

Visible Gaps Between Indian and EU Higher Education Systems

Country: INDIA

Name of the identified GAP	Description of the identified GAP
Regulatory norms	The regulatory systems and the norms are very different in India and the European Union. While the Bologna Process becomes the guiding framework for the EU, India has a highly diversified system which is complex in nature. The higher education regulatory system is divided in 3 levels for central universities, state universities and private universities and institutions. There are more than 10 regulatory bodies to supervise the higher education system.
Degree design and requirements	Degree design and delivery are defined by the regulators and so it is usually different in nature given the domain like engineering, management, medical etc. Usually the duration of the degrees/diplomas are kept constant, their structure differs. The nomenclature as well for the end certificate also differs by the nature of the institutions. For example, in the management area a state university will give an MBA but a private school is bound to name it PGDM (post graduate diploma in management). The annual examination systems without credits or with credit system are not similar to the ECTS system of EU, which creates problems of equivalence in several circumstances.
International perspective	Indian universities and other higher education institutions usually do not have an international perspective. It is very much limited to very few HEIs. The practice in general is that the closed process of university operations and academic offering does not offer much space for flexibility required in the internationalization of the degree and student exchange. Private universities are scoring better due to their flexibility and intentions to promote an international perspective in the degree, learning, and profiling. Universities have visibility on few international collaborations but they are more on the full time scholarship or research than student exchange programmes.
Quality standards and diversity	Quality in the top universities and public/private institutions is very high and matches global standards. At the same time, the quality of the lower section private institutions and universities is very poor. There is vast difference in the quality of the HE institutions in India. The regulatory norms usually follow approval process for the establishment of the institutions which requires minimum qualification to operate the university/institution. The accreditation for the HE institutions is not compulsory especially for the private institutions since it is not benefiting in any form other than students enrollment. There are some meager benefits on accreditation which are not attended by the institutions are

	they are not contributing much. Given that structure, quality in degree design, delivery, research and faculty is highly different in good institutions and lower level institutions. Sometimes it can also result in education in very local language and not in English and Hindi (national language) which means additional weakness in establishing a common quality.
Financial Support to Education	The Indian system works on a university funded model and self funded model. State and federal run universities are funded by the governments so there fees and other expenditure is very low compared to the private institutions which are self funded and demand high tuition fees to meet the high quality of the education. There are not many opportunities for financial support from government except the bank loan which students raise at high cost. The opportunities for scholarship are less, which is almost very different from EU institutions which not only offer good scholarship opportunities for experiential learning but also offer highly subsidized education.
Faculty, Research and Publication	The research and publication environment in India is very much priority of the institution and not highly supported by the government system. Although there are several opportunities offered by government to the institutions, but given the size of the university/HEI system in India, the eco-system of research and publication is not enough. There are highest standards of faculty, research and publication in good institutions and also below average standard of the eco-system. The variance in the European Union would be lower than Indian continent in this category.

Summary:

In general, the Higher Education system in India and European Union are different and require a synchronization system to be accepted in both the systems. There are issues of local systems which may not be similar to the systems of the EU, and there might not be a great possibility of change in the near future. The only nearest solution is to develop a framework which can compare the existing norms and standards and offer an equivalence system as a tool which helps in converging the systems.

It is felt that such a framework will help the institutions to bridge the differences or create tools to manage the differences between the Indian and EU systems and standards.