ISSN No:-2456-2165

Growth and Transformation through Higher Education

An Analysis of the Higher Education System in France and Recommendations to India

Dr. Kimberley M. Green, Dr. Susana Velez-Castrillon, Dr. John Upson
Faculty Coordinator

Ashley E. Mallari, Joseph A. Dean, Connor Dempsey
Students

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ISSN No:-2456-2165

CHAPTER 1:
INTRODUCTION

Around the world, education plays a vital role in improving economic conditions and creating new opportunities to enhance a country's overall well-being. In the 21st century, education has taken a shift to include knowledge and experiences beyond the traditional classroom learning. Higher education is an optional path that students can take beyond primary and secondary school years. Higher education provides students with unique opportunities to choose their prospective area of study by gaining a variety of perspectives in different subject areas through both traditional teaching practices and student interactions.

India has one of the world's largest higher education systems. The higher education system includes 700 universities and more than 35,000 affiliated colleges enrolling more than 20 million students (DrEducation, 2013). The higher education institutions found in India can be divided into four broad categories. These categories include universities, colleges, deemed to be universities and institutes of national importance (U.G.O, 2019). Universities in India includes central and state universities. The federal government funds central universities while state universities are supported by their respective state. While there are several higher education institutions in India, the total Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) in Higher education in India is still only 25.8% among the 18-23 years of age group (AISHE, 2018). According to the Department of Education through the Ministry of Human Development, India desires to increase their GER to 30% by the end of 2020.

Currently, India is in a youth bulge phase. It has the largest youth population in the world—with 600 million young people under the age of 25 (WENR). With a large young adult population, the Department of Higher Education is seeking to expand greater accessibility while also increasing the quality of education in order to reach their goal of increasing their GER. In doing so, India hopes to attract both domestic students and students from abroad. India's large youth population is advantageous because it can be used to drive economic growth and improve human development. In 2016, the Department of Higher Education, through the Ministry of Human Resource Development Government of India or MHRD, laid out their specific objectives on improving the higher education system in India. Our research on how India can enhance its higher education system will be based on a comparison with France's higher education system and three of the MHRD's objectives to improving India's higher education system.

Three of the goals highlighted in the MHRD provide the objectives for our research.

The three goals are 1) expanding the institutional base of higher education (including technical, professional and vocational education) 2) establishing new institutions and incentivizing state governments and non-governmental Organizations/civil society, promote collaboration with international community, foreign governments, universities/institutions and regional and international institutions, and 3) increasing Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) in Higher Education to 30% by the year 2020 (MHRD, 2016). Our research will address access to underserved communities, improving accreditation standards, and expanding internet access that will help India increase its GER to 30%. Throughout our research, we will concentrate on how the country of France is addressing these challenges. Our research will include a background into France's education system, a comparison of educational reforms in both countries, a statistical analysis comparing accreditation standards in India and France as well as recommendations based on France's education system.

France's Higher Education System

The French education system consists of five levels: Elementary education, Secondary education, Lower secondary education, Upper secondary education, and Higher education. France's education system is somewhat similar to India's six levels of education: Pre-elementary, Elementary, Upper Elementary, Secondary, Higher secondary education, and Higher education.

One of the most significant differences in the construction of the countries higher education structure is the number of years a student spends in primary and secondary school years. In France, a student spends nine years in their primary and secondary studies while in India, students spend twelve years in primary and secondary studies. In France, after the completion of the ninth year of study, students have three options of preparation for pursuing higher education. The three options include Lycée Général, Lycée Technologique, and Lycée Professionnel. Lycée Général prepares students for the first year of higher education by providing preparation, "in two years the high school students with the general baccalaureate and the pursuit of higher studies, mainly in university or in preparatory classes. It comprises three series: literary (L), economic and social (ES) and scientific (S)" (Ministere de l'education Nationale et de la Jeunesse, 2019). Lycée Technologique is a similar program but with a heavier focus on technology, math, and science. (Ministere de l'education Nationale et de la Jeunesse, 2019). The third option for students who want to pursue higher education in France is the Lycée Professionnel. The Lycée Professional program offers vocational studies or, "an alternating education with the company and its trades to acquire skills and general and professional knowledge, in various sectors and at different levels of training. The education provided has two ends, professional integration, and further studies" (Ministere de l'education Nationale et de la Jeunesse, 2019).

ISSN No:-2456-2165

The following charts from World Education News and Reviews compare the education structure in both countries. The chart on the left features the overall structure of the France's education system and the chart on the right features the overall structure of the India's higher education system.

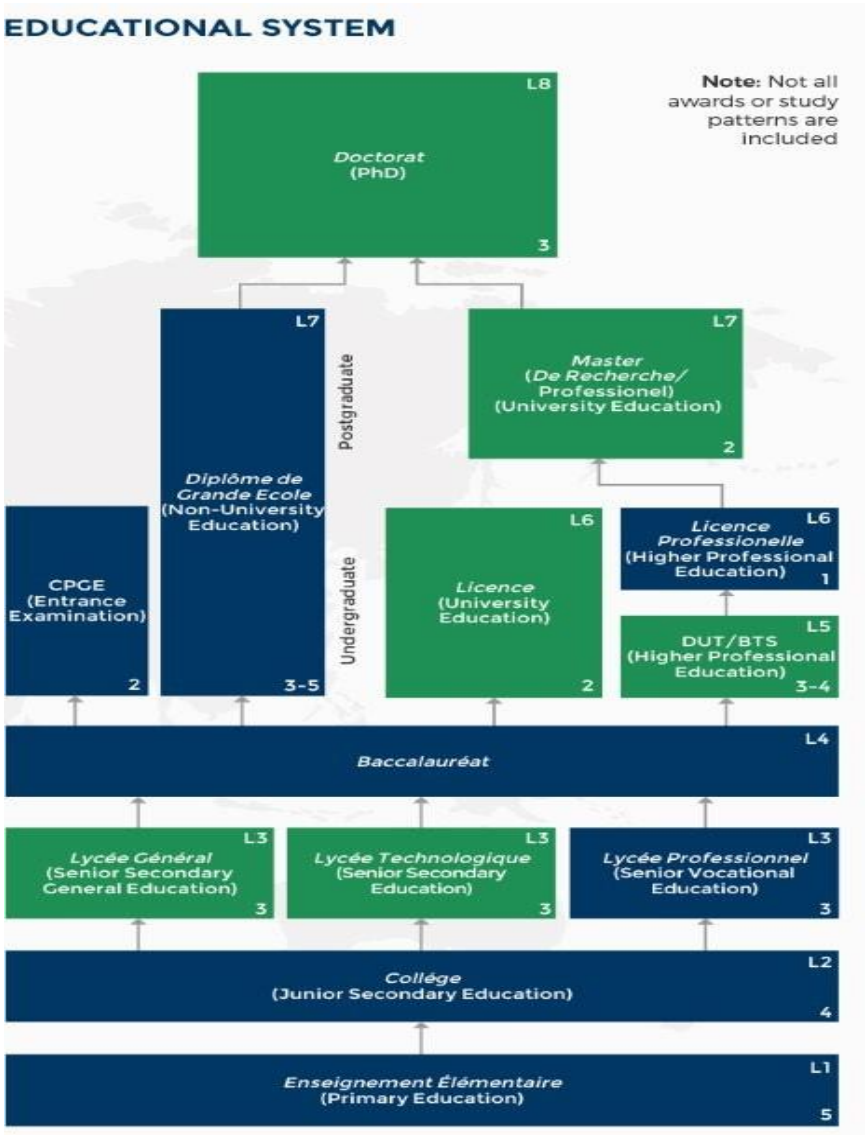

Fig 1:- French Educational System

(Numbers on the bottom right corner represent the number of years students spend at each level.)

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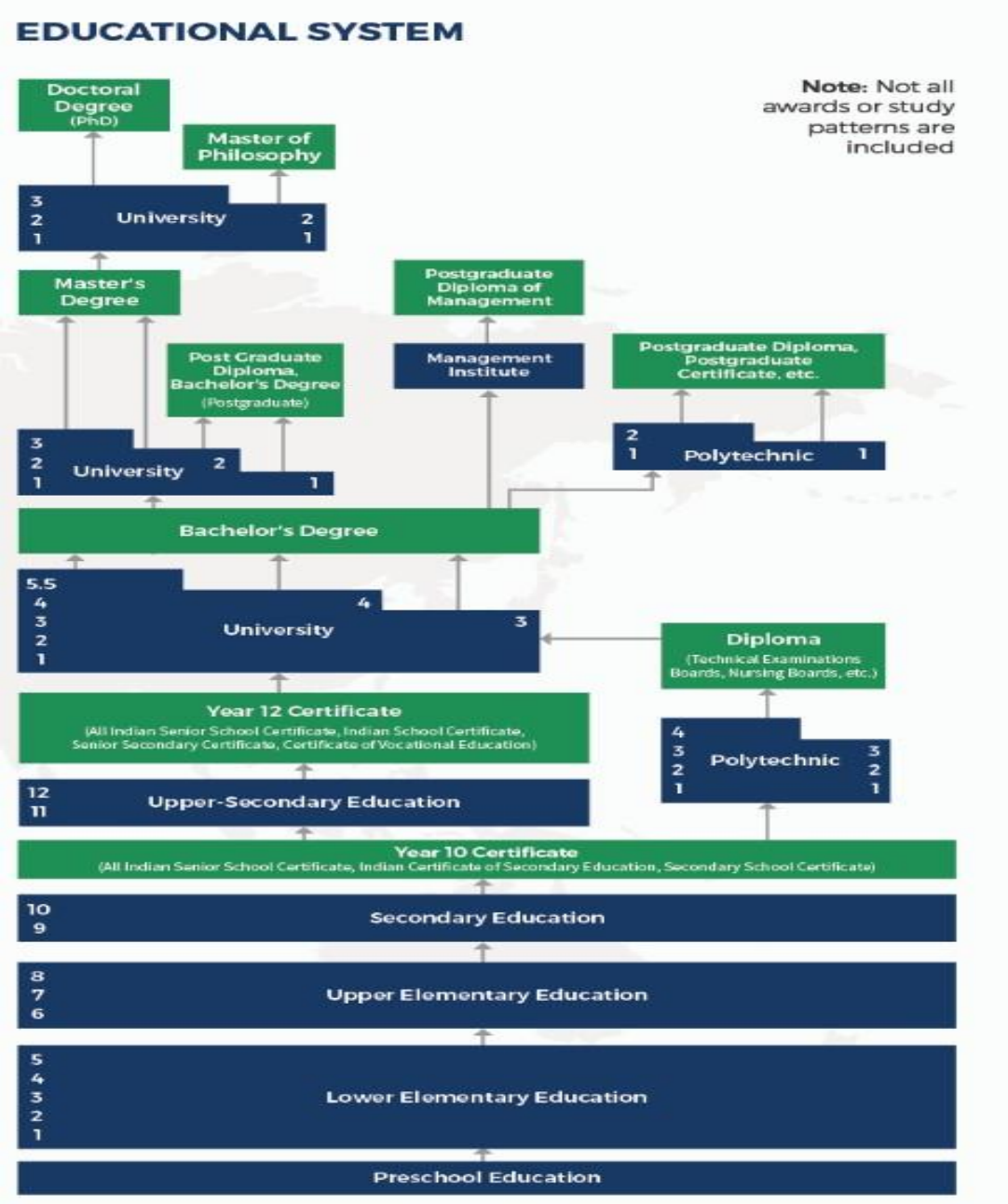

Fig 2:- Indian Educational System

(Numbers on the left side represent the grades at each level.)

In comparison, India has similar entrance preparation and exams into the higher education system. The year ten certificate is obtained after the students have completed that year of education. Students, "who have completed ten years of education (Standard X) take the Secondary School Certificate. Pupils then enter higher secondary schools or Junior Colleges and complete a further two years of education (Standards XI and XII). Courses focus on university preparation" (Foreign Consultants Inc, 2003). These certificates allow students to have exposure to a class structure in higher education institutions. The exams following the

completion of the years of educational training, “Public examinations are held at the end of Standard IX either by individual states or by Central Boards and lead to the award of the Higher Secondary School Certificate (also called All India Senior School Certificate or Indian School Certificate or Pre-University Course)” (Foreign Consultants Inc, 2003). In India, there is also a certificate in place for students who choose to pursue vocational studies. Vocational studies are, “offered in two years at Higher and Technical Schools and lead to the Certificate of Vocational Education (CVE)” (Foreign Consultants Inc, 2013).

In France, the higher education level consists of roughly 2.5 million students. (Campus French, 2019) This number has more than doubled since 1980 when there were 1.18 million students enrolled in higher education. This rise in the number of students in the French higher education system is in direct response to market demand. More and more jobs across France require a college education for employment.

The duration of the higher education level varies from a minimum of two years to eight-plus years, depending on the degree pursued and the availability of courses. The higher education, or University, the structure is organized by the license, master, doctorate or LMD System organized under Europe’s Bologna Process. The French higher education system is divided into three tiers: the bachelor’s degree (license), the master’s degree (master) and the doctorate (doctorate). French higher education has two popular types of institutions. The European Education Directory lists these options as Universities and Grandes Ecoles. Table 1 compares the key differences between the two institutions.

Grandes Ecoles are more specialized and are concentrated on specialized learning. The time required to obtain a degree the same between Universities and Grande Ecoles but those who attend Grande Ecoles are better exposed to their future careers. This exposure occurs earlier in the students’ higher education process (Calmand, Giret, Guégnard, Paul, 2009). Universities and Grandes Ecoles are France’s most popular options for higher education. However, there are other options for those students who do not want to pursue a traditional professional career. Degrees in technical studies and creative studies in art and film are just two of the options available to these students.

		University	**Grandes Ecoles**
Number of institutions		83	250
Fields of Study		all-encompassing fields of study	more specialized including fields of engineering, science and math
Cost		average: €190 per year	vary between institutions range: € 500 - 10,000
Admission Requirements	completion of the baccalauréat exam	completion of preparatory classes following the passing of the baccalauréat de l'enseignement du second degré	

Table 1:- Comparison of Institutions

The French education system has many strengths and weaknesses. One of the strengths is the strong focus on foreign language skills. Students are able to start learning their first foreign language as early as four years of age. In addition, they can pursue a second foreign language as early as nine years of age. Learning foreign languages at such a young age allows students to achieve higher degrees of comprehension and enables the child to develop the skills necessary to learn additional foreign languages. Knowing how to communicate in multiple foreign languages also makes French graduates more marketable in their chosen career field.

Another strength of the French education system is the standardization provided by the Ministry of Education. This standardization is critical to the mobility of the French citizens. Students that move within the country, often at their parents' discretion, can have the same curriculum no matter where they relocate to. These students can easily pick up their studies and arrive at a new institution where they are on-track with the rest of the students.

The standardization of the education system additionally allows for less discrepancy across the school system. Standardization is especially beneficial to lower-income school systems. Instead of being neglected, these systems receive the same level of education as the higher income school systems.

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One of France's most significant strengths of its education system is also one of its weaknesses, the Baccalauréat. "The *Baccalauréat* is an academic qualification which French students take at the end of high school. Originally introduced by Napoleon I in 1808, the *Baccalauréat* exam is not a requirement for finishing high school, but for entrance into universities" (European CEO, 2018) One of the defining problems of the baccalauréat is that it does not fulfill its purpose of providing a good filter between secondary education and higher education, due to a passing rate of around 90%. The Baccalauréat has such a significance that failing the exam can have severe negative consequences "from not being allowed into higher education to terrible career perspectives" (Sayare, 2013). The successful pass rate of the examination is not a good indicator of a student's preparedness for higher education. Currently, less than half of the first-year higher education students move onto a second year. This flawed rite of passage to higher education also comes at an enormous cost. According to the New York Times, (Sayare, 2013) a study conducted by a significant educators' union in France, S.N.P.D.E.N., placed the "true cost" of the "general and technical bacs at a combined $2 billion" in 2012-- the true cost meaning, the teachers' salaries, the cost to produce, administering, and grading the exam.

ISSN No:-2456-2165

CHAPTER 2:
EDUCATIONAL REFORMS IN FRANCE

Autonomy Reform

France's higher education system has seen many educational reforms to improve governance and overall structure. Since the passing of the 2007 law on Liberties and Responsibilities of Universities, commonly referred to as LRU, all public universities became EPSCPs (Établissements publics à caractère scientifique, cultural et Professionnel – public institutions of a scientific, cultural and professional nature), legal entities enjoying educational, scientific, administrative and financial autonomy (European Commission, 2018). University presidents were granted autonomy over the use of their allocated budget and other incoming government funds. Under the new law, university presidents are responsible for ensuring the budget is used to prepare students for future employment by providing opportunities for students to expand on their skill set. Interpretation of this responsibility is left to university presidents. One driving factor to the law's passing may have been that university budgets were becoming more challenging to manage within the government ministry. Before the passing of the LRU law, the French government had steadily increased government spending on higher education. Expenditure on higher education more than doubled since 1980 (by a factor of 2.6, at constant prices), rising by an average of 2.7% a year (Ministere de l'Enseignement Supérieur, 2017). Transfering budget authority to the universities significantly increased the ability of the university to allocate funds to initiatives directed at preparing students for their careers.

Research Reform

Currently, students who live and study in France pay small fees in tuition and the rest of the tuition is subsidized by the government. This year, the French government decided to spend roughly €72 billion for education, and of that, about €28 billion will be spent on higher education and research (Statista, 2019). Research plays a significant role in improving the quality of teaching and enhancing global perspectives in the French higher education system. Research helps to deepen students' knowledge in their chosen field of study or area of interest. With the new reforms, university presidents now have the option to spend their budgets on providing research opportunities to students.

The results of this research in higher education can address the challenges facing French society and help promote international visibility. In late 2012, the Minister of Higher Education and Research, Mrs. Geneviève Fioraso, proposed a bill that sought to improve higher education structure and international visibility. France began improving the quality of education by placing a stronger emphasis on research much earlier in the licence or undergraduate programs. One of the significant provisions of the new reform was the

restructuring and collaboration of research in higher education. This provision includes enhancing research strategies within higher education institutions by connecting students with national research facilities. The new law introduced territorial groupings to strengthen the coordination of training, research, and transfer policies as well as actions for the development of improvement of student life (Ministry of Higher Education, research and innovation, 2017). Many educational institutions are seeking to gain efficiencies by coming together with other institutions, fostering relationships, and pooling resources by creating "*Communautés d' Universités et d'Etablissements*" (COMUE - Communities of Universities and Schools).
The research coordination now falls between twenty COMUE groups and five new research association groups across France. COMUE groups include universities, Grande Ecoles, and research facilities. The goal of bringing these groups together is to increase international rankings and to promote international student inflow. While there are not enough results to measure the success of these COMUE groups, the success and continuous works of these groups can help enhance the quality of France's education system. By sharing any research completed through these groups will not only help improving challenges in the local area but also gain international visibility and improve global rankings.

Included within the Higher Education and Research law is a policy created to promote an overall research strategy. The National Research Strategy (SNR) aims to address current challenges within society, including topics of science, technology, and the environment. In addition to in-depth research, the National Research Strategy ensures the development of innovation, the transfer of technology, the capacity of expertise and support for public policies and associations and foundations, recognized as being of public utility (Ministry of Higher Education and Research, 2015). Implementing the National Research policy includes the continuation of multi-year contracts with higher education facilities and research institutions, public funding, and participation in the European Union's Horizon 2020 program.

Research Funding

The Horizon 2020 program was introduced in late 2013 and is a research and innovation funding program throughout the European Union. The program has three priorities: scientific excellence, industrial leadership, and societal challenges (Ministry of Higher Education, Research and Innovation, 2017). France is using the Horizon 2020 program by encouraging research participants to address the country's societal challenges such as climate change, clean energy, digital transformation, and health through the National Research Strategy. The groups wanting to participate in research submit proposals to the Horizon program to receive funding. France is governing the National Research Strategy by creating multinational contracts with those who are wanting to partake in extensive research projects such as the relationships the states, higher education institutions, and research facilities. These contracts could also include France's COMUE groups

who want to use federal spending on research projects.

Since the beginning of the program, over fifty-five thousand applications for funding have been received. While the program tracks sufficient progress of each country participating in research projects, some projects that are being completed are not available for public access. Also, considering the time frame of significant research projects results may not be immediate. By using Europen Union funding to promote extensive research projects, students pursuing higher education are more likely to initiate research during their studies or continue current research projects. The successful completion of research will help address societal issues in the country, and France can gain international visibility on the rankings of research. Improvements in the higher education research rankings will also help promote the overall quality of France's education system. In the long term, this research the program will benefit not only France but Europe as a whole. France now is faced with the challenge of continuing to promote Horizon 2020 to higher education institutions.

This year, the educational reforms in France have begun to modernize and improve the quality of the higher education system. Under Emmanuel Macron's current administration a new focus of educational reforms will emphasize diversifying university funding, making students' lives easier by providing financial assistance and housing opportunities including for international students, and increased transparency with the successes of educational reforms.

Upon further research, this year, India is in the process of passing an all- encompassing higher education policy with similar features of restructuring and research additions seen similarly in the French educational reforms. In the past India has had problems with restructuring their higher education to accommodate their large student population. The policy includes ambitious goals to restructure India's large number of institutions into three types of institutions to streamline collaboration and expand opportunities for students. Successful collaboration and restructuring of the higher education system are the main points of focus for improving the quality of education.

ISSN No:-2456-2165

CHAPTER 3:
EDUCATIONAL ANALYSIS

The core of our research and recommendations for India focus on the idea of building knowledge. Bringing knowledge to life by developing skills that will create better jobs and economic conditions throughout India. India's current large youth population has presented a robust demographic shift that has the power to fuel economic growth and development. The current education system in India is under pressure to expand education access and options to accommodate the large youth population. More than 27% of the country's youth are excluded from education, employment, or training, while the overwhelming majority of working Indians are employed in the informal sector, many of them in agriculture, often in precarious engagements lacking any form of job security or labor protections (Trines, 2018). In addition to providing access to higher education, India is also faced with the challenge of ensuring quality education; knowledge that will shape the future of new jobs that are needed to improve the quality of human development in the country. It has been estimated that India's economy needs to create 10 million new jobs annually until 2030 to keep up with the growth of its working-age population—that's more than 27,000 jobs each day for the next 12 years (Trines, 2018). The idea of building knowledge in a higher education system requires establishing a diverse curriculum range by allowing autonomy through accreditation and regulation and ensuring students all over the country have fair and equal access to education.

Curriculum Changes

The curriculum provides the base of higher education. Traditionally, in higher education, students choose their area of study based on career interests to enter a related professional career after graduation. However, creating a curriculum that fits the needs of both students and society can be a difficult task. Today, traditional learning in a classroom is not enough to prepare students for their future careers. Curriculums around the world are shifting to provide dynamic experiences to transfer skills in and outside of the classroom. The addition of new technology, research studies, innovative projects, and collaborations with companies in the surrounding areas can help improve the quality of education.

In France, the youth unemployment rate has varied over the last few years and is a concern. Although France's overall unemployment rate is only 8.3%, the lowest the country has seen in the previous ten years (Trading Economics, 2019), the current youth unemployment rate is 20.1% (Trading Economics, 2019). The youth unemployment rate covers France's youngest working population ranging in age from 15 to 24. It includes those who are eligible for work and are seeking some type of employment. Although France has seen steady declines in the unemployment rate, there is an ongoing discussion about how the country is

addressing this issue. France's attention to higher education and its recent reforms are making an impact by helping job-seekers identify and obtain higher-quality jobs. As seen in previous educational reforms, France is emphasizing bridging the gap between the job's required skills and those skills new graduates possess when they enter the workforce.

Although effective, it is an ongoing challenge to ensure that the educational opportunities and instruction expand to meet the needs of its students and society as a whole.

In France, there is still somewhat of a divide in curriculum standards between the types of higher education institutions. Until recently, the focus in most universities in France was to provide a straightforward knowledge-based education with a little emphasis on the preparation of skills in future careers. The exception is the Grande Ecoles, which have prestigious reputations for preparing students for future careers much earlier on in their baccalauréat programs. Those who graduate from Grande Ecoles are desirable candidates to employment recruiters. The curriculum in Grand Ecoles is based on current industry demand and a mano on the teaching staff are known as industry experts in their respective fields. As a bonus, these industry experts maintain their contacts in the industry to keep the channels open for new graduates to find key employment opportunities (MBA Crystal Ball, 2019).

As the table Graduate Employability show, graduate employability rankings universities and Grande Ecoles make the top ten list. A further look into the types of the curriculum offered in within the Universities, specifically the ones ranked on the list offer programs similar to those in found in Grande Ecoles.

France Rank 2018	Graduate Employability Rank 2018	Graduate Employability Rank 2017	University	City
1	23	23	HEC Paris	Paris
2	30	22	École Polytechnique	Paris
3	31	32	Ecole Normale Supérieure Paris (PSL)	Paris
4	33	36	Mines ParisTech (PSL)	Paris
5	34	27	EMLYON	Lyon
6	39	41	CentraleSupélec	Various
7	84	70	ESSEC Business School	Cergy
8	89	104	Sorbonne University (Faculty of Science and Engineering)	Paris
9	97	98	EDHEC Business School	Various
10	110	129	Paris-Sud University	Paris

Table 2: Graduate Employability

Sorbonne University and Paris-Sud University are science and research-focused universities that have gained international rankings due to high-level cross-sectional research and collaborations. Traditional public universities offering degrees outside of math and science do not make the top ten list for graduate employability. Upon further examination of the list, there are Grande Ecoles that specializes in studies besides math and science. Because Grande Ecoles receive recognition for their prestige and skill set preparation Grande Ecoles rank higher in preparing students for future jobs. Students attending universities are gaining knowledge in their chosen profession, but in today's modern job market, it's the skills and experiences that set graduates apart from others.

In France, the higher education system has begun to bridge the divide between university and Grande Ecole students by offering university students the chance to enhance their skill set through collaboration with more substantial companies in France as well as an international collaboration with other universities. When looking at the skills gap between higher education and employment, it is crucial to consider the type of jobs that are currently available as well as the future of jobs that may not exist yet. High-growth industries in France include energy, technology, and manufacturing (World Atlas, 2017).

France is accommodating these in-demand jobs by creating unique partnerships with large corporations and universities. Collaborations and partnerships with large companies within booming industries have begun to allow university students to gain opportunities to enhance their employability skills. Airbus, with their manufacturing headquarters in the heart of France, has provided students with a unique insight into the company's innovation, design, manufacturing, and business divisions. Airbus' university program called Airbus Global University Partner Programme includes, "a global network of universities to develop engineering and technology specialists of the future. The programme currently covers 26 universities in 13 countries – each supported by a Campus team made of an Employment Marketing Manager and several Airbus employees acting as the company's ambassadors" (Airbus, 2018).

While this program also includes international schools, the program offers international exposure and collaboration with the French universities and with the company as well. In 2017, their "100-strong Campus Team reached 300,000 students via our network of 21 universities, with a particular focus on digital skills and competencies" (Airbus, 2018). The program offers unique experiences to enhance skill sets by providing experiences on campus through workshops and various activities set up by Airbus. This makes the program unique because students who may not have the chance to work at the Airbus facilities are still gaining skills needed for future careers. The program is continuing to grow and has the goal of reaching more universities within the next few years.

Universities focusing more on non-science and math degrees offer students the chance to enhance their skill set by partnering with international schools to gain a more well-rounded experience. Institut d'Etudes Supérieures des Arts or IESA, offers studies in art, history, and management through international collaboration. The core foundation for this school is to provide partnerships that, "facilitate academic exchanges and international internships through the Erasmus University Charter, but they also allow for the creation of multi-country programs, jointly run by IESA and its prestigious partner universities" (IESA, 2019). The Erasmus university charter is part of the Erasmus Charter for Higher Education and is described as, "the general quality framework for European and international cooperation activities a higher education institution may carry out within Erasmus+" (European Commission, 2019). Erasmus+ is a student exchange program for students abroad and within the European Union. Partners within the program at IESA include art galleries such as White Chapel Gallery and international museums, including Sir John Soane's Museum London.

These unique partnerships allow students with a more creative to passion international gain experience

through university partnerships included under the Erasmus charter. By partnering with other universities, universities within the organization can share resources and promote international students' skills.

Unique partnerships with companies and universities within the country and abroad is an excellent tool for strengthening the quality of education in any higher education system.

Today the job market is highly competitive in a variety of different fields, and it's the combination of experience and knowledge that will help a student stand out in the job market. Ensuring students are gaining experience is also beneficial to improving current economic conditions and challenges that France and India are experiencing.

Access

Access to high-quality education has been a difficult task for both France and India. In recent years France has seen a surplus in student admissions into universities because every French citizen with a high school diploma, the Baccalauréat, has the right to attend a university at low tuition fees for public universities. The Baccalauréat has a pass rate in recent years, according to the Ministère de l'Enseignement Supérieur, of around ninety percent (Ministère de l'Enseignement Supérieur, 2015).

In recent years, France has had a few economics challenges, especially high unemployment. While the majority of French citizens can attend a university, the actual ability to do so is far less. Due to every French citizen that receives the Baccalauréat being able to participate in a university, overcrowding is a problem in most public institutions.

The congestion of universities leads to a higher student to professor ratio. According to the OECD, the student to professor ratio for higher education in France during 2014 was 18.205 students per professor (OECD, 2016). The OECD also states, the student to professor ratio for higher education in India during 2016 was 23.7 students per professor (OECD,

2016). A lower student to professor ratio allows for more personal one on one conversations with the professor; this ratio allows for more questions asked and more answers answered by the professor. By lowering the student to professor ratio in countries around the world, the NCTE report indicates that as class sizes shrink the students will "perform better in all subjects and on all assessments when compared to their peers in larger classes" (NCTE, 2014).

The NCTE organization suggests that hiring more professors and adding more class offerings for any given subject is the best way to lower the student to professor ratio within a given country. This suggestion by the NCTE would ultimately allow students to have greater exposure into their career fields earlier within the student's college career. This NCTE suggestion will, more importantly, be creating such access to have the exposure mentioned previously. These efforts to increase access could increase the cost of the overall higher education system.

France has begun to expand access to higher education by introducing Student Plan, an application system that focuses on the bridge between upper secondary school and higher education. The Student Plan was introduced in October of 2017 with the goal of creating equal opportunities for students to attend higher education institutions. France has committed, "€500m over five years – on top of the €450m of the Big Investment Plan – to increasing capacity in those streams where demand far outstrips the number of places, to developing apprenticeship-based training, to providing individual guidance for each student and to recognizing the educational commitment of teaching staff (Republique Francaise,2017).

The Student plan involves a number of guidance opportunities for students to gain an insight into career opportunities and the different options for higher education. Acting to ensure success will help each student make better informed decisions with the goal of keeping students in their chosen higher education institution beyond the first year. While entrance into the higher education institutions are not changing, public, "Institutions will be required to accept all applicants. To ensure they are given equal opportunities to succeed, customized pathways will be created between the upper secondary school level and higher education" (Republique Francaise, 2017). The customized pathway will be introduced through a survey that will contain, "all of the information that A level students (students that complete the Baccalauréat) need: the course content, its employment rate and pass rate among former students "(Republique Francaise,2017). In France, access to education is providing access to a productive path for students that aligns with their interests, abilities, and options for the future careers. The Student Plan will help students find a path with a high likelihood of success would be an effective use of resources. France's Student Plan is to ultimately improve access to the higher education system and allow for more transparency between the applicants and

the universities.

Accreditation and Regulation

French Regulation. Public Universities in France are accredited by the Ministry of Education. Three bodies comprise the basic structure of the university. The first is a governing board (Conseil d'Administration), which oversees the budget, policy, and approves actions signed by the university president. The second is the scientific council (Conseil Scientifique), which recommends research policy to the governing board. It also gives input into new educational programs, research contracts, and changes in diplomas. Finally, there is a council for university studies and university life (Conseil des Etudes et de la Vie Universitaire). They propose measures to enhance campus social life, student living conditions, and university facilities (Kaiser, 2007).

Teaching and research faculty, students, administrators, and outside stakeholders are elected as representatives on these counsels. Collectively this structure ensures universities have autonomy in several key areas including in administrative, financial, and educational/scientific matters. A university president is elected and serves for five years.

Interesting, tenure can only be offered by the state (Kaiser, 2007).
The High Council evaluates research for Evaluation of Research and Higher Education (HCERES). Its job is to assure the quality of French research institutions and their research activities, as well as study programs/degrees. They serve as an evaluator of international networks of researchers and French researchers conducting research abroad. They evaluate institutions every five years, and the reports are publicly available. This autonomy from the pressures of the government and other stakeholders ensures trust in the council from the institutes evaluated (Houppe, 2016).

Online Distance Learning in France. The National Centre for Distance Education (CNED) is a public institution that delivers distance learning material. It operates under the Ministry of Higher Education and Research and has the autonomy to create and maintain course offerings. This autonomy allows CNED to keep up with the growing technology fields and enables French schools to compete globally. CNED offers courses ranging from grade school to the university level (Amirault, 2018). In 2013 the French Ministry of Education created the France Digital University-MOOC (FUN-MOOC). MOOC stands for massive online open courses. These are free to use educational programs that are made available by universities and organizations. FUN-MOOC was designed to promote the use of online distance education (Amirault, 2018). As mentioned previously, the student-to-teacher ratio is an increasingly growing problem within India's

higher education system. MOOCs can help lessen the severity of the problem by offering a cost-effective alternative to traditional classroom instruction.

Indian Higher Education System. The Indian higher education system has numerous designations for institutions. State and Central Universities are established by an Act of the state legislature and Parliament, respectively. Central Universities receive funding through the Union Government, while State Universities are funding by the respective State. Deemed- to-be-universities can be established by private organizations such as international schools of higher education. This status is conferred by the University Grants Commission (UGC).

Institutions with this designation have greater autonomy than State and Central universities, in areas like admissions and syllabi. Private Universities can only be established by an Act of a State Legislature (Shah, 2015). There are two types of colleges in India: constituent colleges and affiliated colleges. A University establishes constituent colleges. Affiliated colleges are established by the government or educational trust (Ravi, 2015).

Universities are mostly autonomous bodies with a governance structure similar to France's. Each institution has a Board of Governors with bodies including research boards and academic councils under them. In State universities, the highest authority is overseen by the Governor of the State's Chancellor. In Central universities, the Chancellor is appointed by the central government (Koligudde, 2014).

Accreditation in India. The two central accreditation bodies are the National Board of Accreditation (NBA) and the National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC). The NBA was established under the All India Council for Technical Education. The NAAC was formed under the UGC in 1992. Since 2012, all universities, institutions, and colleges are mandated to be accredited by an accreditation agency unless created through an act of Parliament (Shah, 2015). NAAC's methodology is comparable to international standards with self-evaluations and peer-reviewed evaluations. Some of the criteria include research, student support, and innovation. The final grade is based on the weighted average of the criteria points. The allocation of points is determined by the type of institution being evaluated, with more being allocated for research for universities and more for teaching for autonomous colleges (Shah, 2015). There are significant accreditation gaps in India, with a sizeable backload of pending accreditation cases. The NAAC accredited roughly 410 institutions a year, and it would take approximately 42 years to authorize just half of all Indian institutions (Shah, 2015).

There are five functions of a regulator in higher education: license to grant degrees, accreditation, issuing grants and funds, regulating access (fees, affirmative action, etc.), issuing professional licenses. The UGC is responsible for all of these except the first one. Other bodies have filled some of these responsibilities. Resulting in the large accreditation gap, as well as, the overall state of poor governance (Ambavale, 2015).
Until 2013, accreditation was optional for higher educational institutions. In 2012, the UGC laid out the Mandatory Assessment and Accreditation of Higher Educational Institutions Regulations. The new regulations stated that only accredited institutions were eligible for grants, while technical schools and medical institutions are not required to seek accreditation. The lack of uniform accreditation requirements has been a hamper on ensuring quality within the higher education system (Mohsin, 2017).

Open and Distance Learning in India. About 11% of students in India's higher education system are enrolled in a distance learning institution (AISHE, 2018). In 1985, the Distance Education Council (DEC) was created to regulate distance learning. Eventually, in 2013, responsibility for regulating ODLs was given back to the UGC, which created the Distance Education Bureau (Distance Education Bureau). Currently, the NAAC accredited ODLs, and this has posed several problems.

The NBA and NAAC both encourage the traditional campus learning experience. When evaluating institutions, both bodies take into consideration classroom size, library resources, and other features only present at traditional schools. Since ODL institutions could be penalized in the evaluation and given a lower grade, many are deterred from seeking accreditation (Shah, 2015). India has a relatively young population with around half of the entire population being below the age of 25 (CIA World Factbook). As one report notes, "the fruits of demographic dividend will only be available to India if this population can be empowered to contribute to growth through education" (Sampat at el, 2008). Younger people have a higher propensity to use technology, and online distance learning institutions could take advantage of the uniqueness of India's demographics.

The lack of proper accreditation standards for ODLs means that some students are receiving an education that is undervalued in the market. The lack of accreditation could also discourage students from attending ODLs who cannot go to a traditional school.

Report to the Nation. In 2009, the National Knowledge Commission (NKC) issued a report on the status of the India higher education system. The report's main criticism was that "the system, as a whole, is over-regulated but under-governed." The UGC, the accreditation bodies, and the overall system of university governance were stifling quality. The NKC recommended the creation of an Independent Regulatory

Authority for Higher Education (IRAHE). This body would take over three of the four functions that the UGC currently does (License to grant degrees, accreditation, and regulating access). The UGC would be relegated to issuing grants and funds, and external bodies would take over the provision of professional licenses (National Knowledge Commission, 2009).

The report also found issues with the system of affiliated colleges. They state that universities are saddled with the burden of regulating the admissions, curriculum, and examinations of these affiliated colleges, with uneven regulatory standards from the UGC compounding the problem. The report cited the monopoly that the NAAC has over accreditation as another reason quality is suffering. The sheer number of institutions seeking accreditation every year is too much for the NAAC to handle. The IRAHE would grant multiple accreditation agencies to the ratings. Under this arrangement, regulatory guidance would come from the IRAHE, and the accreditation bodies would be held to strict disclosure standards to ensure faith in the ratings are being addressed (National Knowledge Commission, 2009).

Data

We wanted to identify which factors, related to education, were likely to improve a society. To do this, we accessed data on the nations of the world and performed statistical analysis to identify which factors are significantly related to common indices of human and economic progress. These significant factors would form the basis or our recommendations from France to India. We wanted to formulate advice on only those factors that are likely to improve a society, and ignore those factors that are not likely to improve a society. We used the United Nations' Human Development Index for our analysis. The index is designed to gauge the overall development of a country. The index summarizes three dimensions of human development: a long and healthy life, knowledge, and a decent standard of living. These three dimensions are based on a composite index of life expectancy, education, and gross national income respectively (Human Development Report Office). While the HDI only considers a couple of variables, the United Nations collects data on a wide range of areas and includes them in the annual report. We used a number of these variables in our analysis to find relationships between them and our two dependent variables, Human Development and Gross Domestic Product per Capita (GDP per capita).

CHAPTER 4:
RESULTS

Table 3 displays the descriptive statistics of our data set. We used a regression analysis to compare which variables were significantly related to increases in human development and GDP per capita. These two dependent variables were chosen because they are both trusted measures of the overall health of a particular society.

Variables	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Dev	France	India
Educ as percent of GDP	1.81	12.46	4.69	1.69	5.52	3.84
Pct. employment in ag	.1	91.5	26.86	24.67	2.9	42.7
Internet users	1.18	98.24	49.91	28.19	85.62	29.55
Intl' student mobility	-198.18	64.06	-6.27	25.76	6.32	-0.72
Unemployment	.2	27.9	7.76	5.92	9.7	3.5
R&D as pct. of GDP	0.02	4.27	.87	.93	2.23	.63
Median age	14.924	46.348	28.85	8.83	41.195	26.678
Land area (sq. km)	160	16376870	671507	1873374	547557	2973190
Population (natural log)	.02	1409.52	39.56	145.85	64.98	1339.18
Pct, of population urban	12.7	100	58	23.08	80.2	33.6

Table 3: Descriptive Statistics of Variables Used in Analysis

Human Development

Table 4 presents the results of our regression analysis. Variables highly correlated with human development include: percentage of population that is urban, internet users, and median age. The finding that unemployment was not significantly correlated with HDI is rather surprising. One would assume that higher levels of unemployment would bring down human development. However, our analysis shows that there is a negative relationship with HDI. The data shows that more people living in urban areas, which is typically where high skilled jobs are, is positively correlated with HDI. This would imply that while unemployment is not significant, the kinds of jobs people do matter more. This point is further substantiated by our analysis

showing employment in agriculture has a significant negatively correlated relationship with human development.

	DV: Human Development Index		DV: GDP per Capita	
Variable	**β**	**Sig (p-value)**	**β**	**Sig (p-value)**
Educ as percent of GDP	-.010	n.s.	-.130	p < 0.10
Knowledge based employment	-.210	p<0.001	-.075	n.s.
Internet users	.371	p<0.001	.433	p < 0.05
Intl' student mobility	.010	n.s.	-.082	n.s.
Unemployment	-.021	n.s.	-.202	p < 0.01
R&D as pct. of GDP	.039	n.s.	.193	p < 0.1
Controls				
Median age	.346	p < 0.001	-.063	n.s.
Land area (sq. km)	.009	n.s.	.005	n.s.
Population (natural log)	-0.009	n.s.	-.117	n.s.
Pct, of population urban	.098	p < 0.10	.253	p < 0.05

Table 4: Results of Regression Analysis

Another reason that unemployment is not a significant variable might be due to the differences in the labor force participation rate among countries, types of jobs available, and cultural forces that shape who actually works. The human development index considers quality of life factors, such as life expectancy, which could skew the impact unemployment would have. Countries that have more public services and provide a safety net for their citizens who don't or can't work, can affect the life expectancy of those citizens. The benefits of these services can cause some citizens to choose unrmpoyment over employment. The effect is that the figures on the nation's human development ranking and unemployment might both increase. For example, France's unemployment rate is three times higher than India's, but it maintains a higher human development ranking. Finally the index uses Gross National Income as a proxy for standard of living which isn't directly affected by the unemployment level.

The data shows that a higher median age has a strong positive correlation with human development. This higher media age reflects a longer life expectancy. Education can generate the innovations and developments

in a society that can improve the healthcare system, reduce the physical demands of jobs, and extend life expectancy. This does not invalidate our suggestion that India's younger population is a positive. As we noted in the accreditation sector, this young population is better able to utilize the technology that powers the global economy. Updating India's accreditation criteria, so as to fully utilize the power of online distance learning, will ensure young people are getting a quality ODL education. As India's population ages, the investments in online distance learning will reap long-term benefits. The R-squared value is .93, meaning 93% of the variance in HDI among countries can be explained by our selected variables. From this we give several recommendations in the last section.

GDP per capita

The most surprising variable in this analysis was that education as a percentage of GDP is negatively correlated with GDP per capita. We infer from these results that increasing spending on education in hopes of some reward is counter-productive. From this our recommendations of focusing on governance, regulation, and accreditation of India's higher education are better options that simply increasing funding.

The relationship between research & development as a percentage of GDP and GDP per capita was both positive and significant. The R&D variable is calculated by incorporating research and development expenditures in four sectors: Business enterprises, government, higher education, and private non-profit. As one of the goals of India is to house a world class higher education system, this correlation suggests that one way is by increasing the amount of educational partnerships with domestic businesses.

While unemployment is negatively correlated with GDP per capita, India's low unemployment rate makes this variable less useful for this analysis. International Student Mobility was not a significant variable, which means it does not directly relate to GDP per capita. However, inflows and outflows of students in exchange programs and travel abroad can affect research output and employment opportunities for students. Therefore, international student mobility may be indirectly related to GDP per capita, but has not been examined in our analysis.

ISSN No:-2456-2165

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the analysis we conclude with recommendations to India to support its educational goals. Our analysis has looked at the higher education system in France as a basis for our recommendations. The higher education systems in France and India are similar in that both are increasingly interested in strengthening job opportunities for students after completion of higher education training and degrees. Collaborations with business across all industries will help strengthen opportunities for students. In addition, collaborations can also offer research opportunities for students to expand their knowledge base. Allowing higher education institutions India to provide these opportunities for students will start with increasing institutional autonomy. Over the last several decades, both countries have made attempts to increase institutional autonomy in higher education. Autonomy addresses the fact that different higher education institutions need different approaches. Different geographic locations could make some opportunities more relevant to the students while resources such as access to local business leaders could make some programs more cost-effective for some schools.

India's Ministry of Human Development has stated policy initiatives related to student opportunities for degrees that align with future employment. Specifically, the ministry proposes to provide "practical training in response to social and personal needs" and create "opportunities to access all curricular areas with a fair degree of mobility" (MHRD, 2016). Social needs are constantly changing as new areas of concern arise. Solutions to improving human development begins with education. Education creates opportunities for students to apply what they have learned to address tough challenges such as poverty and environmental concerns. France has addressed similar concerns with research collaborations and partnerships with research institutions that reside in France. Research plays a big role in addressing concerns with human development as it creates new knowledge and new ways of addressing issues. One way to establish and propel those collaborations in India could be through research on issues of importance to society. There is currently a research initiative under Biotechnology Industry Research Assistance Council or BIRAC that partners with, "the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation (BMGF) and the Department of Biotechnology (DBT) to collaborate on mission-directed research and build Grand Challenges India to support health research and innovation" (BIRAC). A few examples of topics that are included in their research are, "scientific and technical solutions for infectious diseases, strengthening India's scientific translation capacity, scientific and technical advances related to agriculture"

(BIRAC) While research studies completed under BIRAC are more advanced research studies, research concerning innovation across multiple fields can help address a variety of societal problems. Allowing students to share innovative ideas through research can begin to improve human development standards across India.

The curriculum offerings in higher education institutions in India should include traditional learning methodology as well as exposure to employment opportunities. While students are gaining exposure into their career field, they are also being exposed to different challenges facing those industries and the impacts of those industries. France has begun to introduce partnerships with large companies to provide these opportunities to university students. Similarly, there are initiatives underway in India that address expanding institutional base. These initiatives are the "Make in India" initiative and an initiative to support entrepreneurship. The, ""Make in India is a major national programme of the Government of India designed to facilitate investment, foster innovation, enhance skill development, protect intellectual property and build best in class manufacturing infrastructure in the country" (IBEF, 2019). Expanding on the manufacturing industry in India will help create new jobs encompassing a variety of different needs. While the main goal of the initiative, "is to attract investments from across the globe and strengthen India's manufacturing sector" (IBEF, 2019), in order to do so India must improve current standards in the manufacturing industry.

The need for innovation in technology and enhancing manufacturing efficiency can be obtained through partnerships between local universities and private firms. Partnerships give students the opportunity to learn new skills while still in school and simultaneously creates the jobs of the future. In addition, manufacturing partnerships can extend to the vocational studies allowing those students exposure with their skill sets. Increasing collaborations with businesses will help students gain exposure into skills that are needed for jobs in a particular industry. In many cases, the general skills learned through outside learning can be shared throughout many different jobs a student may encounter after completion of higher education studies. The need for transferable skills can be achieved by a student who is exposed to as many opportunities as they can while completing their studies.

One of the economic goals of the India government is to increase entrepreneurship and business formation. According to the EY G20 Entrepreneurship Barometer 2013 report, India ranks 11th among the G20 countries in ease with which entrepreneurs can assess funds (Franchise India, 2015). Higher education can serve as a potential tool for encouraging entrepreneurship through linking student research projects to industry and start-ups. India ranks very low in education and training for entrepreneurship, yet 70% of local entrepreneurs believe that access to unofficial training networks has increased over the 2008-2010 period (Franchise, 2015). Higher education could supplement, yet not replace, these unofficial training networks,

and provide opportunities to enhance small scale businesses and start-ups simultaneously. This approach would not only expose students to the world of entrepreneurship but increase the production of research in domestic industries. In addition, taking a somewhat formal approach to entrepreneurship education might enable outside parties to more easily identify unique and valuable entrepreneurial start-ups that are reasonably safe for venture funding.

As India considers increasing the intellectual autonomy of its educational institutions, one way to approach this would be to change the governance structure to include independent agencies. In line with the National Knowledge Commission's report, we recommend the formation of an independent regulatory agency to oversee the regulation of India's universities and colleges. This board would supplement the UGC and replace the NAAC. The UGC would handle disbursement of funds. The IRAHE would handle entry requirements for new institutions and oversee accreditation directly, or license outside bodies to accredit institutions. This arrangement would allow institutions to retain their autonomy without significant oversight from the State.

One low cost way of increasing accreditation standards without restructuring the roles of the UGC and other bodies would be to allow institutions to seek accreditation from international agencies. This would serve as a step towards India's goal of housing a world class higher education system by literally putting its institutions on par with the global standard. We recommend the creation of a separate body to handle ODL institutions. A body similar to France's CNED would accredit the institutions and could even promote the usage of them. The Distance Education Bureau could regain its powers from the UGC and take on these new responsibilities. Another solution would be for the NAAC to update their standards to incorporate the uniqueness of ODLs. This could mean evaluating them using different standards that doesn't consider criteria only traditional institutions would have.

Education is the first step in improving human development. Education addresses economic and societal challenges and its solutions. India's large higher education system has faced multiple challenges in recent years. Despite the challenges, India has begun to make changes to improve the quality of the higher education system. The goals laid out by the Ministry of Human Resource Development are achievable. Expanding educational base to provide opportunities for students to gain employability skills will require direct changes to traditional curriculum. Promoting research and fostering collaborations will allow students the opportunity to share their knowledge and gain valuable skills. By working to improve the quality of education with proper allocation of the resources on hand, the possibilities for students after their learning period in higher education are endless.

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