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## Study on the Higher Education in India and the Need for a Paradigm Shift

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### Abstract

Higher education has experienced a rapid spurt in development over the past two decades, which can be extrapolated to be primarily driven due to measures initiated by the private sector. These measures are suspect however and there exist genuine and legitimate concerns that these initiatives are half cooked, substandard and exploitative and have only served to send the standards of research in a downward spiral and lower the overall academic merit. Some of the problems of the Indian higher education, such as the unwieldy affiliating system, inflexible academic structure, uneven capacity across various subjects, eroding autonomy of academic institutions, and the low level of public funding are well known. These problems were the primary motivation the topic “Study on the higher education in India and the need for a paradigm shift” was selected for the study. The objective of the study is to analyse the effect various facets of higher education in India and to study the various steps required to address genuine concerns in the Indian higher education on a long-term basis and uses the experiences of other countries to suggest measures to tackle its various systemic deficiencies. The study has been conducted on a sample of 118 respondents through the circulation of a questionnaire and information gained from secondary data. The respondents consisted mainly of students and teachers. It was found that most of them agreed that India has an average level of existing infrastructure of higher education in India and also the fact that majority of the respondents felt that the education standard in India is behind that of developed nations. The results of the study indicates that the higher education did not meet the expected standard and revision of syllabus and implementation of pedagogy is needed to bring it up to par with western education.

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## 1. Introduction

“And just because you have colleges and universities doesn't mean you have education.” — Malcolm X

Higher education in India suffers from several systemic deficiencies. As a result, it continues to provide graduates that are unemployable despite emerging shortages of skilled manpower in an increasing number of sectors.

## 2. Objectives of the study

- a) To examine the standard of the current higher education system in India.
- b) To study the factors that would help bringing it within comparable standards with that of the developed nations.

## 3. Review of Literature

**Pawan Agrawal** in the year 2006 successfully conducted a study on “Education system in India” where he assimilated and analysed data from several different departments across India (NAAC, MHRD, UGC, and AICTC). He laid bare the structure of the higher education system in India and its growth - both in terms of enrolment and the institutions. Issues related to the financing of higher education were also analysed. The role of academic research in promoting research and innovation in the Indian economy was evaluated, outlining the weak points and suggesting a way forward. The sample considered, consisted of data from various sources to give an accurate reading of the current education system in India. The other important and contemporary issues, such as governance, academic profession, use of technology, branding and advertising, private tuitions and coaching, trade-related and the statistical system and policy research issues have also been covered by him. It was learned that we have to focus more on the basic parameters of good quality education and improve from the foundation.

**Jayendra N. Amin** in the year 2012 conducted a study on “Quality Research in Higher Education: Issues and Remedies” where he collected data from homogeneous group and studied that quality of life vis-a-vis quality of education received. He suggested that higher education has a direct link with the upliftment of the society as a whole. The overall contribution of Indian researches being carried out at higher education institutions are not up to the mark. The sample was homogenous in nature and data was collected on expenditure in R&D, lack of linkage between industries and research institutions. After collecting data from several sources and analysing them he concluded that if the special provisions were made in the five year plan, then the quality of higher education imparted would improve by leaps and bounds. It was concluded that there is an urgent requirement for implementation of latest technology in our education sector as well as improving the standard of research in India.

#### 4. Research Methodology

The sample size consisted of 118 individuals, whose responses were recorded with the help of a questionnaire. The selected sample was drawn out of students and professionals of age 15 and up who had either completed their studies or were still pursuing them. A Primary research, involving a questionnaire consisting of 15 questions that try to bring out relevant data to meet the objectives of the research, was developed and used for the survey. The response of the respondents was taken by floating a Google document or one on one meeting.

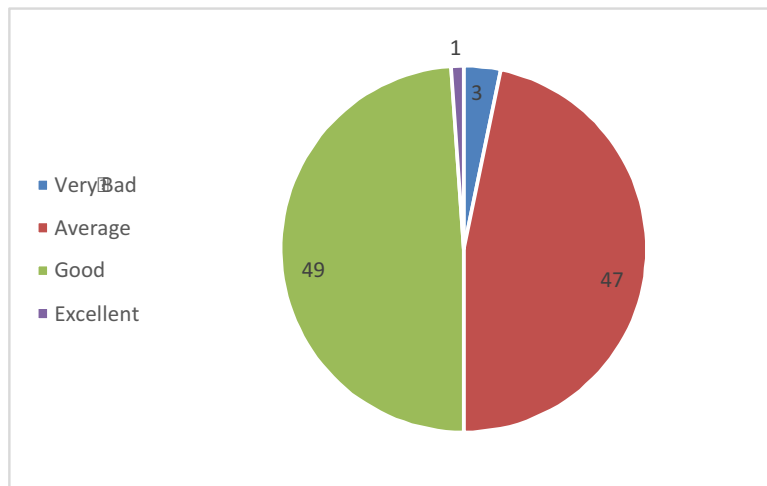
#### 5. Hypothesis

- a) The number of institution in India and the infrastructure provided is not up to the mark compared to western countries.
- b) There is a wide gap in the quality of education provided.

#### 6. Results and Discussion

**Table 1: Response for standard of higher education institutions in India**

S No	Rating	Number	Percentage
1	Very Bad	3	3
2	Average	43	47
3	Good	45	49
4	Excellent	1	1



**Fig 1: Standard of higher education institutions in India**

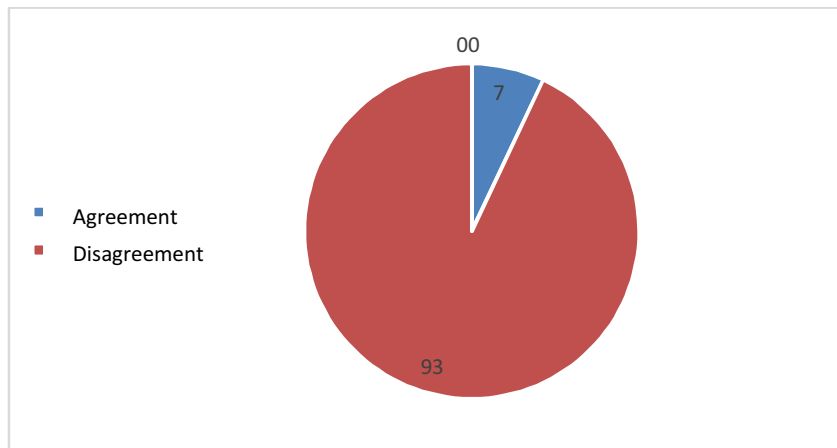
## Discussion

From the table it can be seen that most of the people agreed that India has an average to good level of setup of higher education in India.

This agrees with the facts laid out by Jayendra N. Amin in the year 2012 where he conducted a study on “*Quality Research in Higher Education: Issues and Remedies*” in which he stated that there is a need for marginal improvement and a requirement for changes to be made in our system

**Table 2: Response for education standard in India compared to developed nations**

S No	Response	Number	Percentage
A	Agreement	22	7
B	Disagreement	96	93



**Fig 2: Education standard comparison**

## Discussion

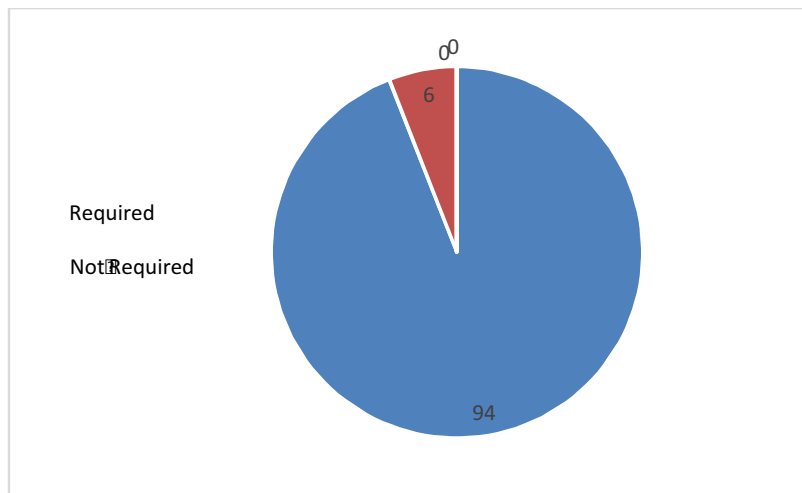
From the table it can be seen that most people think that the education standard in India is of low quality as far as standard is concerned with that of developed nations. 93 % of the respondents agreed with the fact that the education standard in India is behind that of developed nations. There is a need of more budget allocation from the centre and state government side to improve the education standard.

This proves the first hypothesis which states that *the number of institution in India and the infrastructure provided is*

not up to the mark compared to western countries. Hence hypothesis 1 is accepted. Only if the quality of the system improves will we have a strong backbone for the nation. Once the quality improves the standard will also improve.

**Table 3: Response for requirement of branding and advertising in higher education**

S No	Response	Number	Percentage
1	Required	111	94%
2	Not Required	7	6%



**Fig 3: Requirement of branding and advertising in higher education**

### Discussion

The above statistics clearly show why India is spending so high on Education. The ever building need for building a strong nation backed by education is the way forward. 94% respondents feel that even good higher education institutes require branding and advertising. It makes Indian Universities an attractive place for the foreign students also which actually diversify the quality and method of teachings.

This agrees with the facts laid out by Pawan Agrawal in the year 2006 conducted a study on “*Education system in India*” in which he found out the importance of the use of technology, branding and advertising. This helps in the exposure of institutes to the common public thereby helping them to choose wisely.

## 7. Conclusion

The first objective of the study conducted was to study the education sector in India and finding out for a need for improving it. Nowadays, both skilled work and skilled workers are moving across national borders. The paper has examined the role of higher education in workforce development to meet the domestic as well as the global demand for qualified manpower. Majority of the respondents agreed with the fact that the education standard in India is behind that of developed nations and it was also seen that most of the people agreed that India had an average to good level of setup of higher education in India. This agreed with the facts laid out by Jayendra N. Amin in the year 2012 wherein he conducted a study on “*Quality Research in Higher Education: Issues and Remedies*” in which he stated that there is a need for marginal improvement and a requirement for changes to be made in our system.

The second objective was to study the factors that would help bringing it within comparable standards with that of the developed nations. Majority of the respondents agreed with the fact that the education standard in India is behind that of developed nations. This proves the first hypothesis which states that *the number of institution in India and the infrastructure provided is not up to the mark compared to western countries*. Only if the quality of the system improves will we have a strong backbone for the nation. Once the quality improves the standard will also improve. To do this the centre as well as the state government needs to allocate more of the budget for improving the education sector. The role of the UGC and the professional councils needs to be redefined under the changed circumstances. The other important and contemporary issues, such as governance, academic profession, use of technology, branding techniques and advertising methodologies have also been covered. The effective use of new technologies holds great potential in improving teaching, learning outcomes, research performance and institutional and systemic performance. For this purpose, investment in technology infrastructure in higher education is of the essence. With a view to resolve the paradox of high graduate unemployment and shortage of skilled labour availability coexisting together, the coupling between higher education and the jobs that are reliant on the skills taught by this specialised education should be made more symbiotic. This can best be achieved by incorporating adaptability in higher education.

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