

## **Exploring root cause for barriers in the Indian education for international students.**

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**Abstract-** International students constitute an increasingly relevant and important source of diversity on college campuses. This paper focuses on international students pursuing higher education in India. It captures the hardships faced by the international students such as during interaction with immigration officials, education related problems among others of faced by international students in Pune. Survey method was followed to obtain the responses.

**Keywords:** International students, Immigration officials, Classroom facilities, Satisfaction level, Admission problems.

### **Introduction :**

Worldwide demand for higher education is growing at an exponential rate, driven by demographic trends and increased globalization of economies and societies. Participation rose by 128% from 1990 to 2007 (66.9 to 152.5 million students) (UNESCO, 2009).

The movement of students between countries is now a mass movement. The global population of internationally mobile students more than doubled from 2.1 million in 2000 to nearly 4.5 million in 2011. Given that growth trajectory, that total number is likely nudging closer to 5 million in 2014. The pattern of global

mobility is changing. The US is still the world's leading destination. In fact, it is expected to enroll a record number of students again this year. But America's market share is falling (from about 23% of all internationally mobile students in 2000 to 17% in 2011). This is partly due to the increasing share of other English-speaking destinations, such as the UK, Australia, and Canada. (Dennis Murray, Rebecca Hall, Betty Leask, Simon Marginson, Chris Ziguras, April 2011)

International students can be considered as a special case of sojourners—relatively short-term visitors to a country who have no intention of staying, with a specific task to perform (namely engaging in study) and particular opportunities for support (through the institution where they are enrolled). There is a considerable literature on sojourners, with debate about factors impacting on their adjustment to a new culture. (Doreen Anne Rosenthal, Jean Russell, Garry Thomson, Nov 2006), There is no “one size fits all”. Global scenario is changing at a fast pace, faster than anyone could have ever expected. And this revolution is much attributed to the changing face of higher education. It's the transforming world of higher education that has changed the global frontiers. It's important to understand the needs of the international students through which we can open up more frontiers in Indian education for students from other

countries. Some literature seems to hold the view that students' learning styles are predetermined by their culture. This culture-based learning styles' approach (Neuman and Bekerman 2000; Spizzica 1997) has contributed some important knowledge but it also has limitations.

International students come from many cultures and have to adjust to life, as well as to the culture specific to their campus and/or department. The norms that applied in their home countries are likely to be very different. For international students, adjusting to university life is complicated by the fact that they need to learn and negotiate cultural issues first to have access to the academic, social and other resources at the university.

### **Research Methodology:**

"International students" included all students who are studying in India on a study permit or a temporary resident (visitor) visa, or who are undertaking research on a work permit. All full-time or part-time international students attending each institution were eligible to participate in the survey, regardless of their faculty or major, the year of their program, or their level of study. Survey method was conducted. The questionnaire for the study was based on Canada first 2009 study for International students Canadian bureau for international education. The present study is purely based on the primary data. Questionnaire method was used to collect data. The questionnaires were got filled through personal contact method. The sample size taken was 60. The study was conducted at Chennai.

### **Related Work:**

It is crucial that they understand the diverse needs of their international student clientele, and provide a learning environment that meets their special needs (Canadian Association of University Teachers, 2008; Cunningham, 1991). International students often encounter pedagogical and curricular adjustment difficulties due to teaching methods, styles, and expectations that may be different from those they are accustomed to in their native cultures (Andrade, 2006; Demographic differences in culture have different changes and culture difference especially the culture

shock among international students can be liable to cause social crisis and accidents on and off at campus (Xiexin, 2004 p. 50). A deeper understanding of the nature of cultural differences would be obvious as international students are the carrier of their own culture (Xiexin, 2004).

The focus, therefore, is not only on the subject matter of the curriculum, but also on the pedagogical implications of teaching and learning approaches that will promote the inclusion of international students McKellin, 1998;

### **Objectives:**

1. It helps in finding out the reasons behind the student's decision to come and study in India.
2. The study also aims to study about the factors considered as difficulty by the international students while getting admission, interacting while immigration officials among many other factors.
3. It also aims to find the satisfaction level of international students with the course and their institution and finally overall satisfaction.

### **Data Analysis and representation:**

#### **1. Personal profile**

**Table No 1: Gender**

<b>Gender</b>	<b>No of respondents</b>	<b>%</b>
Male Students	32	58
Female Students	28	42
Total	60	100

**Interpretation:** The above table clearly explains the gender bifurcation among the surveyed international students. Out of the respondents participated for the survey 58% were male students and 25 % were female students.

2. **Marital and family status:** Are you married, single, or other (divorced, widowed, and separated)?

**Table No 2: Marital status**

Marital status	No of Respondents	%
Single	43	72
Married	17	28
Other	0	0
Total	60	100

**Interpretation:** Among the international students surveyed 72 % was single, 28 % was married .

### 3. Length Of Stay In India:

**Table No: 3 Length Of Stay In India:**

Length	No of Respondents	%
Less than one year	5	8
One year to less than two years	34	57
Two years to less than three years	11	18
Three years and longer	10	17
No response	0	0
Total	60	100

**Interpretation:** The above question was asked to know about the length of stay of international students in India. It was clearly apparent from the above table that maximum number of international students participated in the survey replied that they are staying in an India (57 %) between one year to less than one year followed by 2 yrs to less than 3 yrs(18 %).

### 4. Reasons For Deciding To Come To India for education:

**Table No: 4 Reasons for coming to India**

Topics	Number of Respondents	%
Indian Educational Quality	18	12
India's reputation as a safe country	24	16
Program of study offered in English in India compared to other countries.	10	7
Prestige /value of a Indian degree / diploma	24	16
India's reputation	14	9
Post-graduate work opportunities in India	8	5
Feasibility in getting a Indian study permit	12	8
Cost of study in India compared to other countries	19	12
Availability of scholarships at Indian institutions.	10	7
Relative/friend/teacher lived or studied in India.	15	9
	153	100

**Interpretation:** The above question was asked to know about the reasons behind the decision of international students to come and study in India. The response will help in focusing and improvising the Indian education system. Prestige /value of a Indian degree / diploma and India's reputation as a safe country (16%) was the most important factor considered followed by Cost of study in India compared to other countries and Indian Educational Quality (12%), India's reputation, Relative/friend/teacher lived or studied in India(9%).

**5. Important Factors considered to attend the current institution:**

**Table No 5: Reasons for Deciding To Come To India**

Topics	Number of Respondents	%
Quality of education	19	9
Availability of a particular program at this institution	11	5
Prestige of degree/diploma from this institution	7	3
Cost of studying at this institution	24	12
Amount of financial support offered by the institution	29	14
Factors associated with the location of this institution	19	9
Most effective in providing information	24	12
Size of institution	20	10
Knew someone who studied (is studying) here	36	17
Fastest admissions process	17	8
	206	100

**Intpretation:** It was inferred that while attending the institution, international students was influenced by Knowing someone who has already studied at that institution (17%) as the most important factor closely followed by the fact that institutes being most effective in providing information and Cost of studying at that institution(12%), Size of institution (10%) , Quality of education (9%) among others.

6. During the time when you applied for admission to your present program of study, did you experience a problem with the following, or not?

**Table No: 6 Educational related Problems while applying for admission**

Topics	No of respondents	%
Communicating and receiving sufficient information about the institution	21	15
Getting course credits accepted by the home educational institution	14	10
Getting letter of acceptance from the university or college	62	44
Passing English proficiency test	44	31
	141	100

**Interpretation:** The international students were asked the question that whether ,they have experienced problem in while applying for admission and what is most important problem education related problem faced by them. Majority of the respondents replied that they experienced problem in getting letter of acceptance from the university or college (44%) followed by Passing English proficiency test (31%), Communicating and receiving sufficient information about the institution(15 %).

7. During the time when you applied for admission to your present program of study, did you experience a problem with the following, or not?

**Table No 7: Problems when applied for admission: general problems**

Topics	No of respondents	%
Arranging for a place to live	52	35
Obtaining a study permit	35	23
Arranging an interview with an immigration officer to obtain my study permit	41	28
Providing proof to the immigration office that I intend to return to my home country upon completion of my studies	41	28
Other problems	19	13
	149	100

**Interpretation:** With the help of the above question, general problems faced by international students while applying for admission is examined. It was found that Arranging an interview with an immigration officer to obtain the study permit (28%) and Providing proof to the immigration office that they intend to return to their home country upon completion of their studies (28 %) was equally a major problem faced by the international students.

**8. Experience with immigration officials in home country**

**Table No 8: Experience with immigration officials /Indian Visa officers in home country**

Topic	No of respondents	%
Immigration official: unfriendly, not helpful	12	7
Excessive red tape	9	6
Officers concerned/distrust	35	21
Frequent delays	24	15
Inaccessibility of immigration officials	8	5
Indian embassy/consulate not available locally	6	4
Unclear application procedures	17	10
Frequent visits requirements	11	7
Medical reporting requirements	5	3
Language / communication problems	34	21
Other	2	1
No response	0	0
	163	100

**Interpretation:** The above helps us in eliciting information regarding the difficulties faced by international students with Indian Visa officers. It was found that Officers concerned/distrust and Language / communication problems (21%) were the major difficulty faced by international

students. Followed by frequent delays (15%) ,Unclear application procedures (10%) and so on.

**9. Satisfaction with facilities and services at their current institute:**

**Table No: 9 satisfactions with facilities and services**

**Table No: 10 Satisfactions with with facilities and services**

**Interpretation:** It was found from the above table that international students were satisfied with (the classroom, labs, equipments (16%), followed by recreational facilities (14 %) ,students counseling services(13%), International student handbook(10 %). Likewise they were least satisfies with Cultural/home country associations and Housing services (3%), English tutoring (2%).

**10. Satisfaction with Faculty at their current institution**

Please rate your level of agreement with each of the following statements about your experience at the university or college you are currently attending.

Topics	No of Respondents	%
Library resources	22	7
Classroom, labs, equipment, etc	52	16
Computer facilities	34	10
Average size of your classes	29	9
International student advisor	12	4
Recreational facilities	44	14
International student handbook	35	11
Housing services	9	3
Study skills/learning support services	29	9
Student counseling services	41	13
English tutoring	8	2
Cultural/home country associations	9	3
	324	100

Topics	Highly Agreeable	Neutral	Highly disagreeable	Total
I have been treated fairly in class by my instructors	36	0	24	60
Most of my instructors are reasonably accessible outside of class to help students	21	12	29	62
Some of my instructors have taken a personal interest in my academic progress	39	7	14	60
My instructors show sensitivity to racial issues	9	38	13	60

**Interpretation:** The question was asked about the level of agreement of international students about their experience with the university or college. Around 39 % replied that they are satisfied with the personal interest taken by instructor in their academic progress. It is been followed by being treated fairly by instructors in the class.

**11. Present courses compared to what you expected when you first came to India.**

**Table No 11: Present courses compared to what you expected when you first came to India.**

Topics	No of Respondents	%
<b>Courses</b>		
Better than expected	12	20
As expected	44	73
Worse than expected	4	7
	60	100
<b>Institution</b>		
Better than expected	15	25
As expected	12	20
Worse than expected	33	55
	60	100

**Interpretation:** The international students were asked about their view on the present course and institution compared to that of their nation. Majority of the respondents (93%) replied that course was as expected and better, While around 45 % replied that they found the institution as expected and 55 % found it worse than expected.

**12. Satisfaction with decision to study at this university/college**

**Table No: 12 Satisfaction with decision to study at this university/college**

Level of agreement	No of respondents	%
Strongly Agree	18	30
Agree	6	10
Strongly disagree	32	53
No response	4	7
Total	60	100

**Interpretation:** The above table helped in eliciting the information that around 53 % of the respondents were dissatisfied with their decision to attend their university /college and 40% of them felt satisfied. But since 7% didn't reply, it was difficult to come to a conclusion.

**Results:**

- Out of the respondents participated for the survey 58% were male students and 25 % were female students. Among the international students surveyed 65 % was single, 27 % was married and 8% came under other category.
- 42% of the International students are staying in an India between one year to less than one year followed by 2 yrs to less than 3 yrs (32%).
- Cost of studying in India (14%) was the most important factor considered followed by Safety aspect if Indian country (14%), Prestige of a Indian degree or diploma is rated as very important in their decision (12%), relative/friend/teacher lived or studied in India (11%), program of study offered in English(10%).
- Cost of studying (16%) ,financial support provided by the institution(14%), followed by size of the institution(13%), location & size of the institute(each

19 %) were the top important factors considered by the international students while attending the institution. among others.

- 39 % of the international students experienced problem in getting letter of acceptance from the university or college followed by 30% while Passing English proficiency test
- Frequent visit requirements (17%) were the major difficulty faced by international students. Followed by unclear application procedures and excessive adherence to official rules and formalities (both 13%).
- The international students were satisfied with the classroom, labs, equipment's (12%), followed by students counseling services(11%),recreational facilities and Study skills/learning support services(each 10 %).
- Majority of the international students are satisfied with the personal interest taken by instructor in their academic progress. It is been followed by being treated fairly by instructors in the class.
- Majority of the respondents (94%) replied that course was as expected and better, while around 90% replied that they found the institution as expected and better.

Around 58 % of the respondents were satisfied with their decision to study at their present institution, but 13 % didn't responded anything

### **Conclusion:**

About half of the international students studying in Chennai believed that it is a place in which they can reach their educational potential. It was apparent from the study that, though certain difficulties were faced by the international students, which was highlighted in the study such as difficulties faced during interaction with immigration officials, due to red tapism, during admission procedure among others but at large international students also enjoyed their stay during India.

Still there is always the hope to improvise the situation, through which we can attract more international students to study in India which will help India to improvise the economy in terms of cash flow. The future scope is to include the financial related

problems of the international students which weren't considered in this study.

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