International Students in Indian Universities

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International Students

International Students are identified differently:

- UNESCO defines them as students who cross borders for tertiary education, of at least one academic year duration, to undertake degree and diploma programs.
- IIE additionally includes, students coming for short term certificate courses & for Study Abroad programs.
- The Foreigners Registration Office includes as IS all persons coming on student visas.
The Confusion

In view of the differing criteria there has been general confusion in India regarding the number of international students studying in the country.

For example in the case of Pune City, for 2013, the AIU gives the figure at 4,298, while the Foreigners Registration Office places it at 10,116.
AIU’s Criterion

The Association of Indian Universities (AIU), in accordance with the definition given by UNESCO, lists as international students, in its data-base, only students who are registered in the Universities and Colleges, for post- higher secondary programs, of at least one academic year duration.
The Association of Indian Universities has been collecting information on international students in India since 1994 and the data has been periodically analyzed. In view of the facts that it is difficult to get absolute numbers because of shortage of returns it is possible only to ascertain trends.
AIU Survey for 2012-13

A survey, was conducted recently by AIU for the academic year 2012-13. It covers, besides data on source countries of international students, information on the gender of the student, the level of education for which the international student is registered and his/her broad discipline of study.
Results

For 2012-13 the number as recorded at the end of February, 2014 is 20,176, in 121 institutions, and the number could possibly go up to about 25,000 when returns are filed by all important universities.

Much better growth had been anticipated but this has not taken place.
Source Countries

Data for 9 universities located along the Western Peninsular Belt reveals that approximately 81% of international students come for under-graduate education, about 17% per cent for post-graduate studies and 2% for research. Asia accounts for 71%, Africa for 24 % and the rest are from other parts of the world.
Gender Ratio & Disciplines

About 40% of international students are female, which in itself is encouraging. The choice of disciplines is also varied. About 30 per cent of the students are in the liberal arts (arts, social sciences, science and commerce) and the rest are enrolled for professional programmes/disciplines.
Universities with International Students

- Ten universities have more than 700 students. Of these four are private. In 2012-13, Manipal University had the largest number i.e. 2742.

- There has been a fall in numbers of international students in the case of some leading public universities.
The Public Universities

The interest of the public universities in international student mobility seems to be waning. This is probably because of lack of resources in terms of infrastructure and human resources, and finance; or because there is difficulty in finding teachers willing to undertake the onerous responsibilities of Foreign Student Advisor.
Private Universities

Self-financing (Private) institutions have more students. They are seeking to internationalize operations, possibly because international students are a source of revenue and add to prestige.

They are positioning themselves in the market through advertisements, developing a brand and other means.
The international student community is growing very fast globally (but not in India). Keeping in view the significance of this development many governments have adopted policies that encourage both inflow and outflow of students.
The policy of the government has not been clearly stated. This needs to be clarified and the universities informed of the action to be taken as regards inflow of international student.
Internationalization, with programs of academic cooperation and significant number of international students, is an important criterion in all major world ranking systems. The failure of Indian universities to make it to the top 200 is partly due to the insignificant exit of internationalization.
Why Internationalize? 2

Indian youth need to be exposed to the global culture if they are to become ‘global citizens’. This can be achieved by meeting more international students either abroad or on home campuses.

International students will bring national diversity to our university campuses.

Over the years the international students will enhance the visibility of India.
Why Internationalize? - 3

Opening the education system for global research using more international students could lead to greater international collaborations, better publication records and greater visibility amongst the peers who rank the universities.

More international students in India would bring in additional revenue to the country through tuition fees and living expenses.
What needs to be done 1

The government should:

- Adopt a clear definition for International Students.
- Study the various reports of UGC and AIU on the promotion of internationalization and decide on their implementation.
- State, in clear terms its policy and inform universities accordingly.
What needs to be done - 2

- Make special provisions for internationalization and identify universities for the allotment.
- Promote other pathways for internationalization, like academic partnerships for teaching-learning.
- Promote international collaboration in research and encourage inter-institutional research.
Recommendation

If India is to keep pace with the rest of the world internationalization of education, especially international student mobility into India, academic partnerships and research collaborations has to be encouraged and promoted. All stakeholders must take positive action in this regard.
Thank You