

# Industry-Academia Collaboration Key To Opportunities & Employability In The World Economy: A Case Study Of Higher Educational Institutions, India And Maruhachi Tent Corporation, Japan

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## ABSTRACT

Academia and industry are two important pillars of our economy. A robust partnership between the two will bring the developing economy at par to the global standards, enabling Emphasis on skill-based education, workplace exposure through internships, blended learning, and embedding employability in higher education. To make India a global innovation hub, a constructive framework is the need of hour to grab the opportunities in the world, demanding collaboration between academia and industry across the globe. There are beginnings of a shift in this approach in India. Memorandum of understanding signed between Maruhachi Tent Corporation, Japan and 3 higher educational institutions from Maharashtra, India is an illustration of collaboration between academia and industry. This research paper is an attempt to understand the implication of Industry-Academia interface to quality higher education.

**KEYWORDS:** *academia, industry, skill-based, internship, blended learning, employability*

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Millions of students across the nation are trained from various higher educational institutions every year but the corporate world always find a gap between their expectations and perceived quality of youngsters in terms of necessary skills needed to meet the global standards. Ultimately, this results in a blame game whereby academia and industry, sometimes surpass responsibility on government for implementation of ineffective policies. People really need to understand that blaming each other will really not work in such chronic situation rather certain solutions to the problems to be sorted out.

Corporate have begun to realise the significance and have started indulging in more and more research-based projects to improve the quality of higher education. Thus, it's really mandatory to bridge the gap between industry, academia and government to tackle the problem of lacking skill and job readiness among youth. The present research paper is an attempt to illustrate an attempt of 3 higher educational institutions from Maharashtra, India and Maruhachi tent corporation, Japan to bring a significant quality change in the educational pattern enabling Emphasis on skill-based education, workplace exposure through internships, blended learning,

and embedding employability in higher education.

### About Maruhachi Tent Co., Ltd

Maruhachi Tent Co., Ltd. is a company which is into manufacturing, designing, installation and sale of tents in Japan located in Nagoya city of Manufacturing, Maruhachi tent corporation has always been trying to create innovative and original tent products since it was founded in 1951. In 1998, Maruhachi Tent Corporation has received the IFAI (Industrial Fabrics Association International) award of excellence. Their carbon product [Nishijin Carbon] is certified by the METI (The Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry of Japanese Government). Maruhachi Tent Corporation acquired certification and got registered for ISO9001: 2000 / JIS Q 9001: 2000.

**VES College of Arts, Science and Commerce** is a grant-in-aid, Linguistic (Sindhi) minority institution, affiliated to the University of Mumbai. The **College** is re-accredited in 2017 by National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC) with an 'A' grade in its 3<sup>rd</sup> cycle. The college has been bestowed with 'best college award' by University of Mumbai in the year 2012-13 (urban area). It has also received grant from

DST under the FIST scheme and the star college grant from DBT in the year 2015-16.

- Department for internship: Commerce
- Internship year: 2017-2020
- Duration: 3-4 months

**The Karmavir Dadasaheb Kannamwar College of Engineering**, situated in the heart of India in Nagpur city, established in 1984 by Backward Class Youth Relief Committee (BCYRC) is one of the leading engineering colleges in Maharashtra State.

Government of Maharashtra has conferred 'A' Grade on the basis of excellence & adequate infrastructure as well as academic achievements of students and faculty. It is approved by AICTE New Delhi, DTE, and Government of Maharashtra.

- Department for internship: Civil engineering & MBA (Marketing / Finance)
- Internship year: 2017-2020
- Duration: 2-3 months

**Shree Hanuman Vyayam Prasarak Mandal**, is situated in Amravati in Maharashtra state of India. Established in 1990, and it is affiliated to Sant Gadge Baba Amravati University. Shree Hanuman Vyayam Prasarak Mandal, Amravati offers 15 courses across 6 streams namely Physical Education, IT, Science, Management, Commerce & Banking, Vocational and across 11 degrees like BA, BPED, BBA, BSc, BCA.

- Department for internship: Computer Science (BCA / MCA)
- Internship year: 2017-2019
- Duration: 2-3 months

## 2. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM:

The research paper aims to probe into, the significance of collaboration between Academia and industries with the illustration of 3 higher educational institutions from Maharashtra and Japanese firm, Maruhachi Tent Corporation. The researcher has tried to analyze the responses of the intern students across three colleges, where in the internship is still going on.

## 3. OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY:

The present study aims to highlight the case study of collaboration between higher educational institution, India and Maruhachi tent

corporation, Japan to impart the quality higher education at par to the global standards with sufficient industry exposure. In this broader framework, an attempt is made to achieve the following specific objectives:

- To make higher education relevant to the learner, employer and the community.
- To explore how the impact can be enhanced by integrating relevant skills and knowledge into the higher education system through academia and industry collaborations.
- To identify certain key factors to develop employable and certifiable skills.
- To consider both a mutual industrial and academic perspective for the internship of the students.

## 4. SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The study enhances the illustration of collaboration between Japanese firm and Indian educational institutions enabling Emphasis on skill-based education, workplace exposure through internships, blended learning, and embedding employability in higher education. Maruhachi Tent Corporation and colleges from Maharashtra have been considered for the study, wherein the collaboration and internship program is already going on.

## 5. LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY:

1. From among the total number of students across 3 colleges, 25 sample respondents are interviewed.
2. The analysis is based on the perception and opinions of a limited number of respondents.

## 6. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Rao (2020) describes the idea of anywhere education and examinations on demand. The paper aims to study the changes in the education sector and action plan required to create the awareness among the stakeholders. The research paper defines a suitable framework for role of private managements, responsibility of the teachers and universities and higher educational institutions roping in the industry in the teaching learning process.

Varghese (2020) aims to study the research and innovations in higher education describing the new dynamics emerged in key domain of higher education. The researcher highlights various

initiatives for nurturing the research culture and emphasises on use of various channels both within and outside the college via regional, national and international cooperation. Further research aims to develop a variety of strategic partnerships for greater global involvement and visibility.

Srinivas et.al. (2020) examines the driving innovation in Indian institutions: the missing links and tries to emphasis on the global measures for innovation in education. The research paper aims to unify the initiative at the institutional level and emphasize on alternative funding models from private foundations, corporate bodies, international organizations etc.

## **7. RESEARCH METHODOOGY**

### **SOURCES OF DATA COLLECTION:**

#### **1. Primary data**

The study is based on primary and secondary data. In order to achieve objectives of the study, moreover, 25 students sample respondents across Mumbai, Amravati and Nagpur colleges are contacted and interviewed.

#### **2. The secondary data**

The data is gathered from relevant research journals, websites, published and unpublished sources etc. Some ideas have been taken from the Memorandum of Understanding between Maruhachi Tent Corporation and the 3 colleges undertaken for the study to consider both a mutual industrial and academic perspective for the internship of the students.

### **RESULTS & ANALYSIS:**

The opinions of student respondents across 3 educational institutions have been analyzed in terms of:

- Application of knowledge and skills acquired in academics in corporate internship
- Outcome of task given during the internship
- Abilities and skills developed during the internship tenure
- Opinion about the overall support and services provided by supervisor or organization

## **8. ANALYSIS & INTERPRETATION**

### **Analysis of Activities under the purview of MoU between company and colleges:**

#### **Internship Program (Online)**

Both the parties acknowledge that Company provides knowledge and actual work training to the selected students. As this is a cross-border internship program provided from Japan to India, this is provided through online video conference training (Skype / WebEX / Facebook Messenger etc).

#### **Internship Program (Offline)**

Both the parties acknowledge that selected students need to follow the instruction given by Company when they do offline work. However, the basic role of selected student is to help Company to do the market research online / offline. Company shall not give any sales work or sales target to the selected students.

#### **Role of Company:**

The Company shall depute their staff and the experts from their establishment to conduct Online / Offline Guest Lectures, workshops and interaction sessions in the college/industry Premises.

1. To provide the internship and job training.
2. To assist the college in the designing of industry / job oriented curriculum in alignment with global needs.
3. To extend the workshop facilities for the effective training at its own premises and/or at college premises.
4. To assist the college in the enhancement of the training infrastructure and effective implementation of the program.
5. To support technically to the Institute in undertaking academic activity mutually agreed upon.
6. To extend full support and take care of the students selected and placed on internship

#### **Role of College:**

1. Identify the courses in consultation with Company and considering local and global needs.
2. Provide counseling and proper information and training to the students.
3. Execute selection process in consultation with Company to select competent and needy participants.
4. Issue certificates to the successful participants (This depends on college's decision).
5. Arrange Workshops, Seminars, Conference, etc with the Company when required

6. Arrange Internship Program/Field work for participants in consultation with the company.

#### General Terms and Conditions:

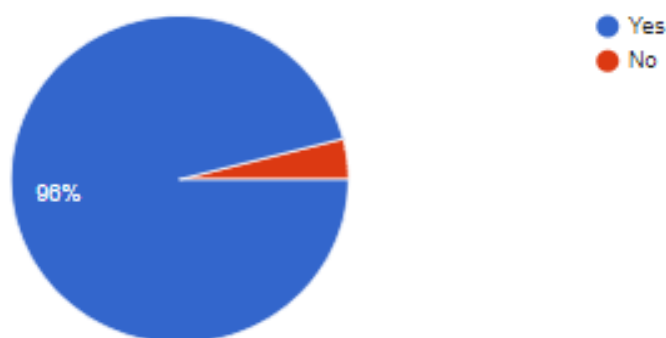
1. The Internship Programs will be managed by the Company with the support of the College.
2. College and Company shall jointly work for preparing skilled workforce as per the local, national and international needs.
3. College shall govern the internship programs in respect to academic matter.
4. Company shall take care, guide and assist the selected participants under this MoU for their internship training. When financial assistance is required apart from

transportation expenses, it shall be discussed, decided and mutually agreed upon by the both parties

5. Continuance of the MOU will depend on the mutual understanding and it can be terminated by either party by issuing three months prior notice to other party.
6. The duration of internship will be mutually agreed and decided by both parties. However, Company has a right to adjust the duration of its internship.
7. Both the parties agree that Company shall support their placement when needed however both parties agree that placement for selected students shall not be guaranteed by Company.

#### Analysis of responses collected from the respondents through Google forms:

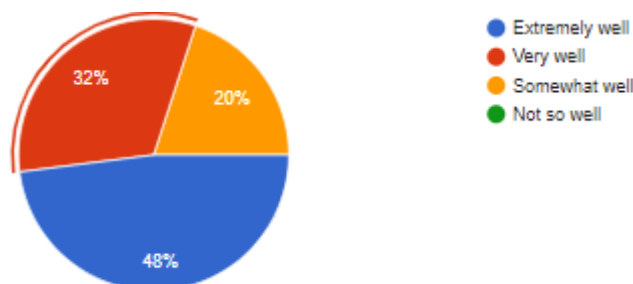
**CHART 8.1 Experience of intern students**



#### INTERPRETATION:

This chart reveals that 90% of respondents are quite satisfied with the experience of internship process and are in the opinion that the process of internship is a value addition in their academic studies.

**CHART 8.2: Responsibilities and academic knowledge and skills**

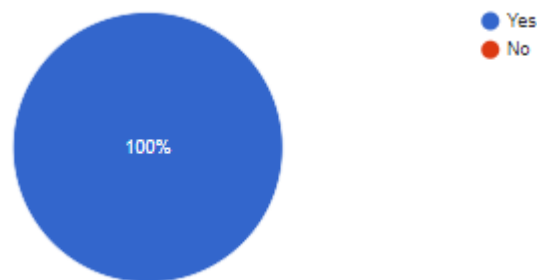


#### INTERPRETATION:

This chart reveals that 48% of respondents are extremely satisfied with the allocation of

responsibilities and find that there is a close relationship between the responsibilities and academic knowledge and skills.

**CHART 8.3 Initiative to work beyond basic requirements of the job**



**INTERPRETATION:**

All 25 respondents agreed to the fact that organization allowed to take the initiative to work beyond basic requirement of the job. 100% satisfaction level is obtained in terms of initiatives and freedom given to the interns.

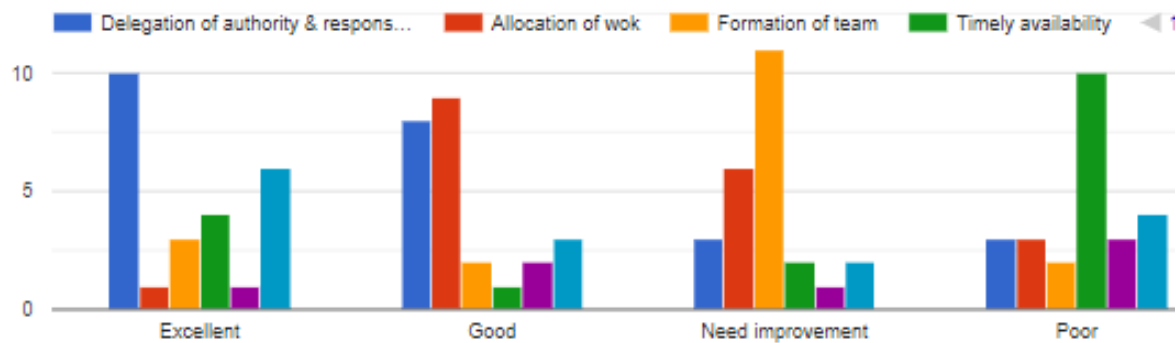
**CHART 8.4 Outcome of task given during the internship**



**INTERPRETATION:**

96% of the respondents are in opinion that the task of marketing research and presentation is really value addition in the industry – academia learning process. 56% respondents are with the view that the internship is really beneficial for report writing. But more than 50% of respondents believe that industrial visit during the internship should be emphasized more upon.

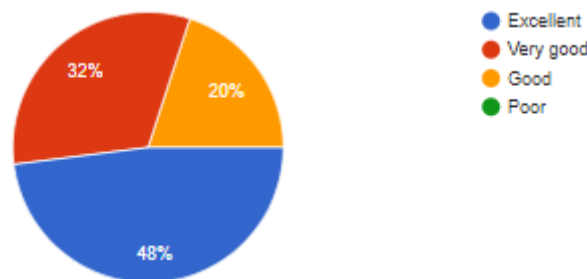
**CHART 8.5 Overall support and services provided**



### INTERPRETATION:

84% of the respondents believe that there is proper delegation of authority and responsibility in the internship process. Allocation of work and formation of team is equally believed by 64% of respondents. But majority feel that timely availability of supervisor is the major challenged they faced. This is due to limited number of human resource representatives in India.

CHART 8.6 Rating of internship experience



12 Students out of 25 are extremely satisfied with the internship experience and further the satisfaction level is quite significant for other 8 students. Remaining 5 students are otherwise quite happy with the overall internship experience.

### 8.7 Opinion of interns for the reason to recommend this internship program:

- An international exposure
- Development of various skills such as communication, presentation, public speaking, technical skills, team building, punctuality, report writing, unique learning experience etc.
- Learning Japanese language
- Market research and practical insights about market
- Boost up of confidence
- Professional & ethical approach
- Just in time approach

### 9. FINDINGS, SUGGESTIONS &

[www.psychologyandeducation.net](http://www.psychologyandeducation.net)

### CONCLUSION

#### 9.1 FINDINGS:

A case study of Maruhachi Tent Corporation and 3 higher educational institutions from Maharashtra has been discussed and following objectives of such collaboration is found from the study:

- To make higher education relevant to the learner, employer and the community.
- To integrate relevant skills and knowledge into the higher education system.
- To provide employable and certifiable skills with sufficient industry exposure.
- To produce technical manpower with high professional ethics and workmanship.
- To extend sufficient opportunities and exposure to the students of the department.
- To co-operate mutually for training and placement of the students.

#### 9.2 SUGGESTIONS:

The involvement of industry in educational curriculum is required in a big way. The industry is to be roped in to design industry-relevant courses, so that no allegations to be made that



the graduates churned out from educational factories do not possess the required employable skills. Few suggestions listed below to be implemented:

- Universities should accept the courses designed by the industries and integrate into the curricula.
- Additionally, the industry should be ready to lend their support to higher educational institutions for such internship programs or for modifications in the proposed curriculum to bring the sea change in the course structures, course delivery and assessment procedures.
- A blanket statement that the output is worthless is not fair. Few industries offering internship to the student with the objective of cheap labour and Human Resources at cheaper cost, without any responsibility to nurture the growth and development of the students, should be stopped.

### 9.3 CONCLUSION:

In countries like the US, corporates reach out to universities/institutions to bring innovation into their work, while in India, corporates and industry bodies rely mostly on their own research rather than reaching out to academia. There are beginnings of a shift in this approach in India. There have been huge leaps taken by various corporates and academia to bring about positive change and innovation. Considering few examples:

\* HDFC bank recently announced its plan to partner 50 technology companies and business schools to tap emerging fintech ideas starting with IIT-Bombay and IIT-Roorkee as part of its industry-academia partnership effort.

\* The Ministry of Human Resource and Development (MHRD) also increased funding to IIT- Madras by nearly Rs 300 crore (\$47 million) to encourage innovation and strengthen industry-academia ties.

The focus needs to be largely on improving the Research and Development wings of institutes. For lack of it, even home-grown companies such as the Tatas are choosing to invest \$25 million in globally-recognised institutions like Harvard and

Yale for top-end research instead of betting on India.

Thus, It is clearly time to create a nurturing environment where the industry and the academia can work hand-in-hand through public – private partnership.

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