic and research workshops, seminars, and conferences in

collaboration with foreign universities, etc.

6. Brand Development of Indian HEIs Abroad: For Indian education institutions to be recognised internationally and to draw in international students, a methodical brand-building strategy is crucial. Scholarships play a crucial role in attracting international students to come to India. Collaboration with alumni from other countries or alumni of Indian descent who currently reside abroad will be beneficial for brand-building endeavors.

Conclusion

Higher education has grown significantly in India during the past few decades. Now, private operators also are allowed to endorse education in conjunction with the advancement of state-funded institutions. India has to produce high-quality colleges and universities (HEIs) in order to overcome the challenge. The government's support for educational institutions is minimal, thus private and international resources are welcomed. India's potential to become a global economic force will be dependent on its ability to attract a highly trained workforce, which will require raising the standards of its educational system to those of other nations. Hence, there is a

growing need for foreign education in India. The Indian universities have started developing cutting-edge techniques for delivering higher education in order to address these needs. India can grow its internationalization push thanks to a number of benefits, and consequently, foreign universities are showing interest in opening campuses there.

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