

Higher Education in India Strength, Weakness, Opportunities and Threats

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Abstract : Indian higher education system is the third largest in the world next to United States and China. India is experiencing a rapid growth in higher education in terms of student enrollment as well as establishment of new universities, colleges and institutes of national importance. Presently about 22 million students are being enrolled in higher education and more than 46 thousand institutions' are functioning as centers of higher education. Indian government plays a 'command and control' role in higher education. The main governing body is University Grants Commission, which enforces its standards, advises the government, and helps coordinate between the centre and the state. Accreditation of higher learning is over seen by 12 autonomous institutions established by the University Grants Commission. The present paper is an effort to analyze the strength, weakness, opportunities and threat (SWOT Analysis) of Indian Higher education system. The higher education in India is progressing ahead by virtue of its strength which is being recognized at global level. Several institutions of India, such as Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs), Indian Institutes of Management (IIMs) and National Institutes of Technology (NITs) have been globally acclaimed for their standard of education. Three Indian universities were listed in the Times Higher Education list of the world's top 200 universities i.e. Indian Institutes of Technology, Indian Institute of Management and Jawahar Lal Nehru University in 2005 and 2006. Six Indian Institutes of Technology and the Birla Institute of Technology and Science - Pilani were listed among the top 20 science and technology schools in Asia by the Asia Week. The school of Business situated in Hyderabad was ranked number 12 in Globe MBA ranking by the Financial Times of London in 2010 while the All India Institute of Medical Sciences has been recognized as a global leader in medical research and treatment. But at the same time, because of vast expansion, the system bears several weaknesses. The Indian higher education system in many parts of the country is in the state of disrepair. In almost half the districts in the country higher education enrollment are very low. Almost two third of total universities and 90% of colleges are rated below average on quality parameters. This can be attributed to the under prepared faculty, unwieldy governance and other obstacles to innovation and improvement that could prohibit India from meeting its national education goals. The opportunities in Indian higher education system are widely ranged. The national institutions are training their products to compete at global level and make them capable to grab opportunities worldwide. The state universities and colleges with their limited resources are giving the products that are capable enough to secure career opportunities and hold responsible positions in various government and private sectors with in the country. This is further creating opportunities for the weaker section of the society to join the main stream. There are several factors which can be defined as threats to Indian higher education system. It is a matter of great concern and needs proper attention. Some important factors are -Conservative society, particularly for women education; -Lack of transparency, -Taking higher education as a means of business

Keywords : Indian higher education system, SWOT analysis, university grants commission, Indian institutes of technology

Conference Title : ICHE 2014 : International Conference on Higher Education

Conference Location : Paris, France

Conference Dates : December 30-31, 2014