



A STUDY ON PREFERRED STUDY DESTINATION OF INDIAN STUDENTS ABROAD

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Abstract

As our global society become increasingly interconnected, people from all cultures, races and ethnicities have more contact with other parts of the world. International educational exchange is one avenue that allows students from all over the world to develop an international understanding by experiencing life in a new culture or country. The objective of the study is to find out the demographic profile of prospective Indian students and the preferred destination. The descriptive research design was followed in this research. The findings shows that the most preferred destination is US followed by UK, Canada, Singapore and Australia, preferred duration is for more than one year followed by for a year, for a semester, for a summer and for a few weeks. This knowledge is a key to formulating effective communication and recruitment strategies for Higher education institutes to attract Indian students.

Key Words: Higher Education, Preferred Destination, International Education.

Introduction

As our global society become increasingly interconnected, people from all cultures, races and ethnicities have more contact with other parts of the world. International educational exchange is one avenue that allows students from all over the world to develop an international understanding by experiencing life in a new culture or country. The number of students enrolled in tertiary education outside their country of citizenship has sharply increased over the last decades, reflecting the expansion of tertiary education systems worldwide and the globalisation of economies and societies. Higher education has expanded remarkably in recent decades. Growth is, by all measures, faster than anticipated. Projections gave 120 million students worldwide by 2020, but that number had already achieved. In 2004, 132 million students had enrolled worldwide, up from 68 million in 1991. Average annual growth from 1991 to 2004 was 5.1 per cent. Most of this growth has been in Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean, the Arab countries, and in Eastern and Central Europe. China and India have doubled their enrolments in the past 10 years alone. In many countries, youth and young adults have driven this increase but in others, such as Canada, New Zealand, and the United Kingdom, a significant number of older adults have also been entering the system.

As national economy become more interconnected and participation in education expands, governments and individuals are looking to higher education to broaden students' horizons and help them to understand the world's languages, cultures and business methods. The internationalization of tertiary education can also provide an opportunity for smaller and/or less-developed host education systems to improve the cost-efficiency of their education systems. In fact, it may allow countries to focus limited resources on educational programmes with potential economies of scale or to expand participation in tertiary education despite bottlenecks in providing it. Enrolling international students cannot only help raise revenues from higher education, but it can be part of a broader strategy to recruit highly skilled immigrants.

An important reason for many Indians choosing to study abroad is the lack of good institutions in India and growing competition for limited seats amongst the existing institutes. Very few universities in India provide good quality education and thus the challenge of securing admission in them becomes more daunting each year and foreign degrees translate into better employability and rising income levels among middle-class families in India, India's educational capacity remains limited.

Review of Literature

Cubillo et al. (2006) institution's image influences international students' decision. Several aspects relate to living in the study destination and city such as safety, cultural activities, international experience, university environment, facilities, quality of life, visa application and immigration prospects.

Mazzarol and Soutar (2002) identified "push and pull" factors in the international student destination choice. Push factors are those that drive students to leave their country, such as poor economic conditions, lack of quality higher education choice domestically, lack of career opportunities etc. Pull factors on the other side are prospects for future employment, high quality of education institutions, access to funding, or safe and pleasant environment.



Ward, Bochner, and Furnham (2001) international students commonly struggle with the transition from their home country to America. The many physical, mental, and emotional challenges that International students endure as they transition to college life are more abundant than what an average American student's experience. As International students travel from a familiar way of life in their native country into an entirely different culture, they may experience culture shock while at the same time being required to cope with the major transition into college life.

Current Trends in Study Abroad

Indian students have had a craze to pursue their further studies from abroad. In an attempt to have brighter career prospects and get a global exposure, Indian students have only looked at the US, UK or Australian universities to get international education. However, with time these destinations, which were considered as hottest study abroad destinations, have declined in the wish list of these students. The reasons for this shift have been several. The attack on Indian students in Australia has made it one of the least preferred study abroad destinations. In addition, USA and UK have lost their previous sparkle. It is for this reason that the number of Indian students who chose the country dropped by 77% in 2010 compared to 2009. Other reasons why there has been a decline of Indian students going to UK and USA are UK tightening visa rules and the US job market experiencing a slowdown. As per new trends, more and more Indian students are aspiring to go to newer destinations like Canada, Singapore, New Zealand, Continental Europe and China.. Number of Indian students going to Canada has increased; it seems Australia's loss has been Canada's gain. France is absorbing a steady increase of at least 20% Indian students a year. Even Germany is attracting many Indian students.

Top ten study abroad destinations of Indian students are The United Kingdom, The United States of America, Australia, Canada, Russia, Singapore, New Zealand, The Netherlands, Germany and Italy

Objectives of the Study

The objective of the study is to find out the demographic profile of prospective Indian students and their preferred study destination abroad.

Research Methodology

The descriptive research design was followed in this research. Conducted a pilot study with a sample size of 93 and verified the reliability, validity and content validity of the designed questionnaire after and appropriate changes were made to improve the quality of the survey instrument. The researcher has distributed 770 questionnaires, but collected 580 completed questionnaires. After scrutiny, a sum of 174 filled-in-questionnaires has rejected due to incompleteness, errors and inadequate information. Finally, 406 filled questionnaires were used in the present study. The sampling technique used for collecting data is convenience sampling. It is a non-probability sampling technique. It would be ideal to test the entire population, but as the population is just too large, it is impossible to include every individual. This is the reason for relies on convenience sampling techniques.

Result And Discussion

Demographic Profile of Students

A completed profile of the respondents who participated in the survey is presented in Table 1 the sample consists of 43.1% male and 56.9% female students. Based on the age of the students 46.3% are of below 20 years, 53.7% are 21-25 years. Present qualification of the students shows that 25.9% have completed schooling, 54.4% are Under Graduates and 19.7% are Post graduate 97.0% of the respondents are born in India and 3.0% of the respondents were born outside India. 15.5% of the respondents have lived in another country and 84.5% do not lived in another country. 28.1% of the respondents have traveled to another country and 71.9% do not traveled to another country.

Anyone in your family previously studied abroad shows that 48.5% of the respondent's family previously studied abroad and 51.5% of the respondents family previously do not studied abroad.

Based on parents educational qualification; Father's highest level of education shows that 8.4% did not complete high school, 30.8 % have completed high school, 4.7% are Diploma holders, 33.5% are Under Graduates and 22.7% are Post graduates. Mother's highest level of education shows that 8.1% did not complete high school, 24.4 % have completed high school, 4.7% are Diploma holders, 38.7% are Under Graduates and 22.4% are Post graduates.

Family Annual income of the students shows that 49.8% had Less than Rs.10,00,000, 30.3% had Rs.10,00,001 - Rs.15,00,000, 11.1% had Rs.15,00,001 -Rs.20,00,000 and 8.9% had Above Rs.20,00,001.



Students Preference

Table 2 shows the students preference. Based on the types of study interested in pursuing while abroad are Bachelor's degree 30.8% , Master's degree are 49.5% and Ph.D are 19.7%.

Based on the preferred field of study shows that 22.7% prefer Management sciences, 4.4% prefer Economics, 20.0% prefer Communication, 18.2% prefer Sciences, 6.9% prefer Fine Arts, 13.1% prefer Engineering, 4.9% prefer Health Sciences, 5.9% prefer Humanities and 3.9% prefer Social science.

Based on the preferred destination shows that 21.7% prefer United States, 20.0% prefer United Kingdom, 11.8% prefer Canada, 8.4% prefer Singapore, 4.4% prefer Japan, 8.4% prefer China, 13.5% prefer Australia and 11.8% prefer Germany.

Preferred duration shows that 69.7% of students prefer more than one-year study, 24.1% prefer a year and 6.2% prefer a semester abroad.

Table 1 Demographic profile

Variables	Description	Frequency	Percent
Gender	Male	175	43.1
	Female	231	56.9
Age	Below 20 years	188	46.3
	21-25 years	192	47.3
	Above 26 years	26	6.4
Present qualification	Completed schooling	105	25.9
	Under graduate	269	66.2
	Post graduate	32	7.9
Born in India	Yes	394	97.0
	No	12	3.0
Lived in another country	Yes	63	15.5
	No	343	84.5
Traveled to another country	Yes	114	28.1
	No	292	71.9
Anyone in your family previously studied abroad	Yes	197	48.5
	No	209	51.5
Father's highest level of education:	Did not complete high school	34	8.4
	Complete high school	125	30.8
	Diploma	19	4.7
	Under Graduates	136	33.5
	Post graduate	92	22.7
Mother's highest level of education:	Did not complete high school	33	8.1
	Complete high school	99	24.4
	Diploma	19	4.7
	Under Graduae	157	38.7
	Post graduate	91	22.4
Annual income	Less than Rs.10,00,000	202	49.8
	Rs.10,00,001 - Rs.15,00,000	123	30.3
	Rs.15,00,001 -Rs.20,00,000	45	11.1
	Above Rs.20,00,001	36	8.9



Table 2 Student Preference

Variables	Description	Frequency	Percent
Types of study interested in pursuing while abroad	Bachelor's degree	125	30.8
	Master's degree	201	49.5
	Ph.D	80	19.7
Field of study	Management science	92	22.7
	Economics	18	4.4
	Communication	81	20.0
	Sciences	74	18.2
	Fine Arts	28	6.9
	Engineering	53	13.1
	Health Sciences	20	4.9
	Humanities	24	5.9
Preferred destination	Social science	16	3.9
	United States	88	21.7
	United Kingdom	81	20.0
	Canada	48	11.8
	Singapore	34	8.4
	Japan	18	4.4
	China	34	8.4
	Australia	55	13.5
Preferred duration	Germany	48	11.8
	For a semester	25	6.2
	For a year	98	24.1
	For more than one year	283	69.7

Table 3 Chi-square test for association between gender and preferred destination

Gender	Preferences for destination						Total	Chi-square Value	P value
	US	UK	Canada	Singapore	Australia	Others			
Male	47 26.9	40 22.9	38 21.7	18 10.3	11 6.3	21 12.0	175	31.980	.000
Female	53 22.9	53 22.9	20 8.7	23 10.0	50 21.6	32 13.9	231		
Total	100	93	58	41	61	53	406		

From table 3 it is clear that the level of preference for male students towards US (26.9%), UK (22.9%), Canada, (21.7%) Singapore (10.3%), Australia (6.3%) Others (12.0%) and female students prefer US (22.9%) , UK (22.9%), Canada (8.7%)



, Singapore (10.0%), Australia (21.6%) Others (13.9%). Since P value is less than 0.00, there is association between gender and preferred destination.

Table 4 -Chi-square test for association between Annual income and Preferences for destination

Annual family income	Preferences for destination						Total	Chi-square Value	P value
	US	UK	Canada	Singapore	Australia	Others			
Less than Rs.10,00,000	42 20.9	55 27.4	25 12.4	16 8.0	38 18.9	26 12.9	202	76.950	.000
Rs.10,00,001 - Rs.15,00,000	37 30.1	22 17.9	19 15.4	15 12.2	12 9.8	18 14.6	123		
Rs.15,00,001 - Rs.20,00,000	8 17.8	8 17.8	7 15.6	10 22.2	7 15.6	5 11.1	45		
Above Rs.20,00,001	6 16.7	6 16.7	6 16.7	7 19.4	6 16.7	5 13.9	36		
Total	93	91	57	48	63	54	406		

From table 4 it is clear that the level of preference among students with less than 10,00,000 annual income prefer (20.9%) US, (27.4%) UK,, (12.4%) Canada, (8%) Singapore, (18.9%) Australia and (12.9%) others. Students with annual income of Rs.10, 00,001 - Rs.15, 00,000 prefer (30.1%) US, (17.9%) UK,, (15.4%) Canada, (12.2%) Singapore, (9.8%) Australia and (14.6%) others. Students with annual income of Rs.15, 00,001 - Rs.20, 00,000 prefer (17.8%) US, (17.8%) UK,, (15.6%) Canada, (22.2%) Singapore, (15.6%) Australia and (11.1%) others. Students with annual income Above Rs.20,00,001 prefer (16.7%) US, (16.7%) UK,, (16.7%) Canada, (19.4%) Singapore, (16.7%) Australia and (13.9%) others. Since P value is less than 0.00, there is association between students based on annual income **and** preferences for destination.

Table 5 Chi-square test for association between students lived in another country and Preferences for destination

Have you lived in another country	Preferences for destination						Total	Chi-square Value	P value
	US	UK	Canada	Singapore	Australia	Others			
Yes	21 33.3	15 23.8	8 12.7	8 12.7	5 7.9	6 9.5	63	15.630	.029
No	83 24.2	82 23.9	56 16.3	46 13.4	33 9.6	43 12.5	343		
Total	104	97	64	54	38	49	406		

Based on the row percentage the level of preference shows that students who have born in India prefer (33.3%) US, (23.8%) UK,, (12.7%) Canada, (12.7%) Singapore, (7.9%) Australia and (9.5%) others and students who have born outside India prefer (24.2%) US, (23.9%) UK,, (16.3%) Canada, (13.4%) Singapore, (9.6%) Australia and (12.5%) others . Since P value is less than 0.00, there is association between students who have lived in another country and preferences for destination

Table 6 Chi-square test for association between previously traveled to another country and preferred destination

Have you traveled to another country	Preferences for destination						Total	Chi-square Value	P value
	US	UK	Canada	Singapore	Australia	Others			
Yes	34 29.8	24 21.1	14 12.3	15 13.2	9 7.9	18 15.8	114	19.148	.008



No	67	65	44	29	57	30	292		
	22.9	22.3	15.1	9.9	19.5	10.3			
Total	101	89	58	44	66	48	406		

Based on the row percentage the level of preference shows that students who have traveled to another country prefer (29.8%) US, (21.1%) UK, (12.3%) Canada, (13.2%) Singapore, (7.9%) Australia and (15.8%) others and students who have not travelled to other countries prefer (22.9%) US, (22.3%) UK, (15.1%) Canada, (9.9%) Singapore, (19.5%) Australia and (10.3%) others. Since P value is less than 0.00, there is association between students who have traveled to another country and preferences for destination.

Conclusion

The competitiveness in the international education sector is notable. The findings shows that the most preferred destination is US followed by UK, Canada, Singapore and Australia., preferred duration is for more than one year followed by for a year, for a semester, for a summer and for a few weeks. Types of study interested in pursuing while abroad are Master degree, Bachelor degree and Ph.D. This knowledge is a key to formulating effective communication and recruitment strategies for Higher education institutes to attract Indian students.

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