

# **International Marketing Education in India: An Assessment and Looking Forward**

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India is a developing country and its participation in global trade has greatly influenced the advancement of its economy. Many companies from around the world have entered and taken their place in the Indian economy during the last two decades. International Marketing (IM) practices are now evident across many industrial sectors and products.

The beginnings of Marketing go back to British administered rule in India with the creation of a Department of Marketing by the Agriculture Commission in 1935 (Govil 1943). Dominated by agriculture the marketing literature focused on agricultural products e.g. cotton (Dantwala 1937); tea (Harler 1933), and fruits (Gadgil and Gadgil 1933). Since then, Marketing education in India has undergone substantial change with the launch of the first two Institutes of Management (IIMs) in Calcutta and Ahmadabad in 1961. The advent of economic liberalization in the mid-80s brought IM education into the limelight. IM practitioners and educators are currently facing an increasingly complex business environment due to the impact of rapid globalization and advances in IT. Current IM textbooks by Indian authors are mostly based on the definitions and processes adopted in the U.S. There is a lack of focus on India and Asia specific issues. Research is advocating that business students focus on IM as it will become increasingly important in the future. At present it is believed that students in India are not well prepared in IM (Turley and Shannon 1999), and there is a perceived gap between industry needs and what is taught in business schools (Lundstrom and White 1997). This is of serious concern.

## **Conceptual Rationale for the Special Issue**

Emerging countries are high growth and high potential markets. They include India, China, Vietnam, Turkey, Brazil and Argentina, to name but a few. IM is key for firms to operate successfully in these nations (Uslay, Cavusgil, Tse and Gillespie 2008). However, with the rewards come great risks which are not fully

understood by marketers. India is no exception as the economy is changing fast and is different from other emerging markets. During the last decade India has focused on advancing its IT industry. At the company level, Alibaba has backed Paytm, Uber has hit the streets, Google and Facebook have captivated Indians with their apps. and IKEA and Sotheby's see the potential of market entrance.

But the question should not be how much potential India has, nor who has entered or is about to enter. It should be, how success can be better achieved, and in particular, how MNCs can better attract Indian consumers with their products and services. International companies such as, Starbucks, McDonalds, KFC, Dominos Pizza, Inditex, H&M, and Chevrolet have struggled and are now employing different strategies to establish themselves better in India. Questions that come to mind are: 1) why are the Indian management graduates employed by these companies not able to understand the expectations of MNCs? and 2) why are these MNCs not able to properly understand the dynamics of the Indian market?

The internet has made IM communication more convenient for both the marketers as well as consumers by shaping consumer behavior. Advanced technology provides a fundamentally different environment for IM. Companies have more freedom to locate services and products where they can best be produced, marketed and sold (Pouresmaeili, Nezakati and Mehdizadeh 2010).

Currently there are 3329 business schools offering postgraduate management programs in India with an intake capacity of 411,150 students (as per AICTE 2016-17 Report). Only a handful are producing adequately educated graduates. There should be more and better prepared graduates with skills aligned to the needs of the industry. There is a need to build a dialogue between industry and business schools. Traditional teaching methods still abound in the business schools of India. Gremler, Hoffman, Keaveney, and Wright (2000) propose that experiential learning assignments in business education are more likely to develop students' interpersonal and communication skills, help them understand course concepts better, improve teamwork and teambuilding, and improve their listening skills, critical thinking and problem-solving. In IM, Rana and Sharma (2016) highlight this on their paper on teaching and learning in India. More research, dialogue and advancements in teaching IM are needed.

This Special Issue therefore aims to help instructors improve the situation by providing some suggestions and pedagogical tools for advancing IM education in the business schools and management courses of India.

### **Featured in This Special Issue**

Aggarwal's "Four Fundamental Forces Driving Information Age Paradigm Shifts: Implications for International Marketing and Business Education" which examines and explains the challenges such as: interactive nature of technology is changing and displacing jobs, deconstructing value chains, and accelerating

globalization for international marketing and business school education. It is contended that while acquiring measurable and useable knowledge and specific job skills are important; it is now ever more important to focus on learning and teaching flexible attitudes, innovation skills, leadership abilities, the ability to continue learning, and a good work ethic to survive and thrive in this new age. The paper explains how important it is for IM educators to deal with these shifts.

Tripathi and Mandal's "An Experiential Approach to Transcending Cross-Cultural Boundaries" emphasizes the importance of experiential learning in IM education by drawing on their own experiences as IM educators/practitioners. The paper suggests practical ways in which international student exchange programs can be made more relevant by incorporating community service and cultural activities as an integral part of such programs. The authors also suggest the adoption of synthetic cultures in cross-cultural simulation games as a risk-free method of increasing students' awareness about different cultures and sensitizing them about the modalities of intercultural communications. Finally, light is thrown on the practical aspects of social integration of interns through planned and deliberate mentoring, foreign language skill development, and harnessing social and digital media for virtual exchange programs.

Yadav and Medhavi focus on how Internet Based Experiential Learning (IBEL) adoption could be important for IM education in India in their article "Adoption of Internet Based Experiential Learning by Indian International Marketing Education Providers". They have identified that business schools in India are lagging behind in adopting new innovations compared to the top ranked business school institutions in the world. The propositions indicate that IBEL can help IM students learning via the various skills developed and would be a significant pedagogy innovation for IM education across India.

Following this, Arora's paper "Teaching Pedagogical Innovation for International Marketing in India" explores applications of the X-culture project as a teaching pedagogy for IM in the Indian context. The paper draws on experiential learning, and intergroup cross-cultural theories for evaluating the effectiveness of the experiential global virtual team-based approach in IM education.

There then follow three case studies of particular interest to IM instructors and students. Thomas, Saha and Satpathy's "Chennai Super Kings (CSK): Growing and Leveraging Brand Equity" looks at the Chennai Super Kings (CSK) as an example of formulating a strategy to grow and leverage brand assets and leveraging through international franchising. Manohar and Rehman's "Consumers' Choice of Functional Foods: A Case Study of Millets in India" focuses on the planning and designing of an exhaustive Integrated

Marketing Communication (IMC) plan. Finally, Dewani and Motiani's "KAY Cinemas: Pricing Dilemma for Delhi NCR Region" applies the concepts of pricing strategy as a key element of the marketing mix as a means to change customer value and how this can be used to increase short term and long-term profits.

## Conclusion

Through the conceptual articles and teaching cases featured in this Special Issue, we aim to help bridge the evident gap between IM practitioners' needs and business school and management instruction in India. The contributions highlight techniques, pedagogies and concepts to deal with increasingly globalized scenarios. India has a developing management education system and with the help of this Special Issue we hope to improve the quality of teaching in IM classes. We also hope that these articles will be of interest and use to IM instructors and students in other similar emerging nations.

We very much hope you enjoy reading and using these articles and case studies in IM courses and thank all those involved in contributing to this Special Issue. Please feel free to share your feedback with the Guest Editor, Sudhir Rana (Email: rana.sudheer21@gmail.com), and to engage in further dialogue on this important topic.

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