YOUR VOICE MATTERS: DECODING 10K INDIAN STUDENTS’ INFLUENCES AND HIGHER EDUCATION ASPIRATIONS AND WHAT IT MEANS FOR INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

SANNAM S4 RESEARCH AND CONSULTING TEAM
THE CASE FOR A 10K SAMPLE SURVEY

Background & Context

- India is the world’s largest democracy with a young, entrepreneurial population, making it a country with a highly skilled and dynamic workforce. (India’s Median Age is 28. By comparison the Median Age in the US and China is 38 years old)
- India continues to be an attractive and important ‘source country’ for international students seeking to study abroad; ~1-in-5 international student in the US are from India
- ‘Indian Student Voices’ Survey is a unique, one of its kind survey with a large sample size of 10,000 Indian Generation Z students (aged 18-23 years, born between 1998-2003)

Goals & Objectives

- The 10,000 Voices objective was to deep-dive into the unique preferences and values of India’s Generation Z students in order to understand their higher education goals and expectations
- To get a closer read on this target audience with respect to higher education, it is key to holistically understand them - how they spend their time, their likes, dislikes, who inspires them, their views on sustainability and what their future aspirations are
- As key outcomes, Sannam S4 and its partner universities (international and Indian) will be able to design products and services that respond to the needs and understand the aspirations of the Generation Z target audience

With 475 million people, India’s Generation Z is the largest in the world
WHAT’S THE PITCH?

10K Voices is a window into Indian Gen Z students’ thoughts, hopes and aspirations

Through Sannam S4’s unique, one of a kind, large sample size survey, unravel and know more about….

- What excites them?
- What inspires them?
- What is India’s Generation Z worried about?
- Which ‘hot topics’ are they passionate about?
- How do they engage online?
- How has their education been affected due to Covid?
- What are the implications for international higher education and universities looking to appeal to Indian Gen Z students?
WHO DID WE SPEAK WITH?

AGE GROUP
18-23 year olds

GEOGRAPHY
Students from pan India were surveyed across Tier 1, 2, 3 cities. 40% from North India, 30% from South India and the rest from West, Central, Eastern India.

10K SURVEY: A unique, one of its kind survey of India’s students that zooms into their lives to get a nuanced understanding of their aspirations from higher education.

EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND
Current and recent undergraduate and graduate students (graduated within the last 3 years)

GENDER
A 2:1 representative mix of female and male participants respectively.
SURVEY PROCESS OVERVIEW

TIMELINE

• The Multi-Stage Survey was conducted in 2020-2021
• The Testing Phase began in October 2020 and was completed January 2021
• The Final Survey was rolled out between February 2021-August 2021

SURVEY PLATFORM

• Initially hosted on Google Forms
• Transitioned to Typeforms
• Posted/Advertised on multiple social media platforms to target Generation Z participants

SAMPLE SIZE

• 11,060 responses were received
• 9,963 responses were validated and accepted
Which one of these Sustainable Development Goals do you think is the most immediate goal to be achieved?

- 93% of Generation Z survey respondents think about sustainability on a daily basis, with Quality Education, Zero Hunger, and No Poverty seen as their most important Sustainable Development Goals.
A SNAPSHOT SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR HIGHER EDUCATION LEADERS

60% students highlight a negative impact of COVID-19 on their higher education plans, 64% are most anxious about their mental health

- Universities should modify communication with students and modify educational offerings, post-pandemic, to address Covid-19’s negative lingering impact
- Institutions need to continue to provide timely and appropriate mental health support to students - online and on campus

93% think about sustainability in their everyday life - ‘Quality Education’ is their highest priority goal and they aspire to make a difference to the world

- Universities should integrate the changing global context in the classroom and cater to students’ aspirations of effectuating positive social change
- Institutions should integrate Sustainable Development Goals in their teaching methods with a focus on action-oriented, practical curriculum

21% of surveyed students indicated that the pandemic brought their professional lives to a standstill - career reinvigoration, revitalization and growth is their foremost priority

- Universities should make clear connections between career growth and education while positioning their programs while highlighting linkages between academia and industry
A SNAPSHOT SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR HIGHER EDUCATION LEADERS

75% are most influenced by personal experiences
62% indicate peer groups and family shape their outlook towards life rather than external role models

- Universities should effectively leverage key influencers to increase awareness about educational programs and create relatable outreach material

60% spend 1-4 hours daily on social media platforms for news, learning and more, 73% use two or more social media platforms

- Institutions can do greater outreach, create information and learning content on multiple social media platforms (e.g., Students spend significant time on Instagram)

75% enrolled in online programs to learn new skills

- Universities should effectively partner with e-learning platforms to cater to students who want to self-learn and build new skill-sets
INDIA’S GENERATION Z IS FOCUSING ON THEIR PERSONAL LIVES DURING VOLATILE TIMES

- Surveyed students expressed negative COVID-19 impacts in terms of their learning experiences and mental health
- Career growth was cited by 39% of respondents as their most pressing issue, followed by their mental health (21%) and their education (21%)
- 73% of surveyed students use two or more social media platforms
- 96% of respondents report using Instagram
- 60% of surveyed students spent 1-4 hours on social media each day
- 18% are on social media >4 hours daily

HOW UNIVERSITIES CAN ADDRESS THE NEEDS OF INDIA’S GENERATION Z STUDENTS

- Expand focus on application-oriented practical learning
- Prioritize skill development
- Appeal to higher order aspirations and incorporate Sustainable Development Goals into the Curriculum and Campus Life
- Supplement existing learning models to address possible academic setbacks that occurred with online classes during the pandemic
- Continue to prioritize students’ mental and emotional well-being
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