



Matching Graduates to the Jobs Market Through Improved Postgraduate Education

Overview

India is renowned for producing graduates of the highest caliber but only very few receive high-quality technical education. By partnering with IDA on an innovative education reform project, India has significantly bolstered the quality and availability of technical education, doubling the employment rate of graduates who are now better-suited to the needs of Indian industry.

Challenge

Some of the best technical and engineering minds in the world were trained in India's renowned Institutes of Technology. These elite institutions were accessible to but a few qualified students however: in fact, only 1 percent. The remaining 99 percent of technical education students in India lagged behind in quality and performance. India needed to overhaul its technical and engineering education sector to generate the pool of highly skilled professionals and creative thinkers to sustain the nation's progress in infrastructure, power, water, information technology, and manufacturing. Quality engineers and engineering research and development (R&D) were crucial for India to address challenges from climate change and natural disasters, such as flooding. India needed to overcome the rigid thinking of the past and create a dynamic, demand-driven and quality-conscious technical education system.

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More Results 

Approach

The Technical Engineering Educational Quality Improvement Project (TEQIP) is in its second phase, and it aims to produce more employable and higher quality engineers and prepare more post-graduate students to reduce a faculty shortage. In order to join TEQIP, institutions must agree to implement a set of reforms that promote academic and administrative autonomy, which is critical to improve the

76%
employment rate for undergraduate students

quality of education. In the first phase (2004-2009) of TEQIP, 127 technical education institutions in 13 states were competitively selected to participate. In the second phase (2010–2014), more than 350 institutions endorsed the reform agenda. In the end, 151 institutions from 20 states were competitively selected, and approximately an additional 50 institutions will be offered the chance to participate. TEQIP spearheads a bottom-up approach that allows the institutions to design and implement their own vision of academic excellence while holding them accountable for providing quality education to their students.

Results

In 2002, the World Bank's International Development Association (IDA) provided financing for TEQIP, the first World Bank project in higher education in India, which was designed to buttress the Indian government's existing education plans. At the end of the first phase of the project in 2009, over 60 percent of the supported institutions obtained substantial academic autonomy. With this newly gained authority, the institutions achieved significant gains in academic excellence from 2002 to 2009, specifically:

1. Employment rates almost doubled from 41 percent to 76 percent for undergraduate students and from 25 percent to 56 percent for postgraduate students, indicating improved relevance of programs and increased skill sets of graduates.
2. There was a 15 percentage point increase (from 35 percent in 2004 to 50 percent in 2008) in students graduating with honors or distinctions in both undergraduate and post-graduate courses.
3. Postgraduate enrollments rose sharply: up 50 percent for Masters and 69 percent for Ph.D programs.
4. Course offerings were restructured, modernized, and vastly expanded in line with employer expectations. Ninety-three percent of 811 Bachelor courses supported by TEQIP's first phase were accredited or in the process of accreditation by a quality assurance agency.
5. 220,000 students from disadvantaged backgrounds were assisted through provision of remedial teaching, workshops and establishment of "book banks."
6. 30,000 faculty and 13,000 staff underwent training and professional development.
7. Sizeable increases in publications, patents and research and development products being commercialized.
8. More than half of all engineering colleges acquiring academic autonomy in 2002-09 did so through the first phase of TEQIP. Now, 86 percent of engineering colleges obtaining autonomy in 2010-11 were associated with TEQIP's second phase.

220,000

students from disadvantaged backgrounds were helped

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- » [Project Documents](#)
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- » [Employability and Skills Set Working Paper](#)
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Voices

“The students' knowledge and confidence level has increased tremendously. Their employability is better, their knowledge base is better.”

—Dr. B. Kumar, Professor, Anna University, Chennai

Bank Contribution

IDA committed US\$250 million to the first phase of TEQIP with government funding of US\$64 million. IDA also provided support of US\$300 million to TEQIP's second phase and the government added US\$200 million. Further, IDA contributed with advice to the national and state governments on decentralization, reform implementation, and monitoring and evaluation.

Partners

There is a close partnership with the Ministry of Human Resource Development, the state governments, and private sector associations. Especially in the second phase, the partnership with state governments has been strengthened through a series of conferences on governance jointly organized by the Ministry and IDA. Further, IDA encourages private sector associations to play a major role to facilitate the partnership between industries and institutions in research, employment, curriculum, and pedagogy. Representatives from the private sector associations are part of the member of the National Steering Committee, the apex body of the project. In partnership with a private sector association, the Bank conducted an employer survey, and the results were jointly presented at Higher Education Summit in Delhi organized by Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry in 2009.

Toward the Future

TEQIP is a series of projects for the long-term reform of the tertiary education sector. A second phase was approved in March 2010 and it equally seeks to contribute to a nation-wide improvement in quality of technical education. It strengthens the core-concept from the first phase, particularly the competitive funding of institutions, autonomy, and accountability reforms, and the bottom-up approach. Lessons learned emphasize the need to focus more on: capacity-building of government officials in technical education, boards of governors, directors and deans to implement the reforms; increase availability of pedagogical training; stop funding to non-performing institutions; project implementation; and monitoring and evaluation. TEQIP-II already shows significant impact on academic autonomy as described above.