

EDUCATION PLUS

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The big move

With more students looking to study abroad, India needs to take a second look at its academic culture and understand what it needs to offer today's youngsters



GETTY IMAGES/STOCKPHOTO

Geetha Gopinath
Maneesh N.

In India, there is a new wave of global movement: that of youngsters in the 18 to 25 age group going abroad for their studies. The allure of foreign universities is being buttressed by powerful campaigning. What are the factors causing this exodus? What is the impact on Indian society and economy?

Factors

One of the reasons for this

exodus is the struggle to find jobs in India after graduation. Students believe that there is scope to lead a better life abroad. After completing their studies, they continue to live there to improve their lives, both financially and academically. Another aspect is the liberal lifestyle in many foreign countries, which offers students a level of freedom that may not be possible in their homes. A third aspect is the possibility of earning while they study.

There is also the perception that studying in a

foreign university carries more prestige than being in an Indian institution. It is also true that admission to prestigious Indian institutions is difficult and only a small percentage of students are able to find a seat. With the relative ease of admission in colleges abroad, more students are able to fulfil their dreams of higher education.

The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 was meant to bring Indian universities on a par with foreign universities with focus on research, critical

thinking and problem-solving and offering equal opportunities for learning in diverse areas, improved teacher training and infrastructure development. But it will take time to implement and to be effective. While India overcomes the challenges of establishing research-based education, students opt to go abroad to find such an ecosystem.

Consequences

The first impact of this is the potential loss of talented manpower. We often see media highlighting achievements of Indians abroad but rarely is the question of why they could not achieve the same heights here asked. We read of students in India developing new technologies but nothing is heard of what happened to these innovations. This loss can hit hard particularly in fields such as healthcare and engineering. Then there is the economic effect. Rarely do students who go abroad for higher studies come back to contribute to the Indian economy. Their life is bound up with the country they reside in.

All this should make us re-look our academic culture and come to new understanding of what we need to offer our students in this fast-changing world.

Geetha Gopinath is Faculty of Education and Maneesh N. is Faculty of Economics at the National Institute of Technology, Kozhikode.



OFF THE EDGE
Nandini Raman

I completed Class 12 with PCBM and took NEET twice but didn't get the required score. I want to opt for architecture or a science course but cannot decide. Can you help? Sabira

Sabira,

The decision should be based on a combination of your core interests, abilities, career goals, and future prospects. Meet a career counsellor and identify which subjects you enjoy the most and feel passionate about. Assess your strength, skill, and aptitude. If you enjoy sketching, designing, or exploring spatial relationships, architecture could be a good fit. But, if scientific concepts, experimentation, and problem-solving fascinate you, then a science courses may be more suitable. Also research career prospects and opportunities – job demand, salary potential, industry growth, and professional advancement – in both fields. Finally, reflect on your long-term goals, aspirations, and vision for your future career. Consider how each option aligns with your personal values, lifestyle preferences, and ambitions.

I am in the final year of B.Sc. (Physics, Chemistry)

Gain perspective

Uncertain about your career options? Low on self-confidence? This column may help

and Maths) but my interest is in History. Which will be a better option for me?

Master's: an M.A. or an M.Sc.? Which has better career opportunities? Akash

Akash,

What do you want to do in the long term? Deciding between an M.A. or an M.Sc. depends on your personality, interests and career goals. Evaluate it carefully to make an informed decision. An M.A. in History will provide you with a deep understanding of historical events, theories, methodologies, and critical analysis and you can pursue careers in academia, research, museum curation, archival work, publishing, journalism, public history, cultural heritage management, education, and more. An M.Sc. in Physics, Chemistry or Maths will build upon your B.Sc., offering advanced coursework, research, and specialisation in your chosen field for careers in scientific research, academia, industry, government laboratories, technology, healthcare, finance, data science, and more. Understand your interests, and long-term career goals, your skills, strengths, and aptitude, career aspirations, job market trends and finally the demand for professionals in your

chosen field before you enrol into a Master's programme.

I am in Class 12 and attempted the CLAT recently. I didn't get a decent rank. I am also preparing for the CUET. What can I do after Class 12? Jyot

Jyot,

What about LSAT or AILET? Identify other colleges and universities and check their admission criteria. Start your CUET preparation and set dedicated study time for it. Check out integrated law programmes like B.A. LL.B., B.B.A. LL.B., B.Com. LL.B offered by reputed universities. Explore other undergraduate courses across Humanities, Social Sciences, Commerce, Fine Arts, Media Studies and Sciences. Get a career profiling done by a competent career counsellor to identify your academic interests and then shortlist your choices. Many students also consider a gap year today to reassess options and enhance their skillsets and profile by working on self-improvement through internships, part-time jobs, and volunteering opportunities. If you decide to take a gap year, explore short-term diplomas or certifications in your area of interest as it will enhance

your knowledge base and add to your credentials.

I have completed BBA but am not sure if I want to be in this line. Apart from looking for a job/internship or applying for higher studies, how can I know what is the right career path for me? Supreetha

Dear Supreetha, Seek guidance from a career counsellor to assess and evaluate your personality, interests, strengths, and potential career options. Identify what you enjoy most. Assess your strengths. Introspect on the values that matter most to you in a job and work environment. Explore different industries and sectors to understand available opportunities keeping in mind current trends, job roles and growth prospects. Make yourself job-ready and obtain relevant certifications that will enhance your current qualifications, help you gain new skills and upgrade your CV. Consider professional shadowing, networking and joining professional associations related to your areas of interest. Internships and volunteering are also great to gain practical experience and understand your career goals better.

Disclaimer: This column is merely a guiding voice and provides advice and suggestions on education and careers.

The writer is a practising counsellor and a trainer. Send your questions to eduplus.thehindu@gmail.com with the subject line Off the Edge

SCHOLARSHIPS

Kotak Junior Scholarship
A CSR initiative by the Kotak Mahindra Group Companies.

Eligibility: Students who live within the Mumbai Metropolitan Region (MMR) and have got over 85% in the 2024 Class 10 board exam (SSC/CBSE/ICSE) and secured admission in Class 11 in institutions in the MMR; Annual family income must be ₹3.2 lakhs.

SAVE THE DATE

Admissions and scholarships

Lovely Professional University (LPU) has opened admissions for its B.Tech Biotechnology, B.Tech Food Technology, B.Tech Biomedical Engineering programmes.

Eligibility: 60% aggregate in Class 12 board exam (with Physics, Chemistry, English, and Mathematics or Biology or Biotechnology) or equivalent. Students have to qualify in LPUNEST, CUET or JEE Main

LPU also invites applications for its B.Arch. programme. **Eligibility:** 50% aggregate marks in Class 12 board exam with English, Physics, Mathematics, and Chemistry or Biology or Computer Science or IT or Business Study or Engineering Graphics or Informatics Practice or Technical Vocational subject. Students have to qualify in NATA 2024. <https://www.lpu.in/>

The University of Birmingham Dubai invites applications for its MEng Mechanical Engineering programme. Scholarships are available.

Eligibility: Between 75% and 90% in Class 12 (depending on board of education) with Maths as a subject. <https://tinyurl.com/4txvjd5k>

Reward: ₹3,500 a month plus mentorship, academic assistance, career guidance, and exposure visits.

Application: Online
Deadline: June 30
www.b4s.in/edge/KJSP2

Esri India Master's Scholarship Programme

An initiative from Esri India. **Eligibility:** Open to Indian citizens who are at least 18 years old and enrolled in the second year of a

postgraduate programme in Geoinformatics or related

field covering remote sensing, GIS, spatial modelling, spatial analysis, digital image processing for GIS, and similar subjects.

Reward: ₹1 lakh annually
Application: By email to gis.education@esri.in
Deadline: July 10
www.b4s.in/edge/GISU4

National Commission for Women Internship

An initiative from the National Commission for Women for students in undergraduate and

postgraduate programmes. **Eligibility:** Unpaid internship is open to students in the first year.

Paid internship programme is open only to students must be in the second year or higher and enrolled in specific fields of study: Law (LL.B), Sociology, Social Work, or Gender Studies.

Reward: ₹10,000 monthly

Application: Online

Deadline: Round the year

www.b4s.in/edge/NWCII

Courtesy: Buddy4study

Tirupati, invites applications for its B.Tech in Computer Science and Engineering (Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning) programme.

Eligibility: Minimum 60% in Class 12 in the current academic year with Physics, Chemistry and Maths as subjects

Deadline: July 31
<https://www.mbu.asia/>

CMR University, Bengaluru, invites

applications for its four-year B.Tech. Programmes from the School of Engineering and Technology.

Eligibility: Minimum 45% aggregate in Class 12 with English as a subject and valid score in JEE, COMED-K, CET or CMRUAT.

<https://www.cmr.edu.in/> **Amazon India** has opened registrations for the fourth edition of its Machine Learning (ML) Summer School.

Eligibility: Engineering students (enrolled in graduate, postgraduate or doctoral programmes) from a recognised institute

Deadline: June 21
<https://tinyurl.com/2urvsux8>

Institute of Bakery & Culinary Arts has

announced scholarships worth ₹ 1 crore with minimum amount being ₹ 10,000 and maximum ₹ 1,00,000. The grants will depend on the course structure and are available for all courses.

Deadline: June 30
<https://tinyurl.com/4txvjd5k>

<https://www.chefibpa.com/>

The University of Sheffield, the U.K., invites applications for its M.A. International Political Economy course starting in September 2024.

Eligibility: A three-year Bachelor's degree with minimum 60% or first class in a relevant Social Science, Arts or Humanities subject or other related subjects.

Deadline: August 31
For details, write to deepak_john@geojit.com

The University of Strathclyde, Glasgow, the U.K., invites applications for its M.A. Artificial Intelligence & Applications course starting in September 2024.

Eligibility: Minimum 60% or first class in a relevant Social Science, Arts or Humanities subject or other related subjects.

Deadline: August 31
<https://tinyurl.com/79yQ>

The Vattikuti Foundation has

launched **Vattikuti Explorers**, a national competition to identify innovative thinkers among medical students in India.

Eligibility: Third- and fourth-year medical students who wish to delve into specialised areas of research with accomplished robotic surgeons as mentors.

Applications open: June 15
Eligibility: Indian nationals with 60% in Class 12 from a recognised board of education (55% for ST/SC candidates and PwD).
<http://dbe.iimb.ac.in/>

Design for the future

Design education needs to offer students a multifaceted toolkit that enables them to create solutions that transcend mere functionality.



from the collaboration of designers, engineers, and material scientists, each contributing their knowledge for an environmentally responsible solution.

Responsibility

Moving beyond mere aesthetics, design education must also emphasise ethical and cultural considerations. Envision a designer who creates a visually stunning product but through environmentally harmful practices or by perpetuating harmful stereotypes. This underscores the critical need for students to develop critical thinking skills and ethical frameworks. By equipping them to consider the social and environmental impact of their work, design education empowers them to create inclusively and responsibly, addressing real-world challenges with integrity.

Thus, a holistic design education equips students with the tools and a mindset to navigate uncertainty and tackle complex problems. This derives from a foundation in critical thinking, problem-solving, and design thinking methodologies. Furthermore, design education fostering collaboration, communication, and empathy empowers students to work effectively in teams and navigate diverse perspectives. By embracing diverse skill sets, understanding the human experience, fostering interdisciplinary collaboration, and considering ethical and cultural implications, design education can empower students to become not just skilled creators but well-rounded individuals shaping a transformative design landscape.

However, fostering a holistic design education necessitates breaking down the traditional silos between disciplines. Imagine a design team where engineers, marketers, and designers contribute their unique perspectives and expertise. This cross-pollination of ideas fosters an environment that enables designers to tackle complex challenges that demand multifaceted expertise. Imagine a sustainable packaging design born

Nealesh Dala

Development sits at the intersection of creativity and utility and current challenges require designers to possess a holistic skillset encompassing human understanding, interdisciplinary collaboration, and ethical awareness. The design landscape is evolving at an unprecedented pace, fuelled by technological advancements, globalisation, and an increasingly complex world. In this dynamic context, the traditional design education model built solely on technical proficiency falls short.

The imperative now lies in fostering holistic design education, equipping students with the necessary skill sets to not only excel in their careers but also become responsible and impactful change-makers.

Multidisciplinary approach

While technical expertise remains the foundation, its true value lies in its synergy with other complementary disciplines. Imagine a designer who possesses

not only the ability to craft pixel-perfect interfaces but also a deep understanding of human psychology, the nuances of user experience, and the evolving trends shaping society.

Such an individual can create solutions that transcend mere functionality and designs that resonate with users on a deeper level.

Psychology becomes the cornerstone of this holistic approach, unlocking the doors to the intricacies of human behaviour, emotions, and motivations. Thus, designers can craft interfaces that are not only user-friendly but also intuitively guide and emotionally engage users. This human-centred approach fosters trust, satisfaction, and, ultimately, a positive brand experience.

Sociology fosters inclusivity and equity, equipping designers with the tools to navigate social structures and power dynamics while recognising the impact design can have on diverse communities.

Imagine a design team considering accessibility standards beyond technical compliance, their decisions informed by an understanding of diverse physical and cognitive abilities. This awareness ensures that their creations are not just usable but truly inclusive, catering to the needs of a broader audience.

The writer is the Founder, JD School of Design, powered by JD Institute of Fashion Technology.

Being media literate

Higher education should enable students with the ability and capacity to decide truth from fiction and make informed decisions

Koneru Lakshman Havish

In today's digital age, the capacity to judiciously analyse and comprehend media messages is more significant than ever. As higher education institutions struggle to prepare students for a complicated and media-saturated world, incorporating media literacy into the core curriculum has become a vital need.

The latest survey led by the digital rights organisation Social & Media Matters showed that nearly 80% of India's first-time voters are bombarded with fake news on popular social media platforms. This study also established that 65.2% of respondents will be casting their votes for the first time, with 78.9% bumping into fake news on these platforms. This emphasises the crucial need for media literacy education to aid individuals in steering the vast amount of information accessible online and making informed decisions. By training students to sail across

the dangerous waters of media messages, higher education prepares upcoming leaders with the capacity to decide truth from fiction and make informed decisions.

Students are like sponges in a sea of information overload, soaking up memes, tweets, and TikTok reels. Media literacy is the magic mirror that exposes the reality behind the pixels helping them comprehend how media shapes our insights, beliefs, and behaviours and to navigate this digital deluge without drowning in a sea of misinformation.

Integrative approach

- **Media Analysis Skills:** Adding media analysis skills to course content can elevate student learning by infusing subjects with critical media analysis. This will help them develop a keen eye and dissect media messages and understand the impact on society.
- **Identify opportunities in subjects:** From Biology to Busi-



ness, every subject offers a window into the world of media influence. By identifying opportunities for media analysis in various disciplines, educators can show students how media shapes their field of study and vice versa.

• **Innovative assignments:** Instead of allocating boring essays and multiple-choice tests, educators can create assignments that foster critical media analysis and help students unleash their creativity and critical thinking skills to deconstruct media messages.

• **Across disciplines:** Just like a good meme spreads like wildfire across social media, media literacy concepts can ignite a blaze across different fields of study. Whether it is philosophy or physics, media literacy concepts can be the universal language that bridges the gap between disciplines and show students how media influences everything from ethics to equations.

• **Collaborative approach:** Integrating media literacy across departments can bring together

minds from different disciplines and create a chorus of critical thinking across campuses.

Strategies

Teaching media literacy in higher education can involve the use of interactive workshops, engaging activities, and multimedia resources. Another way to make these lessons stick is to use real-world examples and case studies and show how these have influenced events and perspectives.

The Global Risk Report 2024 has identified misinformation and disinformation as the top global risks for the next two years and ranked them among the top five risks impacting worldwide peace and prosperity. Thus higher education institutions should work towards nurturing a generation of media-literate individuals capable of engaging thoughtfully with the intricacies of our interconnected world.

The writer is Vice President, KL Deemed to be University



Weigh your options

Should you do an MBA immediately after graduation or opt to work first?

Christopher Abraham

The crucial decision to pursue an MBA immediately after graduation or work for a few years first is a common dilemma for students. Both options have their advantages and disadvantages, and the final decision depends on different inter-linked factors such as individual aspirations and career goals, the diverse networking opportunities, the opportunity for the overall development of various skills, and the critical commitments of cost and time.

Pursuing an MBA immediately after graduation can be appropriate and relevant for those who envisage starting their business with the acquired knowledge and skills. It offers an opportunity to concentrate on their business education without the distraction of work and helps build a strong foundation. Further, fresh graduates may have more clarity on their life and career goals and can tailor their choice of programme to align with their dreams and aspirations.

However, there are quite a few MBA programmes across the globe that prefer applicants with relevant work experience. This is based on the understanding that the experience can enhance the learning by giving them pertinent and valuable insights and also help them apply the different practical skills that are not al-

ways taught in the classroom.

Building work experience allows students to add to their practical experience in their chosen domain, open up opportunities to enhance their professional networks, and facilitate a higher salary.

Additionally, students may have a much clearer understanding and appreciation of their career goals and can choose an appropriate programme to fulfill their life interests and career aspirations.

Pros and cons

Joining an MBA programme immediately after graduation makes it easier to switch tracks and enter a completely new field. It can also help build a strong foundation in different disciplines, and give students a much better idea of their life and career goals. However, the flip side is that students may not know what they want to focus on and lack practical business and/or industry experience. Also, they may need to bear the costs without employer support or financial assistance.

Working for a few years before pursuing an MBA can help students gain practical experience and develop a professional network. Also such students may have more focus and clarity about their careers, allowing them to opt for a programme that best aligns with their needs, propensity to invest and their lifestyle.

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Executive MBA
An Executive MBA (EMBA) by default is designed for working and career professionals who look forward to climbing the corporate ladder faster. This allows students to apply the concepts learnt in class in their work environment immediately. Globally, EMBA programmes offer greater flexibility and part-time options like weekend classes and schedules that accommodate their busy lifestyles.

Many EMBA programmes are also offered online, providing the students with myriad learning options and choices. While the curriculum and degree earned are similar to the regular MBA, the design, delivery and structure differ to meet the needs of working professionals.

It is essential to compare and contrast the various individual factors before one decides whether to opt for an MBA immediately after graduation or to work for a few years. Additionally, analysing and studying the differences between a part-time Executive MBA and a regular full-time MBA can help them choose the programme that best aligns with their needs, propensity to invest and their lifestyle.

The writer is CEO and Head, SP Jain School of Global Management, Dubai.

Davinder Singh

India hosts the third largest start-up ecosystem in the world, a growth driven by factors such as favourable governmental policies, increased access to funding, and a burgeoning talent pool. With the government projecting the year-on-year growth at 12-15%, the importance of entrepreneurship for socio-economic advance cannot be ignored.

As a result, entrepreneurship education becomes key to nurturing the spirit of innovation.

As educational institutions endeavour to instil entrepreneurial aspirations in students, a fundamental transition towards learner-centred teaching methodologies becomes indispensable. It is also becoming increasingly essential to integrate technology and digital skills into entrepreneurship education to remain relevant and effective.

Theory and practice

In response to the evolving landscape, educational institutions are recalibrating their entrepreneurship programmes to integrate emerging technologies such as Artificial Intelligence (AI), Blockchain, Augmented Reality (AR), and Machine Learning (ML). An integral facet of this integration lies in providing practical, hands-on experiences through initiatives like hackathons, incubators, and accelerators.

These serve as crucibles where students can apply theoretical knowledge to real-world situations, fostering essential skills like creativity, collaboration, and critical thinking.

Moreover, government data shows that over 8800 institutes of higher education have established Institution Innovation Council (IIC) to drive innovation and entrepreneurship.

The use of AI has emerged as a transformative force in education, as it facilitates personalised learning experiences and offers real-time feedback and adaptive pathways, empowering students to grasp complex concepts at their own pace.

Simultaneously, big data provides insights into learning patterns through comprehensive analysis.

Educators can identify at-risk students early and offer timely support, while also nurturing exceptional talent,

to create an inclusive and effective learning environment.

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