

## The Importance of Internationalization on 'Academics and Research' parameters for Ranking of Universities after Covid-19

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### Abstract

Mobility of students and faculty is an essential aspect of Internationalization of Higher Education (IHE), but it also has an influence on academics and research, necessitating study into the consequences of these two characteristics for university ranking. The study used a qualitative approach to data collecting. Vice Chancellors and Senior Academicians from Institutes of Higher Education in India, Australia, and Zambia were interviewed in-depth to learn more about the impact of globalization on academics and research. The responses from majority of the academicians were positive as Internationalization of academics and research creates an environment bringing in intercultural, international and comparative aspects in the classroom. The world today faces challenges due to Covid-19, which are no longer local but have global implications. Local solutions can be applied globally through Internationalization of research. However, other academics believe that internationalization may not be a priority for India at this time, since the country must focus on domestic issues such as access and fairness. Academic internationalization not only provides a global classroom environment, but it also has a tremendous influence on the community through research, since these answers may be used internationally, resulting in changes. According to the findings, internationalization should be regarded as a criterion for the Indian Ranking System. This paper provides in-depth insights and views of policymakers about the importance of Internationalization and its significant influence on academics and research after Covid-19.

### Keywords

Internationalization, Higher education, Global, Academics, Covid-19, Research.

### Imprint

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Internationalization of Higher Education (IHE) involves many activities not only restricted to mobility but internationalizing the curriculum and campus diversity. The concept of IHE is changing, but in a broad sense, it involves incorporating parts of internationalization into teaching, learning, and research roles, as well as assuring academic and administrative staff participation and management support to ensure long-term viability. The recent definition also adds the contribution of IHE towards community service and public engagement (Knight, 2004).

Knowledge cannot be restricted into one geographical locality so it has always been considered international due to its open accessibility (Marginson, 2010). Higher education, on the other hand, is increasingly becoming a factor in determining a country's economic, social, and cultural growth.

The definition IHE has been evolving (Knight 1993, 2003; de Wit 1999; Van der Wende, 1997; Soderqvist, & Yang, 2002). Mobility has always taken a place of prominence, this essay, on the other hand, attempts to investigate the influence of internationalization on academics and research. The qualitative research includes interviews with famous academicians, researchers, and policymakers to examine their perspectives on the necessity of incorporating foreign perspectives into academics and research. The transcripts of the participants' interviews were analyzed by qualitative content analysis using the deductive method. Three broad themes emerged- 1) Academics comprising of Faculty, Curriculum and Research 2) Global Citizenship and 3) Reputation and Rankings.

## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Although neoliberalism has been a major player in world politics, its effect on higher education has recently gained importance due to globalization (Patrick, 2013). IHE is considered one of the effects of globalization, though its genesis can be traced back to the 1990's; it started gaining motion from the year 2000.

Institutes of Higher Education have realized that in a globally connected and networked world it is not possible to work in silos and are gradually disengaging themselves from their national contexts to becoming globally visible (Marginson & Wende, 2007).

Teichler (2004), According to the author, higher education has become more concerned with mercerization and competitiveness than with providing high-quality education because of globalization. Because of mystification and increased access to education due to the growing middle class population, the presumption that IHE was an opportunity for the elite is no longer relevant. Changes in population patterns in the west, reductions in government/state support for higher education, and expectations to contribute to the country's economic development are all factors to consider. (Tremblay, 2013) created the urge for Universities to attract international students and resulted in countries from the west to begin looking eastwards for recruiting international students.

Lin & Chang, H. J (2009), state that Universities are no longer satisfied in developing their local higher education system and engaging with the local community as the need to cater to global indicators has taken prominence. Salmi (2009), states that the parameters of ranking place emphasis on gaining reputation, education, research quality and internationalization. One of the important ways for gaining prestige and impact is to have an international reputation for research and teaching ( Alden & Lin ,2004).

There are many national and international ranking agencies, also known as league tables, but the most well known are Quacquarelli Symonds (QS), Times Higher Education World University Rankings (THE), and Academic Ranking of World Universities (ARWU), all of which have developed their own criteria for ranking universities. India has developed its own rating mechanism, known as the "National Institutional Ranking Framework (NIRF)," to rate Indian higher educational institutions. The "Ministry of Human Resource and Development (MHRD)" initiated this initiative in 2015 with the goal of bringing the competitive drive for excellence to Indian Higher Education Institutes.

Despite the fact that internationalization is one of the ranking criteria, it is largely concerned with student and faculty mobility. Internationalization, on the other hand, has an impact on teaching, learning, and research quality. According to Yeravdekar and Tiwari (2014), internationalization of teaching and research

improves higher education institution production by assuring academic merit and variety. Marginson and Rhoades (2002) suggest 'glonacal' planes, which are triangular intersecting planes that represent the global, national, and local factors that determine the future of higher education.

This exploratory study aims to assess the impact of internationalization on student and faculty mobility, as well as its contribution to improving the quality of teaching, learning, and research at Indian universities. The methodology used is grounded theory design and qualitative content analysis using the deductive approach for analyzing interviews with Vice Chancellors, Senior Academicians and Administrative Staff to understand the importance of internationalizing the academics and research functions in an university. The paper also brings out the importance of Internationalization for stakeholders like students, parents and philanthropists for choosing universities, which have been ranked Internationalization, should be included as one of the characteristics for rating Indian colleges in the National Institutional Ranking Framework, according to the proposal.

#### *A. Internationalization: Academics , Research and Reputation*

(Vaughn, Pitlik, and Hansotia 1978, as cited in Conard, 2000) mentioned that when it comes to picking a higher education institution, students and parents priorities the quality of education and faculty, followed by academic reputation. (Morrish& Lee 2011) indicate that the ranking of a university is crucial in communicating its academic excellence. Students believe that a degree from a highly rated university not only has a better value in the job market, but also opens up more opportunities for finding a satisfying work. As a result, rankings are seen to simplify the complex world of higher education by allowing stakeholders to assess institutional performance and reputation more easily (Williams & Van Dyke, 2008).

(Woldegiyorgiset al., 2018) states that recent years have seen growth of multiple centers of knowledge working collaboratively and competitively. Internationalization creates possibilities for faculty to participate in international networks to conduct research on vital issues affecting both countries and learning from expertise and knowledge through mutual interaction (de Wit et al.,2015).

Internationalization acts as a catalyst to gain international reputation, which is not only considered to benchmark of excellence, but as a strategy to build

trust among stakeholders (Harris, 2008). It has a progressive effect on the reputation of a University, which is attractive to students (Bourke, 2000) and regulates the relationship between the quality of teaching, learning and research (Marques et al; 2013). A greater emphasis on internationalization may result in increased visibility, which may have an impact on performance, research, teaching quality, and graduate employability (Delgado-Márquez et al., 2013). Institutions with a good reputation and visibility are more likely to recruit famous academics, which improves the quality of teaching and research. It assures the students a safe academic environment, cultural diversity, varied programmes and courses to choose from which are acknowledged and valued globally. All these facilities and support services create a positive and encouraging teaching learning ecosystem (Arambewela & Hall 2009; Park 2009; Lemmink et al., 2003).

#### B. *Rankings of Universities and Parameters*

The publication of “America’s Best Colleges” by “US News and World Report” in 1983 sparked interest in rankings. Nearly a decade later, in 1993, the first “Times Good University Guide” was published in the United Kingdom, sparking a public discussion about the institutions’ performance. The “Academic Ranking of World Universities” (ARWU) published by “Shanghai Jiao Tong University” in China in 2003 and the “Times Higher Education World University Rankings” published in 2004 followed.

ARWU, THE, and QS are the most well known and well received. “Harvard University,” “Stanford University,” “Yale University,” “University of Berkeley,” “Massachusetts Institute of Technology,” “University of Cambridge,” and “University of Oxford” were all mentioned in the first two league tables. ( Marginson & Wende, 2007).

Rankings have heightened the competitive spirit among institutions, luring top academics and young talent to their campuses. As a result, there is a desire for higher-ranking colleges to be viewed as emblems of success. They have also gained significance and are seen as national drivers of growth in the knowledge economy ( Marginson & Wende, 2007). Commercialization of higher education has become an essential component for economic advantages and an extra source of money for nations such as the United States, Australia, the United Kingdom, and Germany, among others (Wende, 2003). Global rankings have gained prominence in higher education because of their evident impact on institutional and policy settings. (Marginson & Wende, 2007).

Comparison of Parameter and their weightage given by ranking agencies

As indicated in Table 1 above, QS World ranking places importance on parameters namely like ‘Academic reputation’ and “Employer Reputation” which is measured by undertaking a global survey. The employers are asked to identify universities producing the best graduates. More weightage has been allocated in cases where employers based in other countries give the endorsements. This indicator further creates the desire for prospective students seeking admissions to identify institutions with a global reputation. Besides this, QS ranking also considers Student-to-faculty ratio, citations in ‘SCOPUS’ and ability to attract international faculty & students as a measure of quality. THE ranking survey administered by Elsevier considers the opinions of highly acclaimed academicians about their perceptions of universities whom they consider excellent in research and teaching within their disciplines. Since this endorsement is limited to 15 universities it creates undue pressure on Institutions to struggle with

Table 1

Source: Quacquarelli Symonds (QS), Times Higher Education (THE), National Institutional Ranking Framework (NIRF).

Quacquarelli Symonds (QS)	Weightage %	Times Higher Education (THE)	Weightage %	National Institutional Ranking Framework (NIRF)	Weightage %
Academic reputation	40	Teaching (learning environment):	30	Teaching, Learning & Resources	30
Employer reputation	10	Research (volume, income, reputation)	30	Research and Professional Practice	30
Faculty/Student Ratio	20	Citations	30	Graduation Outcomes	20
Citations per faculty	20	International outlook (staff, students, research)	7.5	Outreach and Inclusivity	10
International faculty and student mobility	10	Industry income	2.5	Perception	10

expectations to be internationally recognized and research intensive. Academicians gain familiarity with a University, which is proactive towards initiating internationalization, which is considered a major driver for academic reputation (Baty, 2018). This in turn attracts endorsements by Academicians, thereby increasing the rankings of a university.

### C. *Indian Higher Education system*

The history of the Indian education system dates back to the 7th century BC, when famous learning centres drew students from Tibet, China, Nepal, and Korea (Choudhary, 2009). Before the British replaced it with the colonial system of education in the 18th century, India had three separate scholarly traditions: Gurukuls, Buddhist Viharas, and Quranic Madars (Agarwal, 2009).

Though many reforms and commissions were set up, none of these could be considered systemic. The University Grants Commission (UGC), Commissions, and Regulatory Bodies have been established for qualitative expansion, but their impact has been minor due to a lack of competent execution (Altbach, 1993). Despite having an old education system, India's higher education system, which has adapted to the British colonial model, does not have an amazing number of universities in the league rankings. The QS World Ranking 2020 has only 3 Indian Institutes who have been ranked in the first 2000, while the THE 2020 has none in this rank. The Ministry of Human Resource and Development's recent intention to choose 20 universities, ten from the private sector and ten from the public sector, to become excellent and introduce a national ranking structure is a welcome improvement. For rating colleges, the NIRF examines five broad basic parameters: "Teaching, Learning, and Resources," "Research and Professional Practices," "Graduation Outcomes," "Outreach and Inclusivity," and "Perception." The Ministry officials express the view that the Ranking framework will create a competitive spirit among Indian Institutions to participate in the global rankings and an urge to improve quality in research and teaching. India has recently launched "Global Initiative for Academic Networks (GIAN)" with a view to attract foreign faculty to teach Indian students (Internationalization at home), to increase presence of foreign academia in Indian Institutes, encourage collaborative research, increase quality of teaching and develop new pedagogies. India has always encouraged collaborative frameworks for encouraging

research, student and faculty mobility through programs like DAAD (German Academic Exchange Service), Australia India Council, Obama Singh Initiative, "United Kingdom India Education and Research Initiative" (UKIERI), "Erasmus+" and others. In spite of introducing these initiatives with an intention to increase the engagement of Indian Universities with foreign collaborations, it is interesting to note that Internationalization has not been introduced as a parameter in the Indian ranking methodology.

According to (Altbach) 2009, China and India, the world's two fastest growing economies, have one-third of the world's population and the world's largest and third largest academic systems, respectively, and will need to transform their education systems by creating an enabling environment in order to gain recognition in terms of providing quality education.

China has adopted a national policy to build globally prominent universities in 1998 and formulated 2 Projects namely - 211 and 985. Project 211 was aimed at building 100 Universities of global prominence by early 21st Century and the Chinese Government invested large amount of funds towards capacity building in select Universities. With an intention to achieve faster progress another Project 985 was launched to create Research focused universities and Key Centres of Excellence (Wang, et al., 2011; Liu, 2011). There were 39 universities chosen, with 9 being World Class Universities and 30 being World Known Universities. In 2000, there were no institutions in the top 300 ARWU rankings; however, owing to continued efforts and financial endowments, this number grew to eight in 2008. During the same time, the number of Chinese universities in the top 500 climbed from four to eighteen. China, has made remarkable progress which portrays the commitment of the Chinese Government in supporting the Universities by nurturing and creating the right environment for their ascent in the league tables (Wang, et al., 2011).

(Hazelkorn) 2008, states that Internationalization has also taken priority for Japanese Government due to the change in its demographic pattern. Japanese higher education has no alternative but to upgrade campuses, introduce more courses taught in the English Language and increase investments in higher education (Sae Shimauchi, 2020). Many universities are offering post-graduate programs in English for popular courses like management and sciences for recruiting international students. Other initiatives like introducing sim-



plified student visa procedures, creating distinct tenure arrangements and offering attractive salary packages with an intention to attract internationally competitive scholars also strengthened the education system. The Government also launched the “Global 30 Project” in 2009 with an intention of internationalizing 30-core universities (Hennings & Mintz, 2015). Since 2000, the government has adopted a number of legislative and regulatory changes in response to the fact that universities have been losing a competitive edge in the global market owing to a protected environment. It strengthened institutional autonomy, improved managerial competencies, placed a premium on quality, and used centers of excellence to create internationally competitive research. (Hazelkorn, 2008).

### 3. METHODOLOGY

A qualitative approach by conducting in-depth interviews was considered for the current study. This study drew insights from 22 participants comprising of Senior Academicians, Visionaries and Vice Chancellors of higher education institutions from various states of India like Arunachal Pradesh, Bangalore, Jalandhar, Pune and Orissa. Academicians like Deans of Faculties, Senior representatives from High Commission and Eminent scholars on higher education from Australia, Zambia, Uganda also participated in the study.

During the interviews, participants has been asked about the importance of internationalization in higher education and how it might aid in the improvement of academic and research excellence

The valuable perspectives expressed by these senior representatives are likely to benefit Government Bodies, Accrediting Agencies, and Policy Makers in bringing positive changes to the educational arena at the national level and creating a favorable environment for implementing Internationalization at the university and institute level. These insights will also aid in evaluating the impact of internationalization on not just student and faculty mobility, but also academic and research quality.

The Objectives of the current study are:

- Higher education on academic excellence is determined due to the impact of internationalization.
- Higher education research quality is determined due to the impact of internationalization.
- Parameter for the Indian Ranking System of Higher Education Institutes is collaborated by the inclusion of internationalization.

#### 1. Analysis

The deductive technique was used to evaluate the transcripts of the participants’ interviews using qualitative content analysis. The study developed ideas by manually coding and evaluating the data using the Constant Comparative Method of Qualitative Analysis (Corbin & Strauss, 1990; Glaser, 1965). “The constant comparative technique combines systematic data collecting, coding, and analysis with theoretical sampling in order to develop theory that is integrated, near to the data, and stated in a manner clear enough for future testing,” according to the constant comparative method (Conrad, Neumann, Haworth, & Scott, 1993, p. 280 as cited in Kolb, 2012). Thematic analysis was done to identify, analyze, organize the themes that were generated from the data (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The data collected, consists interviews conducted, which are analyzed systematically considering all the emerging concepts. With the goal of developing a framework to analyze the influence and relevance of internationalization of higher education on academics and research, comparable themes were grouped together to establish broad categories

#### 2. Findings

The content analysis revealed three main themes:

- a) Academics and Internationalization-with three subthemes Faculty, Curriculum and Research
- b) Internationalization and creating global citizens
- c) Internationalization and quality rankings and reputation Academics and Internationalization

#### 3. Faculty

Most interviewees highlighted the need for Internationalization in a globalized world. As the boundaries are becoming blurred, there is a necessity to work in unison. Internationalization was necessary to develop the mindset of the faculty to adapt to the changing needs of the globalized world and introduce comparative and international aspects in the classroom. One interviewee mentioned that being an expert on ethnic and cultural diversity he chose to teach a diverse classroom in the US and it was fascinating to get different perspectives from the multicultural classroom, which widened his scope of thought “beyond all disciplines”.

“In today’s globalised world, national boundaries are blurring, and one cannot survive in silos without being affected by changes happening in the world around us,” one of the participants said. “It is therefore

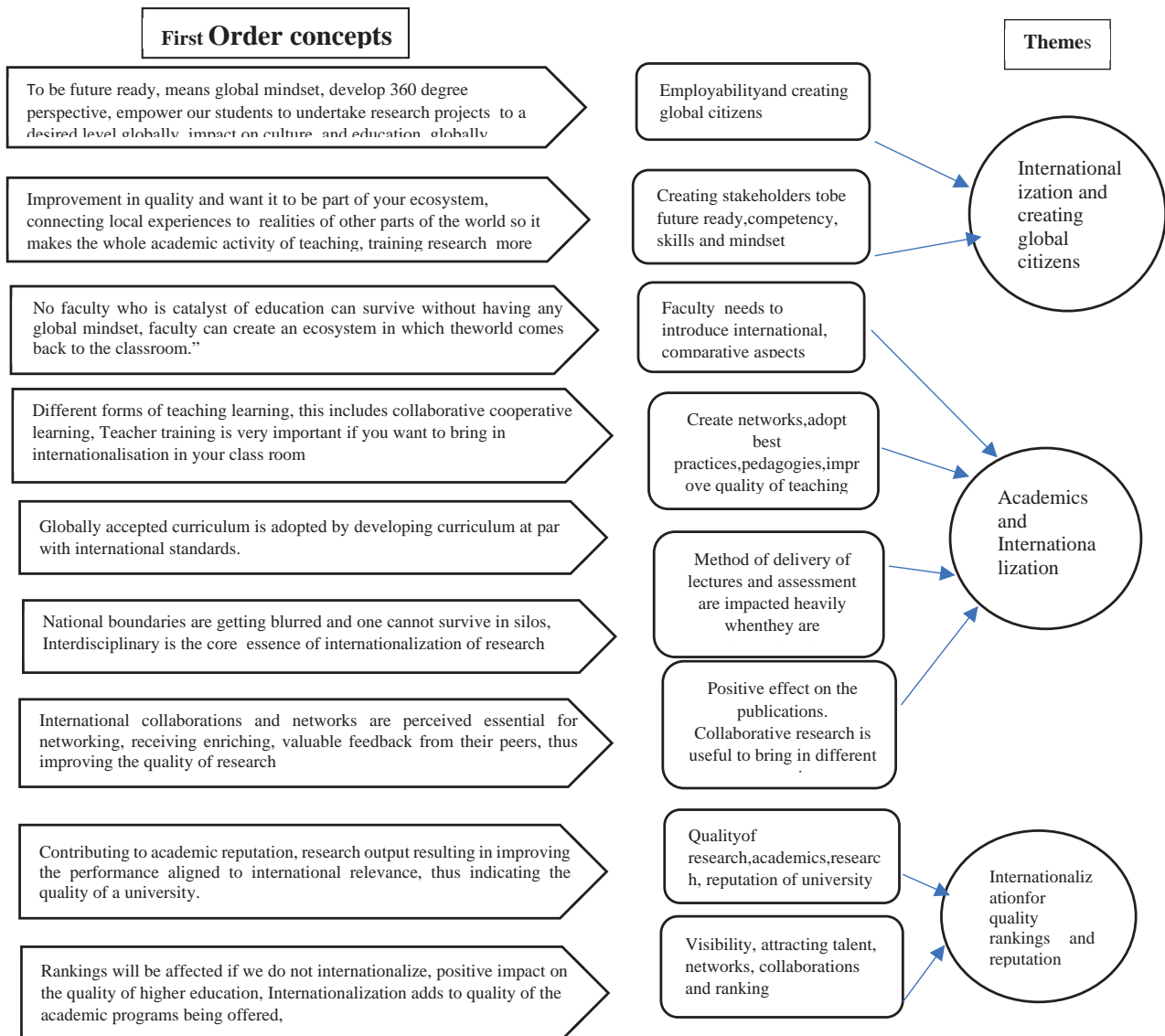


Figure 1. Broad concepts and themes emerging from the interviews

imperative to understand best practices around the world, and the best means to acquire and learn these is through internationalization of education."

"No faculty who is catalyst of education can survive without having any global mindset and teachers have to go beyond textbooks. Our teachers have to relearn their pedagogy to teach new generation learners who are exposed to technology to bring in western concepts and aspects."

In this new age, business is becoming international, therefore, it becomes necessary to study the social, economic cultural aspects of different regions, which are or may be potential markets. Inviting international faculty enriches this understanding further as they can share case studies and live experiences in the classroom. The curriculum, method of delivery of lectures and assessment are impacted heavily when they are international.

Internationalization involves the expansion of global markets and institutions. Many scholars seemed to want to change the pedagogy towards student centered learning; however, the challenge was the size of the classrooms. But, it is heartening to mention that they also considered that usage of technology could be the solution to combat the challenge. Teacher training was considered an important factor, which could facilitate the faculty in developing a global mindset. If internationalization of the classroom is to be ingrained and welcomed by all faculties, it is also necessary to train instructors. The presence of overseas students, according to the majority of participants, is a crucial role in enhancing learning opportunities for all Indian students, consequently affecting the college's academic reputation."

#### 4. Curriculum

Incorporating international, intercultural, and global views into the content, learning goals, assess-

ment, teaching techniques, and support services of a programme of study that promotes intercultural competences in students is known as internationalization of the curriculum. (Leask,2013).

Many interviewees accepted that comparing more examples from other parts of the world instead of focusing on local or connecting local experiences to other realities of other parts of the world makes the whole academic activity of teaching, training and research more enriching. This makes a dual significant impact, one on academics and the other impact on the institution.

“If a globally accepted curriculum is adopted by developing curriculum at par with international standards, connecting local experiences to other realities of other parts of the world, makes the whole academic activity of teaching, training research more enriching and accepting.

Relying more on examples from other parts of the world instead of focusing on local creates an environment in which the faculty can create an ecosystem in which the world comes back to the classroom.”

One academician emphasized the advantages of introducing foreign, comparative themes into the classroom.. According to him, some courses need to introduce comparative aspects for better understating of international mechanisms. Indian universities teaching a course in petroleum management cannot restrict by explaining the pricing, technical aspects of the Indian petroleum sector, instead they need to discuss and deliberate on the different petroleum management techniques in countries like in Saudi Arabia, France, Quebec etc. This is vital for the student to understand how country specific policies, pricing disparities between countries affect the global markets directly and indirectly. Such initiatives strengthen internationalization with physical mobility of faculty and students.

The most significant effects of internationalization is the removal of the “sense of inertia that sets in among faculty, moving from the mindset of “ we are the best,” “we know it all,” to gradually realize that learning from outside helps in benchmarking and adopting pedagogies, introducing international aspects and case studies, and improving the quality of teaching and learning.” Along with utilizing our local resource, we should collaborate nationally and internationally and imbibe the knowledge thus generated into the teaching process building global competencies in students.

One of the Vice Chancellors in North West India stated “I believe that it will have a fruitful impact the emphasis to undertake curriculum revision so that our students enjoy at par the course content that is being undertaken globally. When we have a worldwide curriculum at our institution in a remote area of the nation, we want to enable our students to do research projects to the desired level globally.

#### 4. RESEARCH

A strong theme across all interviewees over the relation between Internationalization and research was the focus towards quantity due to which the quality of research was being compromised. This was attributed to the haste of participating in the global rankings, despite a huge contribution in the number of papers published by certain institutions. It was quite eminent that many of the interviewees expressed their discontent that instead of looking at numbers the institutions should also focus on publishing quality papers.

Focus on the quantitative rather than quality approach towards research and publications has become the need. International collaborations and networks are perceived essential for networking, receiving enriching, and valuable feedback from their peers, thus improving the quality of research and having a positive effect on the publications. Collaborative research is useful to bring in different perspectives thereby boosting multicultural aspect.

It was satisfying to when one of the Vice chancellors in a remote area in Northeast India said that they have research projects in Physics, Bio-Technology and are internationalizing the syllabus which is being facilitated by the MHRD. However, he also mentioned that out of 27 departments only 6 departments are indulging in some activities which are international while others are dormant. Internationalization at the University is at the Individual level, so it is not sustainable; once a faculty retires it becomes a challenging situation, however “vetting” of courses by international experts is part of the academic process.

##### *1. Internationalization and creating global citizens*

Many participants also linked Internationalization to creating stakeholders to be future ready, which meant having a global mindset and introducing global aspects into teaching and research to create globally employable graduates.

One of the interviewee remarked, “Nationalization will not help any millennial or centennial” Though In-

dia has the advantage of the demography it is predicted that developed economies will have 30 % shortage of talent by 2030. In view of this, PhD students can be evaluated by international reviewers to enable in creating an impact on the quality of output on Research students. Student learning tends to compound as they learn taking into consideration many perspectives instead of only a singular perspective.

## *2. Internationalization for quality rankings and reputation*

Internationalization adds to quality of the academic programs being offered, enhances cultural diversity, personal development and technological innovation, contributing to academic reputation, research output resulting in improving the performance aligned to international relevance, thus indicating the quality of a university.

A senior academician expressed his thoughts by linking Internationalization and ranking of universities by remarking, “rankings will be affected if we do not internationalize”. Internationalization of higher education has a positive impact on the quality of higher education institutions and economies cannot participate in global markets effectively if universities remain national.

One of the scholars lamented on the fact that most of the rankings assessment parameter relating to Internationalization is quantitative which considers the number of inward faculty, students and number of publications. However, rankings do not count the applicability and quality of research output. According to him, research and teaching can be enhanced if we invite Nobel Prize winners and distinguished scholars to interact with faculty and students.

## *3.. Is Internationalization necessary in the Indian higher education sector?*

There are few scholars who will oppose their viewpoints, and one of them retorted:

Our focus should be “We need to take care of our own internal resources, impart good education so that our students become good citizens and perform desired actions in society, livelihood of the family and duties in our country instead of concentrating on internationalization”.

Internationalization of curriculum should be considered instead of calling faculty and students from outside was one view expressed, while another line of thought was foreign faculty not being an essential requirement as India was self sufficient and had lot of its own expertise. “ If we keep ourselves aware of the

happenings outside, understand what is being taught and discussed outside we can teach it ourselves and do not require outside faculty”.

“Internationalization is a broad terminology and needs to be defined properly, but it can be a two way process where there is an exchange of knowledge- we can learn the Technology related disciplines from outside where India lags behind and lend our expertise in disciplines of social science, anthropology to foreign faculty making it mutually beneficial”.

## **5. CONCLUSION**

While the popular league tables lay emphasis on the mobility aspect of faculty and students, it fails to acknowledge the contribution of internationalization on improving quality of academics and research, which form a substantial percentage as a parameter in the ranking framework. The interviews conducted state a positive impact of Internationalization on academics and research, thus contribution of internationalization should be looked as a parameter used for making qualitative improvements instead of merely looking at it as a quantitative parameter which considers faculty and student mobility in numbers.

(Reddy et al., 2016) state that the Indian higher education system faces challenges like quality and relevance of research, scarce financial support and lack of motivation to compete internationally. Universities need to participate in a multilevel engagement with international collaborations to create close partnerships, which become successful, mutually beneficial and sustainable. India's higher education policy should reflect on how to benefit from ‘demographic dividend’ and create incentives for promoting internationalization (Rajkhowa,2017). If India wants to be recognized internationally as a global knowledge creator and a centre of innovation, it has to produce research with global impact. This requires motivation to collaborate with best academicians from the world and embrace internationalization (Baty,2013).

Despite having the ‘best’ research quality, Indian higher education is falling behind in terms of improving academic standing, teaching capacity, and fostering internationalization at the same rate as its foreign counterparts throughout the world (Ben Sowter,2020). As a result, internationalization must be prioritized in order to achieve awareness in the global market and recruit outstanding students and professors from all over the world.



According to Ministry of Human Resource and Development (MHRD), the NIRF parameters are subjective and fact based considering the national challenges. There is a provision to measure the outreach and inclusivity factor, which is crucial for the country. It was also mentioned that there could be a possibility of including internationalization as a parameter in the Indian Ranking framework, however, Indian Institutes still consider this a challenge ("IIT-Madras tops government rankings", 2020).

The Indian Government has taken certain initiatives like creating Institutes of Eminence, GIA network and SPARC. These have been aimed towards increasing faculty mobility, Phd student's mobility; enhance research capabilities and creating networks to understand best practices and benchmarking for quality enhancement. However, compared to investments made by other countries, India should consider investing more in the Indian Higher Education system for creating a favorable ecosystem for universities to gain global visibility. India will increase its working age population by an additional 200 million in the next two decades (United Nations, 2017) who may get the opportunity to work in different continents. Thus, making it imperative that they are equipped with the global necessary talent, skills and qualities like team spirit, empathy and tolerance, thus making internationalization a priority.

These findings suggest senior academicians do consider Internationalization helps in creating global mindsets as students learn global issues making them globally competent. Internationalization also helps in developing a global mindset of faculty by exposure to teaching in foreign universities, interacting and networking, assisting in widening their perspectives and enabling them to bring the world into the classrooms which benefits culturally diverse students.

This study therefore reiterates the importance of Internationalization, which plays an important role in creating visibility and reputation of a university. It also proposes that the Indian Ranking Framework needs to consider Internationalization as a parameter for ranking of Indian Higher Education Institutes by laying more emphasis on quality of improvement it contributes towards Teaching and Research rather than just considering student and faculty mobility.

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