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June 2016

Online at <https://mpra.ub.uni-muenchen.de/72245/>
MPRA Paper No. 72245, posted 28 Jun 2016 17:20 UTC

Changing Approaches in Campus Placements: A New Futuristic Model

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ABSTRACT

The success of higher education is measured in olden days by determining the level of knowledge and skills the students gained during that period. But as time progress, the phenomena of globalization and large quantity of job creation in Information Technology industries changed the scenario in such a way that new model of higher education is seen which consists of providing campus placement as a final part of their higher education service. Recently, providing campus placement to successful students is considered as institutional obligation and institutions are ranked based on number of successful job placement provided in the campus for a given year along with the average salary offered. But as time progress, the model of campus placement is going to change and it is predicted that industries are thinking of adopting new model of placement through online. In this new model called "Online-oriented industry placement model", students have to study various companies of their choice in different countries, and study their business models along with suggesting solutions to their problems and business expansion opportunities with students/applicants promise of individual contribution to the company. If company executives realise that the candidate is suitable for their organization they may offer competitive job but sustainability is a function of candidate's contribution to organizational challenge and his individual continuation to group productivity. The paper contains the details on this new proposed model and strategy to be followed by the student to get good challenging job offers from reputed international companies and hard and smart work he/she has to perform for his/her sustainability and growth in the organization. The paper also contains advantages, benefits, constraints, and disadvantages of such online student centric placement model.

Keywords: Future campus placement model, Online-oriented industry placement model,

1. Introduction

The concept of higher education deals with the systematic way of providing knowledge, skills, and experience through teaching/training on chosen area/subject to aspiring students. The success of higher education is measured in olden days by determining the level of knowledge and skills the students gained during that period. But as time progresses, the phenomena of globalization and large quantity of job creation in Information Technology industries changed the scenario in such a way that new model of higher education is seen which consists of providing campus placement as a final part of their higher education service. Selection and Recruitment of human resources for various positions of responsibilities is one of the most pivotal functions for any Business Organizations as they seek highly skilled professionals to fill up their challenging positions. For this purpose, corporates have been relying upon maximum on campus placements to fill up their operational level positions. This method by far is one of the best ways for them to get the right resources in a shorter span than relying on other sources like job portals, consultancies, advertisement based recruitments and walk-ins. Recently, providing campus placement to successful students is considered as institutional obligation and institutions are ranked based on number of successful job placement provided in the campus for a given year along with the average salary offered. While the companies get the best manpower from different universities, engineering colleges, technical institutes and B-Schools in large quantities, students too as well get a chance to start their career with some

of the best companies in the business world. Every university should have a career services division to help the students find their right career where they can hone their skills and prepare for a bright future ahead. Campus Recruitments are advantageous for the fresh graduates in many ways. The students get exposed to the industry atmosphere at the very right time and learn how to prepare them for fighting stiff competitions. Employment Services cell in a university/college implies that the institution administration is very focused about the career of their graduate students. Moreover, stakeholder perception today regarding higher education has seen a paradigm shift towards universal employability. This is why it is always a smart choice for youngsters to choose a University/College/Institute that offers campus placements to its students [1].

Expectation from Students:- Modern Day Students expect that their chosen University/B-School equips them into a skilled professional, boost their inner work knowledge and confidence, builds positive recruiter perceptions and removes fear through extensive talent development and interview training [2]. Finally, they expect their Institute to provide world class reputed companies in the campus job placement events where they can fearlessly crack tough interviews and get highly paid jobs.

Expectation from Parents:- Present day parents expect to see their child get a good highly paid job so that the child becomes their support in old age. In Indian context, there is also an extra emphasis laid on improvement of Business English Language among their children and get foreign jobs. Since it is a status symbol for parents to boast about their children's career say in some MNC, naturally their expectation from University/B-School is high. Middle-Class Household parents expect minimal fees for higher-education of their children.

Expectations from Recruiters:- In Campus Recruitment Process, Recruiters expect that they should get Quality, Skilled and Domain Knowledge experts from the Institute/University/B-Schools. They lay extra emphasis on Soft Skills, Communication, Aptitude, Attitude, Conceptual and Problem Solving Skills. From the Institute's side, Recruiters expect priority compared other recruiters, good Hospitality, Support, Accommodation and overall autonomy while conducting their hiring events at campus.

Obligation of Education institutions:- A Educational Institution can ensure functioning in society only if it satisfies its stakeholders and has a moral giving to its country. Therefore, it has the obligation to provide quality Human Resources to Country's Businesses for ensuring nation's economic prosperity through providing campus placements to eligible students. Since Employment Generation and creating entrepreneurs is major requirement for any nation's economy to prosper, educational institutions should be partners with government in realizing these objectives through campus initiatives. Branding respective institutions's students and their campus to Government Sectors and Private Sectors for employment opportunities should be a continuous ongoing activity by colleges towards job creation and national growth [3-4]. Apart from these, education institutions have to create graduates who can contribute to the industry through their innovative and dedicated service. Conducting placement activity at campus is a ideal route towards realising this noble cause.

2. Present Status of Campus Placement: A Survey

The concept of campus placement is started by information technology companies during the last part of 20th century. Ideal education system provides placement to all the graduates because the demand in the society is always higher than supply from the institutions [5-6]. In online education system [7], the service provider imparts specific knowledge and skills to the registered students and they are least bothered on placement facility due to the fact of demand for such courses and supply will be proportionate to the demand. In campus based education, when demand from industries is less than supply of qualified students, campus placement facility becomes important. Following are the findings from various researches that were

conducted in the area of placements. The nexus between campus placement interviews and subsequent employment decisions by organizations and candidates has always received scant research attention. In a longitudinal field study, we found that candidates' job choices were related to their post-interview aspirations. However, Companies' job offer decisions were not connected to HR's post-interview intentions or to their perceptions of candidates' intentions. The results offered general support for the applicability of the theory of reasoned action to the recruitment process [8]. This can also be substantiated when Flipkart deferred the hiring of campus selected IIM-A MBA Graduate from June 2016 to December 2016 citing restructure and Funding Crunch [9]. Historical Researches of the concurrent effects of hiring practices and work attributes on constant reactions to the maiden job interview offered constant support for a work attributes effect, but less support for hiring practices impacts. The Research using a pre-interview and post-interview design, found that recruiting practices significantly impacted all scales of student candidatures' reactions to campus placements. Recruiters had a larger impact on perceptions of the work itself than on perceptions of other work attributes. However, possibilities of job acceptance—the candidate's reaction that was conceptually closest to job choice—was still mostly unaffected by recruiting practices. Further studies examining the effect of recruitment practices on candidate responses throughout the recruitment process is suggested. From this we can ascertain that how well is the organization communicating (about itself, on the nature of the work job content and how staff are compensated) to the outside world and also how the initial connection with the company (e.g. Recruiting HR team) is made [10]. Such perceptions are subjective, in that it cannot be separated from his/her preference. Research papers focused on influence of company reputations and recruiter behavior has indicated that interviewer actions did not have a direct impact on candidate appeal, but influenced attraction indirectly along through understandings of work and company attributes [11]. Recruitment activities in campus are importantly related to candidates reactions only at the preliminary selection stages. Reactions are bound to vary and change when final processes getting conducted at company offices [12]. Remotely of recent, along with traditional hiring tools, few established recruiters are beginning to use technology, smartphones and computers in their initial interview rounds for screening [13-15]. This is evident as the Industry is now focusing on a shift towards technology based hiring for a more of e-recruitment system. Moreover, present system of campus recruiting requires academia to amend their syllabi to include various competitive topics matching industry standards towards grooming and soft skills training of job aspiring students [16].

3. ABCD Analysis of Campus Placements

(a) **Advantages:** Campus placement provides a stage to choose the best candidates for different job roles. Besides getting a wider choice, the employers also save a lot of time in entire recruitment process. Most of the fresh job seekers are talented and ready to accept challenges. So, the most testing assignments can be given to these fresh new recruits. Students also get the option to choose and select their employers this way, according to their traits, personality, skills and interests. It also saves them a lot of time and frustration involved with job hunting process. Also, the selection equation is much higher in campus selections as compared to any other forms of recruitment activities which facilitate Institute Placements as well. The other big advantage of campus recruitment is the brand and loyalty factor. Campus Placement process smoothly facilitates branding of both the Employer Company and Institute/University. The young graduates will also have high regards for their first organization as they are emotionally linked to it. Being their first employer, the students are very close to their hearts and the company name appear on top of their CV as well enhancing their brand value.

(b) **Benefits:** Campus Selection is an ultimate cost effective activity for the companies as it saves a lot of time for the recruiters. The HR team just requires to visit a few institutes/universities/B-schools and spend couple of days in the campus to end up short-listing good amount of fresh candidates. If recruiters have a hiring calendar schedule, then it can be a further attractive cost-efficient activity for future hirings. The other merit would be saving time going to different avenues and incurring huge costs on transport, promotions/advertisings, consultant fees, screening, arising ambiguity in conducting the final round and then finally getting a suitable candidate. Therefore, campus selection leads to efficient time saving as well as minimize control other administration costs when compared to said demerits [17]. The organizations conducting campus recruitment in a particular institute/college establish strong bonds with the concerned institute/university and their students. The students keep coming to these organizations for summer training and internships often and more frequently. So, it builds a strong pipeline and trust for next year's selection process. It is therefore the preferred activity of the companies as well as to Institutes who can even ensure provision of quality internships for the academic year.

(c) **Constraints :** The major constraint is the available time for the process. Generally, the semester time is limited packed with program deliverables like assignments, internships, Cell/Club activities and Projects. Therefore, it is very challenging to hold multiple job drives when students are studying at campus amidst the semester. It is also difficult for educational institutions to provision accommodation and hospitality to visiting recruiter due to cost factor. Other constraints in campus recruitment process is that, companies can hire only if there is job openings created which is again related to favourable business atmosphere and economy.

(d) **Disadvantages :** The biggest demerit for a hiring company comes in the form of work training cost required for these untrained fresher students. Fresh candidates selected through campus selections require adequate training for work. This is an additional expense for the company overhead. If you go to far-off areas for recruitments, the commutation costs and lodging expenses also scale high. Campus Placements is also not a solution for short term and urgent staffing requirements. For Educational Institutions, Campus Placements is also a costly affair; as for majority of the participating companies involves providing guest service and incurring commuting expenditures all costs add up to institutional overheads. Companies also incur different costs related to transit, lodging, staff expenses etc., while conducting employment selection activities. Moreover, the dynamic and talented applicants having practical work experience cannot be hired via college recruitment activities. Also, generally college fresher cannot work with their dream organization in campus placement process and will have to remain contended with the organization that hires them during Institute selection most often due to friend pressure and parental force to get placed.

4. Changing Perspectives of Campus Placement

(a) **Changing Recruiters Perception:** The uncertain and complex business environment of today has made modern recruiters to focus more on saving costs and time in campus recruitment which instead they can focus on business generation and profitability. Therefore, the HR department has come up with innovative hiring styles like Interview online through Skype Video Calling and Telephonic Interviews. Even Social Mediums like Facebook and LinkedIn have been introduced for the aspirant to apply through profile postings. Blogs and Links have been created where the job applicants can write model codes and do programming for the companies to know their employability factor. Hackathon competitions are being held to pre-screen prospects for job and seed capitals for new ventures. Also, corporates would be happier if Students knew and are exposed to real business problems and practical work challenges right in semesters as organizations can save significant cost of training the fresh resources as per real life business scenarios.

(b) Changing Students Perception: The present age students prefer their recruitment to happen paperless so that they do not have to carry any stationery for the campus recruitment process. They want recruiting company profiles/Job Descriptions available in their phones, inspire them to apply for the company and also have an online case study/aptitude test with only objective type clicking. Moreover, these days when education itself has been taken online shape through EdX and Alison courses to name a few, current generation is no doubt looking for such processes at their career process [18]. They also prefer e-recruiting where they only have to upload their CV for the company to take up rest of the process. Students have interest in challenging jobs which they can find by going through company profile and website and provide innovative solution to companies' challenges.

(c) Changing Institutional Perception: Well in the present competitive scenario, the institutional perception towards placements is to basically have organizations at their campus at any cost. For this branding purpose, business schools/universities have mastered the art of pleasing companies by offering executives stay in luxurious hotels, provide transport/air tickets and give mementos as token of gratitude. All this is done to ensure that institutions can effectively present their placement records to stakeholders and reduce competitive pressure. Amidst this, Universities are also expecting companies to do online recruitment at campus so that they can show innovations in E-Recruitments. Of recent, Institutions have also resorted to publicising e-recruitment laboratories through social media as a means for realising branding objectives. Lastly, Colleges also do have a profound love to see their students only to be selected at the end of the job interview process.

(d) Changing Technology: New Technology evolving at the Market has also changed the course of recruitment in HR Industry. Nowadays, Job Advertisements and applications are all processed through social media and web portals [19]. Filtering potential candidates are done over websites, blogs, links, smartphones like Mobile recruiting or through Video Conferencing forums like Skype. Hiring Apps are also contemplated to make applicants cognizant of a particular's company's entire hiring process. Both pre-training and job related simulation trainings are being imparted through Massive Open Online Courses (MOOC) over the web either through company intranet or internet.

Moreover, Aptitude tests are held online as well typing methods in case of Case Interview or Essay writings. LinkedIn platforms are being used to network manpower between different and competitor companies. The present changing technologies benefits is reaching wider student job aspirants for companies at a very low costs and time as well as across different universities across geographical areas.

(e) Changing requirement of Job skills: In current corporate world, job skills are all about life and soft skills. It also expects as to how one can effectively meet delivery timelines and targets in a given time. Technical task oriented, tech-savvy and computer literacy requirements, inter-personal skills, cultural adaptability and Emotional Intelligence are the other few important skills a graduate must hone when he completes his higher education. Recently, Automation, Process Improvement and Project Management skills are also becoming significant in today's competitive environment. However, Human and Personality Skills with global perspective like sense-making, work-load management, flexibility, and social intelligence are sought by managements for the role as well these days.

5. Online-oriented Industry placement model

Before we proceed to the future model of campus hiring, let us first determine the existing system of campus recruitment through Figure 1. The process highlight begins with attraction of Industry/Companies's attention by Institutes/Universities through sending invitations, relationships cultivated through extra-curricular event interactions over time or vice-versa

from Industry Side to the Universities. The College/Institute acts as a service provider here in the process through connecting Students with Industry Job Requirements and Specifications.

Current Campus Recruitment System Model

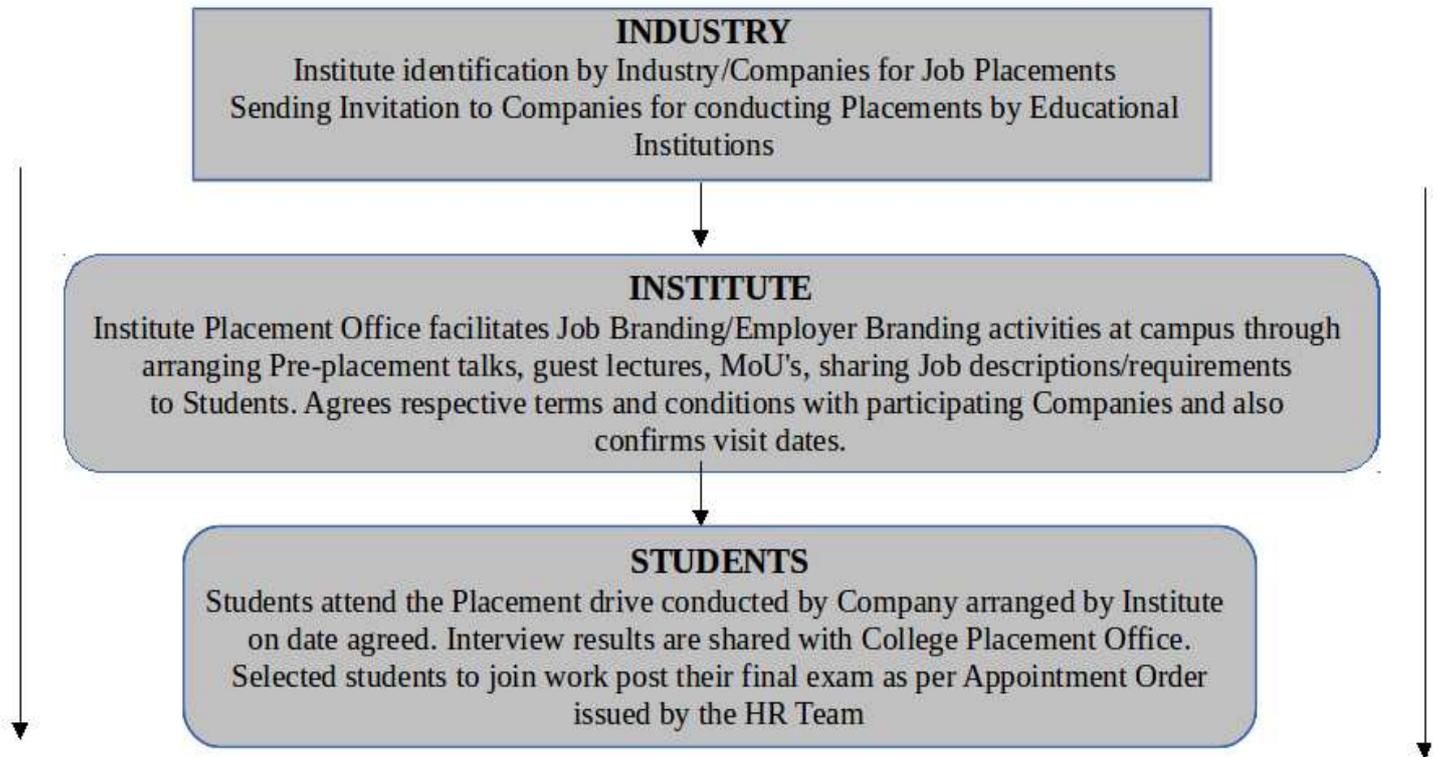


Fig. 1: Present Campus placement Model (Top-Down Approach)

Future Campus Recruitment System Model

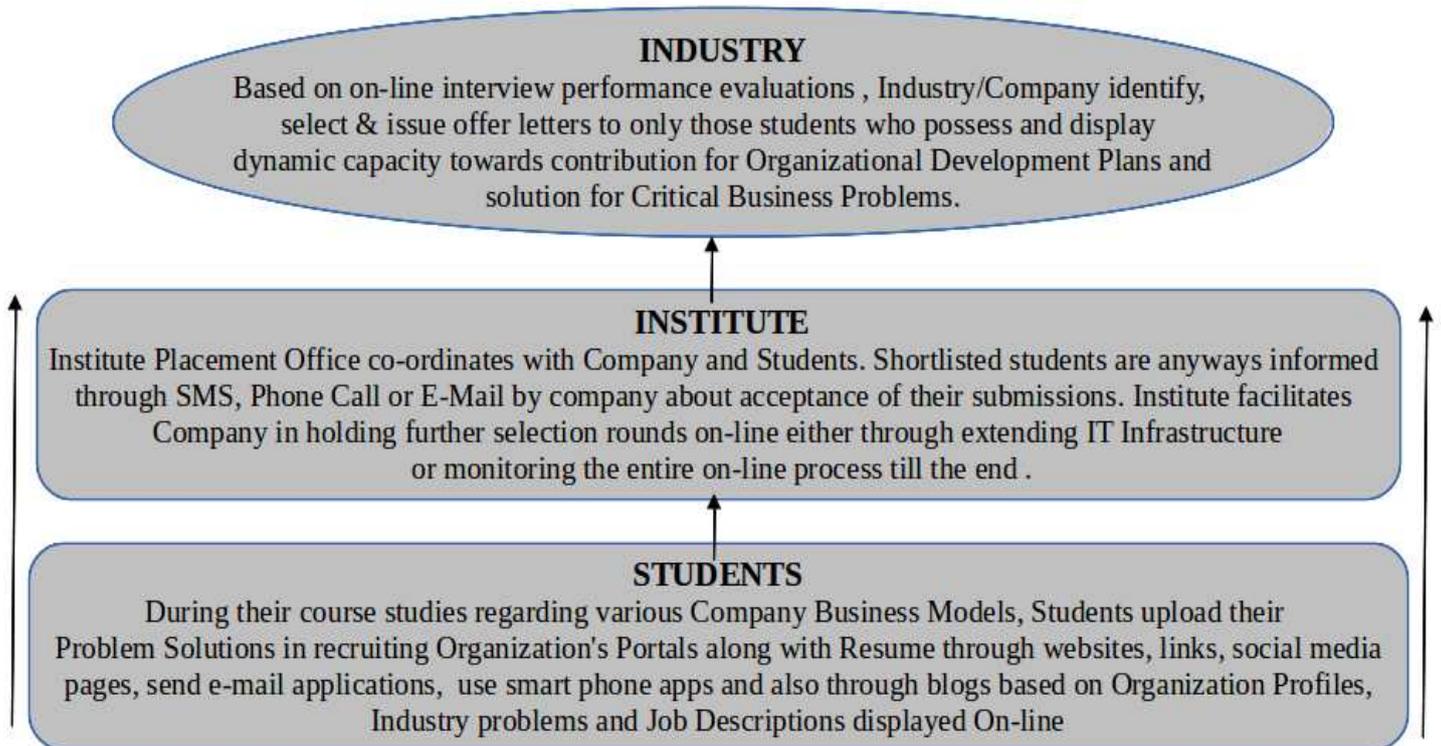


Fig. 2: Future Industry Placement Model (Bottom-Up Approach)

This process generally occurs through extensive job branding at college campuses in the form of pre-placement talks or guest lectures or campus promotions as well as advertising of jobs by college placement office. Once terms and conditions plus visit date is agreed between company and college, the recruiters visit the college and hold the job drive as agreed spread over around one or two days. Interview results are shared with college placement office just like how an university shares academic exam results with college. Beneficiary students receive offer letter and appointment order to their e-mail and receive sms/phone call from HR department on a joining date.

(a) Brief Description: An online oriented industry placement model is one where entire recruitment process is executed totally through websites, links, social media, emails, smart phones, and blogs and video conferencing applications over Internet [20]. Basically, this is a paper free green bottom up approach as depicted in Figure 2, where Student Job aspirants based on their academic studies about various business models in course semesters, are motivated in campus on their own to upload CV/Resumes in company portals on-line. Here, job descriptions and company profiles along with specified industry issues are also displayed requiring feasible solutions. Therefore, job aspiring students in campus are needed to work on such real business issues and prepare a solution synopsis either by case, report or whichever format specified by recruiting company for being evaluated on their problem solving capacities. Here again, recruiter shortlists such uploaded resumes and applications through their online screening methodologies and intimate the shortlisted student through email or call or chat. Later further rounds are completed through telephonic interviews and video conferencing. Those Students who are capable of practical problem solving and display capacity of organizational development are offered; where appointment letter is e-mailed as a document. Well as we know today, that present generation of job applicants including fresh student job seekers, prefer any selection methodologies by companies who provide business related simulations, practice tests, training materials, demo plus positive evaluations backed by a high validated material contents for applying jobs on-line [21]. Therefore, the future model proposed in this research will contribute to develop overall impressions about recruiting as a whole as well as company image in student's mind to take up informed career decisions. It is also achieved when student understands the company nature on-line and cross checks references with professional social networking sites thereby taking wiser career decisions.

(b) Salient Features of Online-industry oriented placement model: The ideal feature of this model involves impressive time and cost savings, quick response receipt, easy interactions among institutes, students and companies, total paperless exercise.

- (1) Bottom-up approach instead of Top down approach
- (2) Well streamlined step by step Hiring Process Flow
- (3) Detailed feedback on Interview Performance after every round
- (4) Analytics and Collaboration in the form of links to all available jobs in the Organization
- (5) Easy to track Recruiting, Hiring and Event history with time logs
- (6) Scope for more Automation

Among all, an on-line model facilitates healthy prosperous relationship between companies and students at campus to achieve a better candidate relationship module on-line. Application of e-recruitment also ensures ubiquitous recruitment process [22].

(c) Advantages & Benefits to The Recruiters : E-Recruitment for the recruiters comes with multi-fold benefits as compared to traditional method [23]. First of all, the user-friendly features will enable HR staff to easily navigate the web portal in Monitoring, CV to Job Matching and exposing all available jobs to job seekers. Networking with interview panels and candidates becomes easy with involvement of social media [24]. Secondly, Industry tailor made job training materials can easily be uploaded on to the site where students can take up

pre-training while in studies at college. Even Administrative work like generation of Offer Letters and Appointment date confirmation communications can all be executed at easy through ICT Technologies. Macro-level benefits include time and cost Savings, connectivity to vast university campuses across spread geographical areas, reduction in manual administration duties, employer branding, large scale student talent pool in online presence and no intermediary fees.

(d) Constraints and Disadvantages to the Recruiters: On-line Screening, checking the skill sets and evaluating reliability of millions of resumes is an operational constraint and time consuming exercise for business organizations. Moreover, since corporate websites and portals are always soft targets for hackers to steal data, guaranteeing and protecting the security of candidate's input information will be a challenging task for the company. Again, there will also be expenses involved too if software and firewall is utilized for this process along with maintaing an IT Environment in hiring. There will also be issues when website will be hanged or crash if involved with too much student traffic. Secondly, with low Internet penetration, no access and lack of awareness of internet in many locations across India causes recruitment programs to be limited to urban universities and institutes only. Moreover, companies cannot just depend solely on the online recruitment methods due to tight time lines and strict delivery deadlines. Also in India, the employers and the employees still prefer a face-to-face interaction rather than sending e-mails and interacting over chats. There are also possibilities of students cheating while registering through mis-representation or concealment of material facts. Also, the major message for HR department is to acknowledge organization wide implementation of on-line recruitment for fresher hiring is about more than technology. There will always be behavioural and cultural changes involved during implementation.

(e) Opportunities and Challenges for the Students: On-line oriented industry placement process will definitely open door for experimenting more on on-line industry internships and work projects. The greatest benefit here for the students would be relief from apprehensions on work environment and stress worry as they can network with company businesses from any corner of their convenience without being to actually be present at offices. This will stabilize student expectation towards work atmosphere of their placed organizations [25]. Challenges for students involve ensuring they are technologically competent and computer literates to ensure participation in online selection and recruitment process. The biggest opportunities for the students are choice of many companies in a given space rather one company one visit in case of physical campus placement process. Moreover, they have the freedom to access company profiles and job descriptions anytime anywhere all the time. Challenges in the same time involve students to put in additional hours of preparation and practice other than their studies. Even young students may have to tune in their Patience, Personality and adjust Attitude for the entire new online process otherwise which they know as current campus recruitment system (Figure 1).

(f) Responsibility of the Institutions: Institutions must ensure proper computer lab facilities and other IT infrastructure is being extended to recruiters during the on-line recruitment event. The big responsibility involves in the adequate training of the students to make them technologically competent and computer literates. This training should be separate along with job oriented and skills based training where students are educated on list of dynamic hiring organizations as well as soft skills on World Wide Web. Separate Syllabus or Subject should be implemented in Teaching Pedagogy as well for students to better understand the online recruitment process first academically. Sufficient On-line Mock Interviews are to be arranged by Institutions to sharpen the students' answering confidence on video screens. Institutions should initiate strategic tie-ups and MoU's with corporates who have adopted E-Recruitment or On-line Model for enhancing opportunities for its students.

6. Conclusion

To conclude this research, due to the various short-comings of traditional campus recruitment process discussed, the online or E-recruitment model will definitely be the new face of hiring and placement in Higher Education Domain. Especially, the new model will save a considerable amount of time for academia since job seeking students are able to familiarize themselves with job requirements on-line with very few minimal instructions from placement office which otherwise would had to be spoon fed in traditional process for every step of execution. Future Online-oriented campus placement model is a fantastic opportunity to enter Career life in a easy hassle free paper less way. The Model's objective also serves towards promotion of a robust green environment. Given the high benefit and advantage factor for corporates such as time, image benefit and cost savings as well as autonomy on student's side to navigate and browse corporates online throughout the globe in a paperless way makes online recruitment stand out when compared with traditional placement model.

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