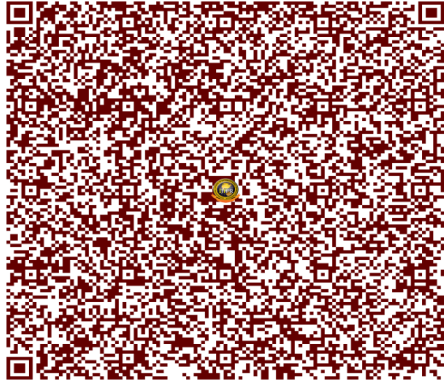


To ascertain the trend and reasons supporting the growth of Hotel Management graduate students wishing to pursue further education in Foreign Universities

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Abstract

It is an observation that each year increasing number of students wish to go to foreign lands. It is no surprise that students take up internship programs or further education in order to go abroad. This despite the fact that Indian Hotel Industry is booming, and there is a steady demand for trained manpower. There are "push" and "pull" factors that exist in the current job market which influence the decision. This study aims at understanding the lure of foreign lands. It also attempts to understand and explore the reasons owing which students wish to go abroad. In an effort to do so, a survey in the form of a questionnaire was conducted from the sample comprising 78 graduating students of AISSMS CHMCT Pune. The finding of the research suggest that indeed majority of students prefer to venture outside the country. Quality education, work environment and spurt of agents securing foreign internship and education visas have fueled the trend.

Key Words: Hotel Industry, Hotel Management, Further education, Post-Graduation (PG), Foreign Internship, Quality Education

1 Introduction

Hotel Industry, part of the Tourism sector, has been flourishing in the city of Pune. With new hotels, new job vacancies have made the job market very fluid. The industry is keen to absorb fresh graduates. In a country where employment is a serious challenge, it is a little disappointing that jobs on offer are regretted and not being taken up. The issue has broadly two sides – employability and conditions of employment.

In today's age of instant gratification, and in times when a lot is on offer, evidently has taken its toll on the aspiring hotel management graduates. They are looking at so called greener pastures. The lure of foreign destinations is relentlessly being chased. The present condition of the hospitality industry that students are exposed to, during their internship which ia part of the curriculum discourages them from wanting to join the industry. Factors like poor remuneration packages, long work hours and poor work conditions strongly force the students to re consider working in hotels in India. Adding to which, the attraction a foreign





destination which promises a good life, a handsome earning and a professional work life seems like the ideal destination to pursue. All the above factors have contributed to this growing trend of going abroad post graduation. This has resulted in more and more students wishing not to take up employment in India. Internship abroad, though temporary in nature takes the students closest to their dream of working abroad. It also gives them time to work a future plan, while ensuring quick returns. Alternately, pursuing a post graduation also seems an easily doable option which provides an added value of education qualification. This trend has been evident for a few years now, and is growing. Foreign universities have also identified India as a source market for their admissions. Owing to this fact, one can see tremendous rise is agents specializing in processing student admissions and visas, and has led to an increase in the numbers of foreign universities reaching out to the potential target market in India, by means of holding exhibitions and seminars.

2 Literature Review

Sonia Rodrigues (Times of India; December 18, 2013) spoke to a few eminent personalities from the education field, who threw light on development in the sector. Also the article highlighted the major bills passed by the post independence legislation regards reforms in education. Vaishali Maheshwari, Bharti Meghani (Journal of Strategic Human Resource Management Volume 2 Issue 2 June 2013) investigated the experience of the interns and compare it with their expectations and highlight how smoothly they can be transformed into hospitality professionals. In the newspaper article "Many takers for post-graduate courses abroad"(TNN Apr 10, 2013, posted at 06.31AM IST) reflected the trend in the rise of students aspiring to go countries like USA, UK, Canada for post graduation studies. It collate the views of respondents from institutes, students and agencies facilitating the exchange. The study was for the city of Hyderabad, but can be a generalized acceptance of theory for the city of Pune as well.

Chen, Ruy Feng, Subhash, Kizhakanveetil Bhaskaran Pillai George, Vinu Weiermair, Klaus, (2012), in their paper have conducted a comparative study between students of Hotel Management in two institutes location in India and Taiwan respectively. The paper studies the various motivators and the relation of these motivators with their career choices. The new millennium has brought in immense opportunities for the hospitality professionals. Seizing these opportunities and developing the workforce with employable skills and competencies is the challenge of educators and entrepreneurs. Kavita KM and Priyanka Sharma(2011), by way of their research paper have probed the quality of students available to join hotels. They have essentially considered the employability of the students viz. the expectations of the employers and the gap thereof.

Vandana Mahajani and Ritu Bhattacharya (JOHAR – Journal of Hospitality Application & Research Vol. 5 No. 2), made an intensive study of the internship of Hotel Management students in star hotels, as part of their curriculum. They highlighted the importance of internship for the student, institute and establishment. Essential take away was the negative experiences of the internship lead to poor, lasting and generalized impressions about the hospitality Industry in India as a whole. This turns a push factor. Prof. Prasannakumar. J.P and Dr. Shaji Thomas (JOHAR – Journal of Hospitality Application & Research Vol. 6 No.1), have researched on the perceived motivators for students, technique



effective for increasing motivation, identify students' expectations from their jobs and provide relevant and timely information as an institute.

3 Objectives of the Study

1. To identify the number of students wishing to pursue International learning opportunities.
2. To identify the "pull" and "push" factors that contribute to this trend of pursuing education abroad.

4 Key Terms and Definitions

For the purpose of clarification in this study, the following key words are defined for better understanding of the hospitality and tourism organization.

Hospitality Industry consists of broad category of fields within the service industry that includes lodging, restaurants, event planning, theme parks, transportation, cruise liners, and additional fields within the tourism industry.

Hotel Industry is all forms of business relating to the provision of accommodation in lodging, food and drinks and various types of other services that are interconnected and form intended for the public service, both of which use the lodging facilities or who simply use the services or the production of certain of the hotel.

Hotel Management (HM) refers to professional management techniques used in the hospitality sector. These can include hotel administration, accounts, marketing, housekeeping, front office, housekeeping, restaurant production and service.

Post Graduation (PG) refers to education that involves learning and studying for degrees, professional or academic certificates, or other qualifications for which a first or Bachelor's degree generally is required, and it is normally considered to be part of higher studies.

Foreign Internship refers to short term (1 month – 1 year) work experience with an organization abroad that allows participants to apply theoretical classroom knowledge in a real world setting and gain a better understanding of a given field in a global context.

5 Limitations of the study

1. This study is purely based on the information sourced from students of one HM college in Pune.
2. The study is conducted in the current scenario and the opinions, perception and expectations of the respondents may differ with time.
3. The study is purely on the basis of the sample. The sample's limitations in terms of their maturity, understanding and exposure.

6 Research Methodology

6.1 Collection of Data

The primary data required for the research was collected using the following techniques:

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- Data collection tool: Questionnaire
A questionnaire bearing straight forward and relevant questions was drafted and handed over to the sample to obtain their responses.

6.2 Sampling Techniques

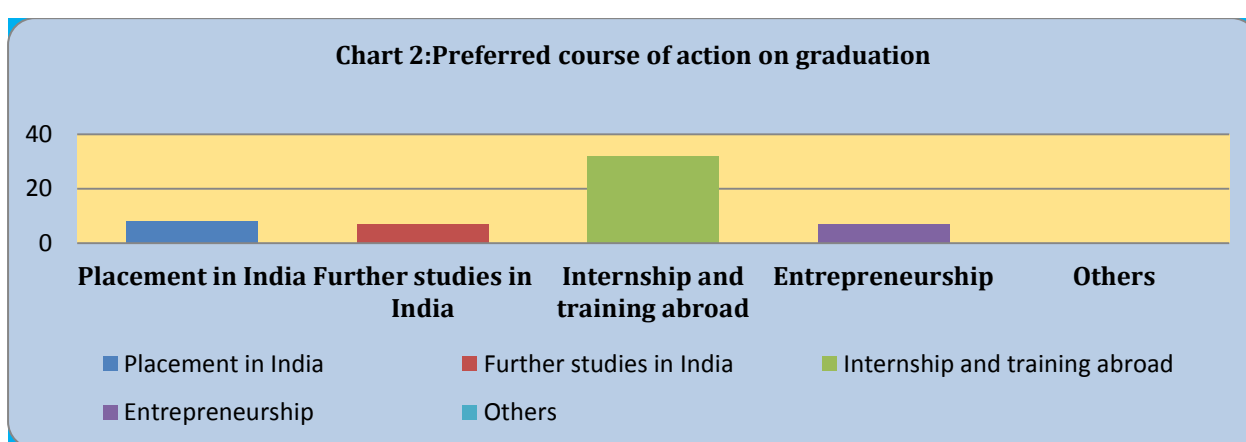
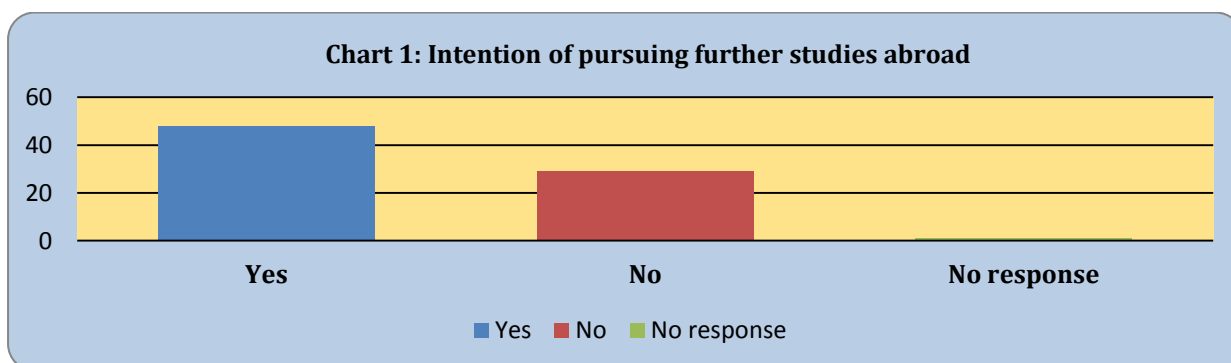
The population being “Hotel Management Students” is more or less homogeneous in nature since the students’ aspirations, goals and expectations post graduation is more or less the same. The population comprises of students pursuing final year in two courses, Bachelors in Science – Hospitality Studies (duration three years) and Bachelors in Hotel Management and Catering Technology (duration four years). The sample is simple random of the identified population. The sample size is seventy eight. Apart from the above mentioned tools the relevant secondary data for the research was collected from journals, books & internet.

7 Observations, Discussions & Findings

On an optimistic note it is very encouraging to witness increasing number of students wishing to pursue higher education on completion of their degree in HM. On the other hand the students are not taking Indian universities at par with universities abroad. This trend is fuelled by the desire to go abroad and education provides the means of realizing the same. It is possible by means of taking up a stipulated time internship or going for a foreign university qualification. Based on the survey conducted on 78 of our final years students, our primary data has reflected key learning to understand the thought process of the students. It was discovered that a close over 61% of the respondents wish to go abroad. The majority would prefer an internship at their chosen destination. Alternately they would also consider a post graduation qualification. Financial resources were reflected as prime constraint. Students essentially try to look at financial investment against the returns when abroad. The financial fees are many a times prohibitive, in which case the student might consider a lesser cost destination. Of all the countries UK & USA were highly preferred for their renowned universities. Also, fast emerging countries students are looking at are Canada and Australia. Most Students wish to invest not more than 10 lakhs and wish to return within 5 years. The trend is a bit of a concern, for it gives rise to varied issues. To start with, the expectation of securing of a job on graduation is lost. This is a straight contradiction to their prime aim just a couple of years prior when they enrolled for the HM course at our college. Also, the hotel industry in India, particularly in Pune is buoyant. It is currently offering many options which will provide a sound platform for a long term career. Importantly, students who go abroad, when come back have to face a few adversities. Their qualifications are not recognized to get a higher position job, and they are not attuned to the work culture in India. That along with lower pay structure and loss of time amounts to pressure. This often snowballs to bigger challenges and despair.

7.1 Respondents’ intention of pursuing further studies abroad

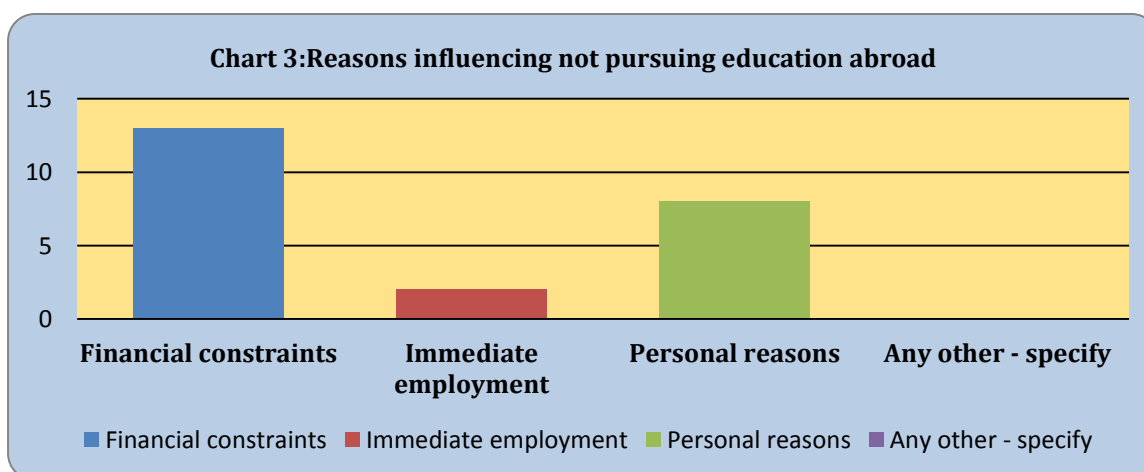
Out of the sample respondents’ size of 78, majority amounting to 48 showed inclination of going abroad for further studies. It certainly indicated that more number of students harbor the ambition of leaving the country.



7.2 Preferred course of action on graduation.

On completion of graduate studies in Hotel Management at the college, most number of students i.e 32 showed a definite inclination of going abroad to a foreign country by means of internship, training or education. Not surprisingly, only 8 students actively wished to seek and take up a placement in India. This is a concern that needs to be addressed.

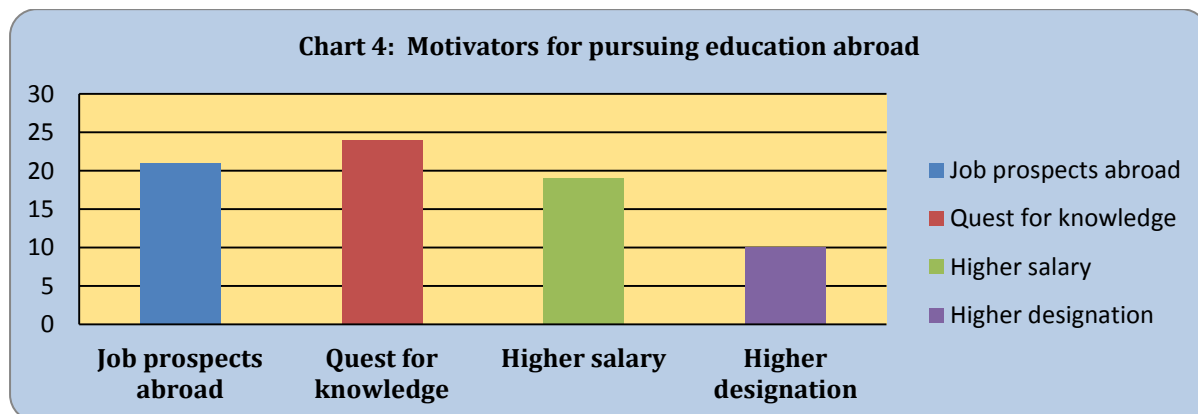
7.3 Reasons influencing not pursuing education abroad.



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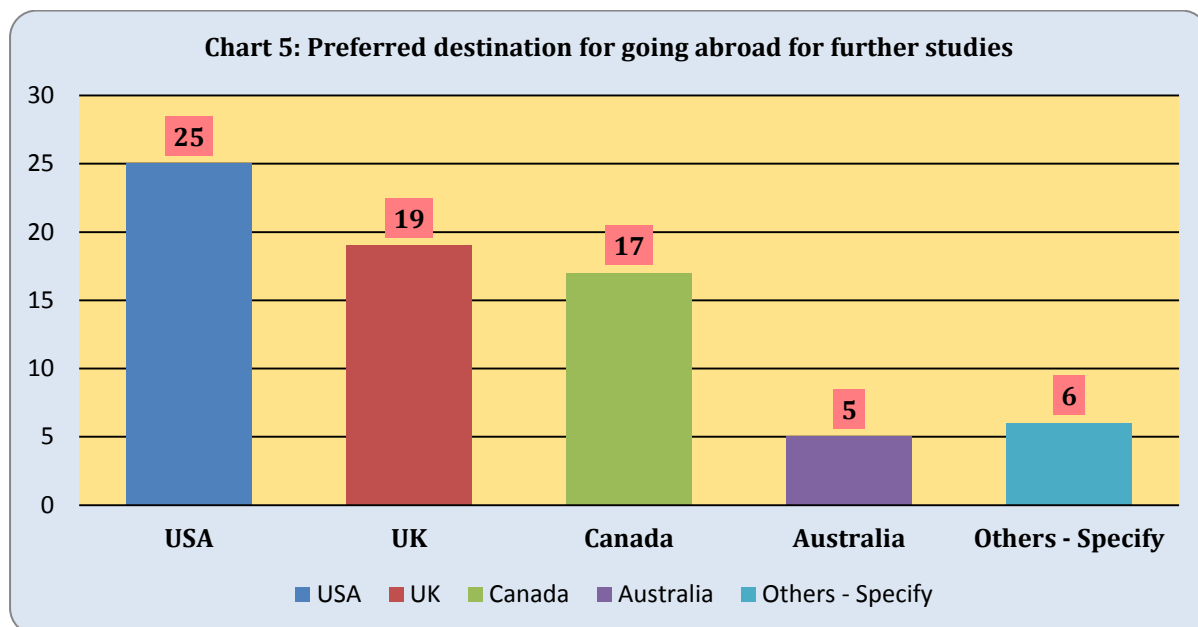
Though most wish to go abroad for internship / studies, a staggering majority, i.e 23 out of the 32 face constraints in terms of finance, employment pull in India and personal issues that restrict their aim to go abroad. In this, financial constraint topped the factors influencing not pursuing education abroad.

7.4 Motivators for pursuing education abroad.



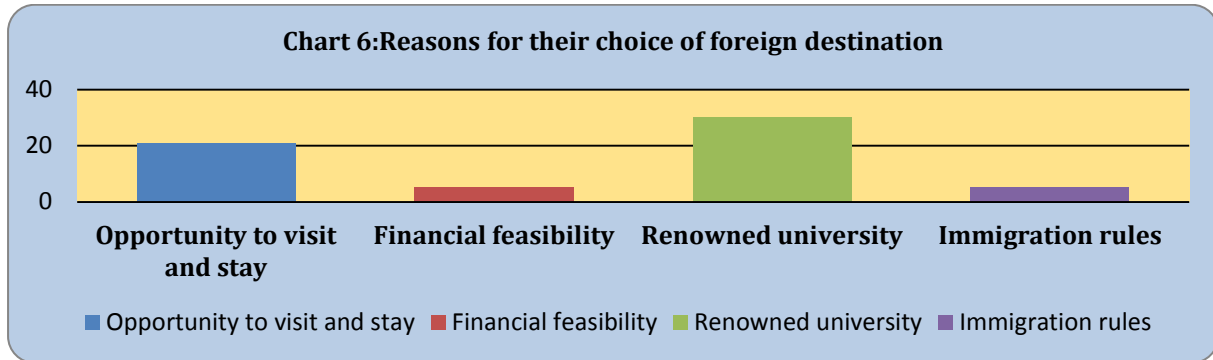
As understood, 48 respondents are keen to go abroad. Out of these students, they were asked about the top two or three motivators. The finding suggest that the top two reasons as reflected are – quest for knowledge, followed closely by job prospects on completion of the qualification. This reflects that students aspire to upgrade themselves, and look to apply their learning in the International arena.

7.5 Preferred destination for going abroad for further studies.



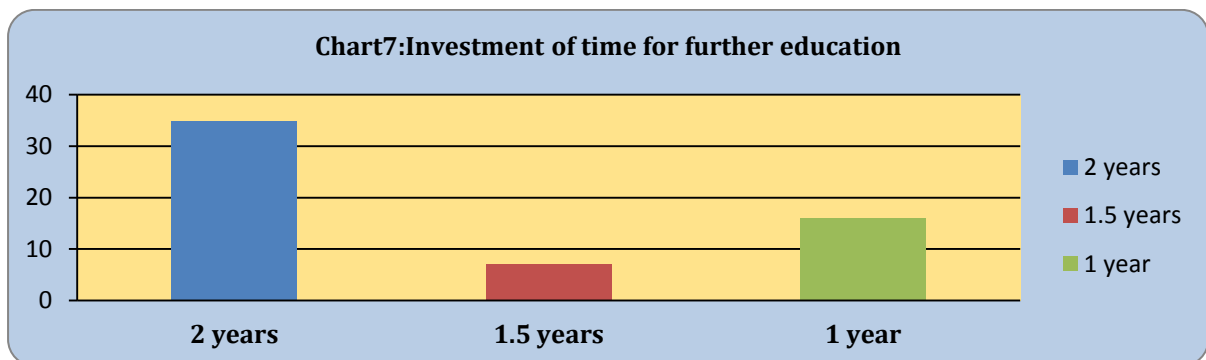
USA is the most preferred destinations to go abroad for further studies, this is closely followed by UK & Canada. Australia is amongst the other emerging destinations.

7.6 Reasons for their choice of foreign destination.



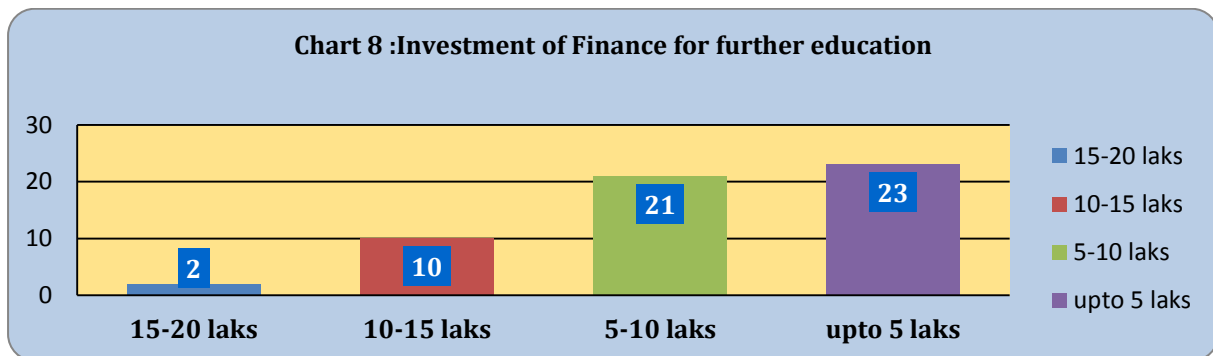
From the 48 students wishing to go abroad, the main reasons are enrolling in a renowned university. This would give them more exposure to the course of their study. The opportunity that the university and course will open doors for them to work and stay was the second reason while selecting a certain country. Finances and immigration policies, though perceived important, rated low at the time of country selection.

7.7 Investment of time for further education.



Most respondents wish to invest not more than two years in post-graduation studies.

7.8 Investment of Finance for further education

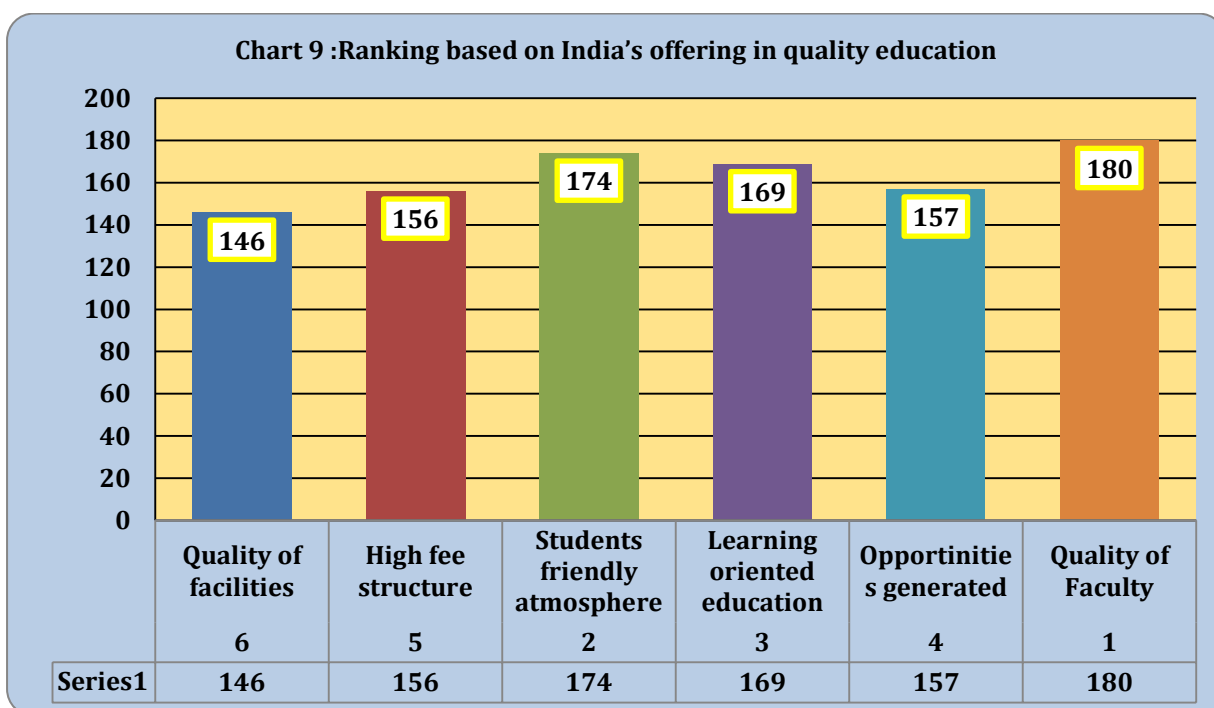


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It is evident that students wish to spend minimum that they can towards education abroad. This is clear from the fact that close to half of them prefer spending not more than five lacs. And close to the same numbers are willing to spend up to 10 lacs, but significantly few are in agreement to spending any more.

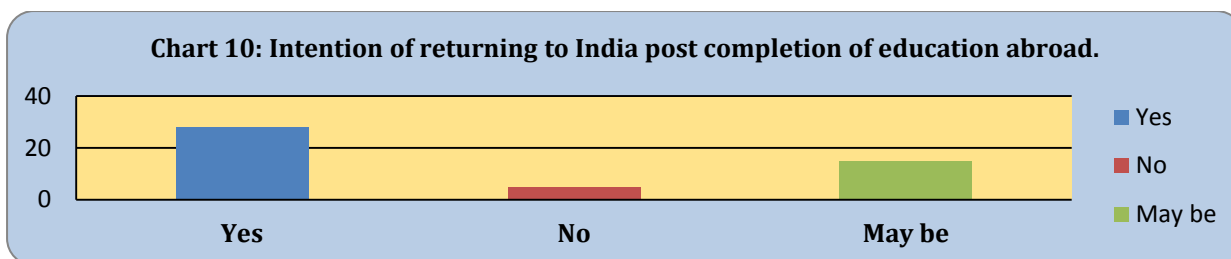
7.9 Ranking based on India's offering in quality education.

Respondent	Quality facilities of	High structure fee	Students friendly atmosphere	Learning oriented education	Opportunities generated	Quality of Faculty
Ranking	6	5	2	3	4	1



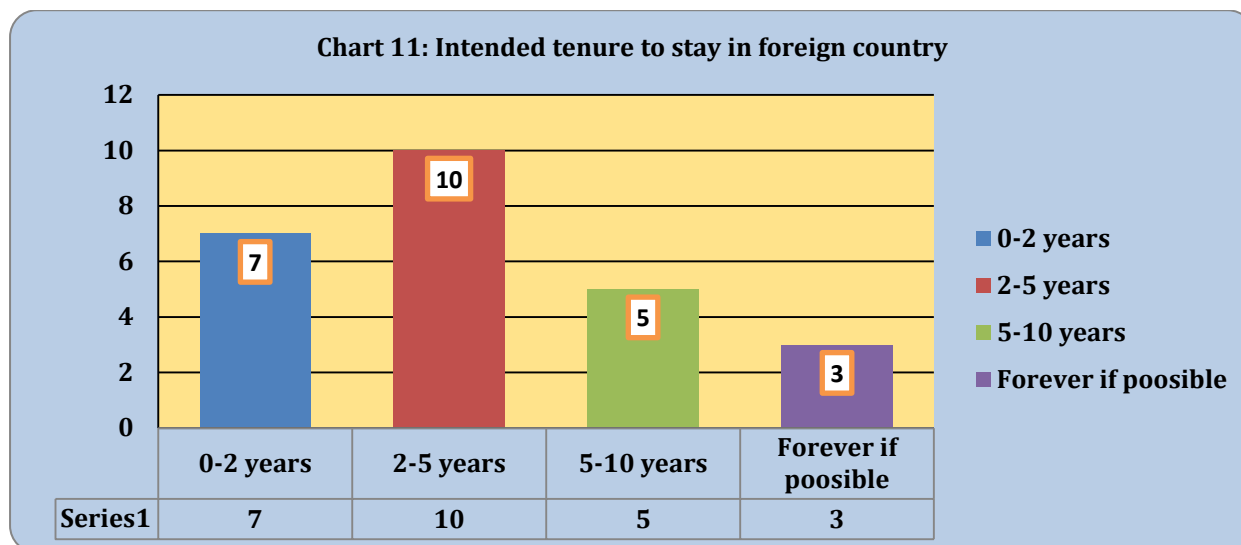
Apart from the above pull factors, certain factors that lack in the current education system in India, act a push to consider student to explore foreign lands. Based on the ranking, we lack in quality of facilities and infrastructure. This is followed by high fee structure and the opportunities generated. Learning orientation, atmosphere and faculty are the bottom three factors as identified.

7.10 Intention of returning to India post completion of education abroad.



28 of the 48 respondents wish to continue their stay abroad. Only 5 express their desire to return. A significant 15 number were not sure on their further course of action.

7.11 Intended tenure to stay in foreign country



Maximum respondents wish to stay in the chosen country for not more than 5 years followed by few who wish to stay for 10 years.

8 Suggestions & Recommendations

Based on the responses received from the final year students of our college, the following suggestions & recommendations can be made:

1. It is imperative that we can look at controlling the “push” factors. Quality of education and general employment conditions in hotels can be improved in order that they restrict and limit the need of considering foreign options.
2. Quest for knowledge is the prime pull for students. Indian universities can re look in adapting and apprising their curriculum, faculty and infrastructure. A leap in improving facilities and impart practical and structured education is the need of the hour.

9 Conclusions

The findings of the research can be concluded as under:

1. It has been identified that close over 61% HM final year under graduate students wish to go abroad on completion of their graduation.
2. Those who do not wish to go abroad, is primarily owing to financial constraints, followed by personal matters. At the same time, a hotel job is not the reason.
3. For those who wish to go abroad, quest for knowledge and renowned universities are the pull factors.
4. The quality of education and infrastructure is perceived lacking.



10 Future scope for research

This research reflects merely the consequences. The possible causes for drain of young talent need to be explored.

1. Ascertaining quality standards of Indian Universities and comparing with those of foreign universities.
2. Increase in remuneration of hotel employees, especially at the entry level and quality work environment.

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