

BRIDGING THE GAP IN MANAGEMENT EDUCATION FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

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The objective of education is to prepare the young to educate themselves throughout their lives.

-Robert Maynard Hutchins

ABSTRACT

Management education in India stands at a crossroads. The traditional university structure of educating and training tomorrow's business leaders has become redundant and is likely to be discarded in the increasingly diverse and technological global economy. Process of globalization not only demands drastic changes in the traditional educational approach but also stress a need for introduction of new age employability skills which have more economic value in today's' time . Thus, there is a crucial requirement to shape the management education in accordance with the global changes to improve competitiveness and employability of the India work-force.

This paper tries to explore the current paradigms of management education in India with special reference to the gap between academia and the industry. This paper also studies the trends and issues prevailing in management education in India, and to suggest plausible solution towards improvement of management education in India.

Keywords: Management Education, Management Education reforms, Development, Gaps

INTRODUCTION

Management education can be defined as the process of imparting concepts, skills and competencies to learners, which are essential to perform the task of managing. The present management education does not prepare students to face the challenges in business environment. The current management education merely teaches the concepts with case studies. It does not focus on the challenges arising out of rapid growing technology and the challenges involved in running an enterprise (Rao, 2010). Generally, it denotes those activities traditionally conducted by colleges and universities that focus on developing a broad range of managerial knowledge and abilities. Unquestionably, the major issue in management education is the curriculum offered in our business schools and this concern has been labeled *the competency movement* (Wexley and Baldwin 1986). The traditional management education curriculum, as presently constituted, may not be adequately preparing individuals for the challenges they experience as professional managers (Pfeffer, 1977). With the opening up of economy, the field of management education is one area which requires some drastic and constructive changes to survive and sustain in the changing

times. The contemporary management is not just limited to the functional areas such as Marketing, Finance and Human Resource Management but has widened to include new areas like Operations, Information Technology, International Business, Supply Chain Management, retail

India is seen as the mine for the young and budding population. There has been a continuous growth in the area of education because of the rising demand of trained management graduates globally. With the onset of globalisation, privatisation and liberalisation, management education has become one of the most sought after education. It started with the establishment of Indian Institute of Management Ahmedabad (IIMA), followed soon after by one in Kolkata (IIMC). Over the last two decades, management education has seen a rise with the establishment of 4 Indian Institutes of Management Calcutta (1961), Ahmedabad (1962), Bangalore (1973), Lucknow (1984), now management education is being offered as full time/part time MBA programmes by some leading universities in the country. Recently and particularly during the last 4-5 years the country has witnessed a tremendous growth in the founding of management institutions most of them in private sector offering management programs in different functional areas of management.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

This research attempts to evaluate today's management education to develop employability skill in the paradigm shift of managing business. The first section of the paper evaluates the current scenario of management education viz. a viz. industry expectations and examines the role of business schools in the contemporary business, the

second section explains the strategies to reform management education with the emerging needs of the business.

From review of studies we have taken following research issues:

- ❑ To evaluate the present scenario of management education in India
- ❑ To study the gaps and suggest measures to integrate management education with industry expectations
- ❑ To suggest plausible reforms towards improvement of management education in India.

CURRENT SCENERIO

Today managers are in great demand in every sector of economy. India needs a huge reservoir each year of people who are trained for business and for management and demands is to last for coming years. But it is matter of concern whether the demand is for what they have been taught. In management education, quality has become a necessity. To make India an intellectual capital of the world, we have to create a dynamic environment, which can encourage superior quality management education colleges and effort should be made to breathe life into management education. Government has taken initiatives in this direction by giving node to 7 more IIMs taking the total number of the premier management school to 14. India already has 11 functional IIMs in Ahmedabad, Bangalore, Kolkata, Lucknow, Indore, Kozhikode, Shillong, Tiruchirappalli, Ranchi, Raipur and Rohtak remaining three are to setup in state of J&K, Uttarakhand and Rajasthan. Apart from IIMs management education is offered by university's own department in campus, affiliated colleges of universities in same place or the whole State, now technical universities have been given this role. Moreover

autonomous institutes approved by AICTE, universities running distance education program and open mode like IGNOU, Delhi University, Kurukshetra University, ICFAI and several others are also offering courses in management. Some recognized institutes and universities are also offering 3 years part – time program in evening faculty for working executives. Foreign universities having collaborations in India and those having students exchange program with limited-time studies abroad are also imparting management education. New private universities like ICFAI (a national brand), Amity and several others are now coming up. According to annual report (2009-2010), published by Ministry of Human Resource Development, there were 20 Universities and 500 Colleges at the time of independence. At present, there are 504 Universities and university-level institutions (as on 31.12.2009) 243 State Universities, 53 State Private Universities, 40 Central Universities, 130 Deemed Universities, 33 institutions of national importance established under Acts of Parliament five Institutions established under various State legislations. Table (1) shows region- wise data of AICTE approved management institutes in the year 2010-11.

Table 1: Region-wise data of AICTE approved Management Institutions in India by the year 2010-11

| Region | Management Institute | Total |
|----------------|----------------------|-------|
| Central | 373 | 373 |
| Eastern | 150 | 150 |
| North- west | 472 | 472 |
| Northern | 525 | 525 |
| South- Central | 945 | 945 |
| South | 395 | 395 |
| Western | 419 | 419 |
| South - West | 277 | 277 |

Source: www.aicte.ernet.in

As per AICTE data, in 2008-2009 the number institutes increased at exceptional rate, thus can be called the golden year in respect to establishment of institutes. In last 5 years the number of AICTE approved colleges has increased by almost 70% in total in various disciplines, whereas number of management institutes has seen growth of 90% in terms of number of institutes and growth of 123% in terms of intake.

FINDINGS/GAPS IN MANAGEMENT EDUCATION (FACTS AND CONCERNS)

The design of the Management Education should be that it not only meets the needs of the students but also match the outlook of the corporate world, but one of the biggest challenges is, how to build up ethical & human values of Management concepts without prejudice. The other challenging issues of the Management Education system in today's challenging environment are as follows:

- ❑ **Institute's Quality & it's management education imparting design**
- ❑ **Stringent reassessment of course**
- ❑ **Retention programmes for competent teaching body**
- ❑ **Lacuna of Industry orientation in course**
- ❑ **Deficiency of industry exposure faculty**
- ❑ **Pedagogy style**
- ❑ **Low PST (Per Student Teacher)**
- ❑ **Gaps in packages leading to faculty's lackadaisical attitude** for creativity & adoption of newer ways for improving teaching which may lead to better understanding
- ❑ **Management education as a profit centre rather than temple of Education**
- ❑ **Companies to be considered as training centre for already trained employee leading to inefficient wastage of company's resources**

- ❑ **Gaps in knowledge of concepts** to real life situations
- ❑ **More emphasis on memory power v/s knowledge** leading to one night stand for concepts thereby no role of education
- ❑ **Most of the Management colleges are one man army** with no forces
- ❑ Management education institutes, once considered to be a temple of knowledge are now being considered as temple of money. Many of the institution hardly give respect to the overall development of students by adopting new methodology, new or revised syllabus according to the need of the real world. The result is that what we are taught in college is different from the real life situations. They miss in inculcating the ability to apply conceptual knowledge to the real world. They come as graduates, leave the college with a degree of Management with no change in their personality to become future business leaders who meet the requirements of the Industry.

CONCLUSION

In today’s global economy where the need of the hour is to have Management Education which not only help in growing economy but also bridge the gaps between artificial & real world. Need of the hour is to have a set of curricula design which fits well not only from trainer perspective but also from students perspective. This integration can take place once we remove the gaps between trainer & students. There is also a need to understand the rational of management education for continuous development .There is also a need to reexercise the management education system to amalgamate economic development with educational system.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The challenge of sustainable tomorrow puts a profound responsibility on business schools to

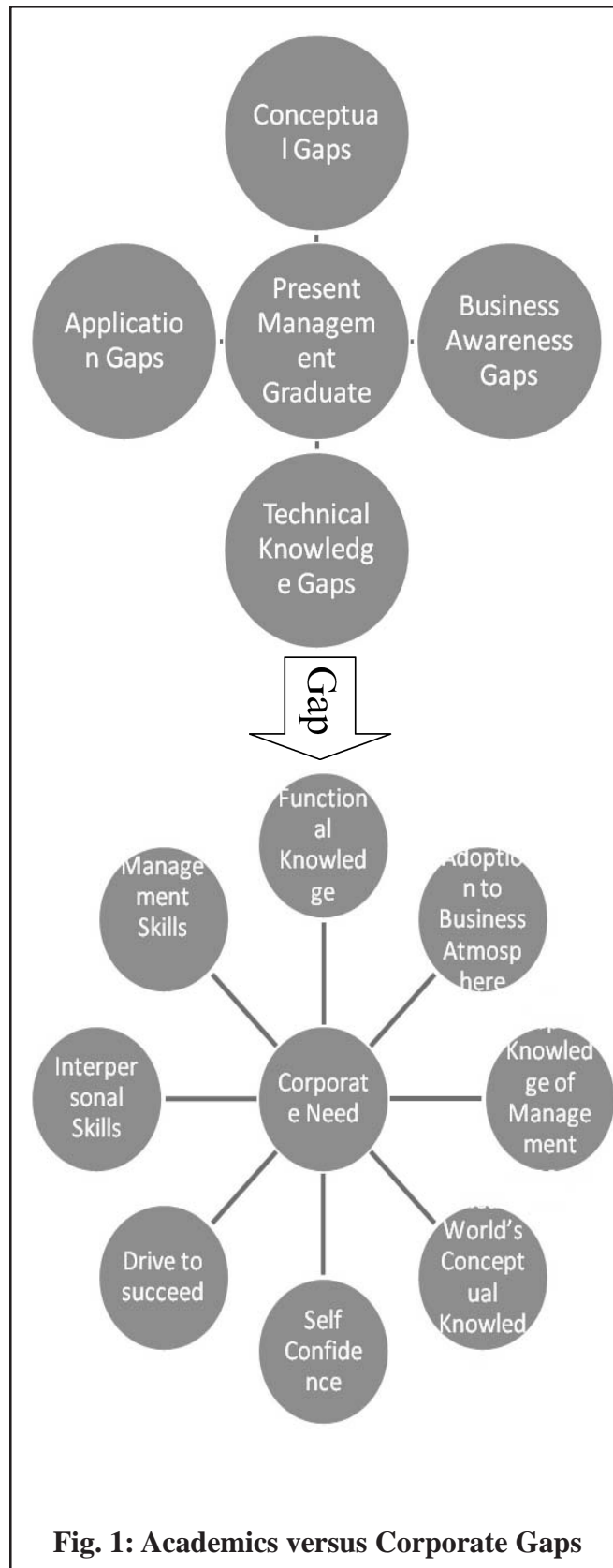


Fig. 1: Academics versus Corporate Gaps

disseminate knowledge to business professional for today and tomorrow. Management education has contributed immensely for the success and growth of institutions, corporate and industries for more than a century. But the global dynamics of business is changing. New challenges and opportunities are thrown open in terms of values, equity, and accessibility; afford ability, inclusion, quality, intellectual capital, restoration of resources, conservation, eco system and above all sustainability. This is leading us to revisit and realign the management education. Following the United Nations Principles for Responsible Management Education (UNPRME), business programmes should become thought and action leaders on these issues. The task of transforming management education to contribute effectively to the challenge of moving to global sustainability is upon us. Thus, keeping in mind the daunting challenge, we suggest the following measures:

Upgradation and enhancement in Course Curriculum

The syllabi should be revised and updated regularly so that the curriculum appears applied and realistic. Moreover, the process to bring about the change should be smooth and easy. There needs to be an integration of the theories taught in the classrooms and the practices followed in reality. A periodic review of the curriculum by the industry experts should be conducted to bring about the practical aspect. Assigning live projects to students will bridge the gap between the theory and application and enhance their learning abilities. Academicians should include techniques like role plays, group discussions and management games to make learning more interesting and lively.

Promotion of Experiential Learning

Educators need to promote experiential learning through live case studies and project writing. Too much reliance on books makes the learning inefficient and students lack the knowledge and skills required to compete in the competitive world. Contemporary business environment requires more than the lecture/discussion framework to impart information and make learning more effective. Educational institutes need to promote pragmatic learning through live projects and case studies.

Encourage regular Institute - Industry Integration

In order to sustain in the changing environment, it is mandatory for management institutes to have regular industry interaction. There is a strong need for reorientation of teaching, training, consultancy and research activities. Experienced and senior officials from industry can be involved to provide industry exposure to the industry. Moreover, Institutes should organize guest lectures inviting experts from various functional departments to share their experiences with the budding managers. Regular industrial visits can be organized to give a feel of the actual working of the industry. Conferences and seminars are other such platforms which can be used for information sharing and deliberations to strengthen academia- industry integration. The current system requires students to attend only 6-8 weeks of training which does not suffice to get a holistic understanding of the organization. Regular and longer duration of internship is required to bridge the theory – practice gap.

Need for Incessant and innovative Faculty Development Programmes

There is a scarcity of quality management academicians, especially in the functional

areas like marketing and finance. It is a herculean task to fulfill the needs of rapidly expanding management institutions. Thus, some institutes are compromising on the quality of the faculty members to meet the demands. This in turn affects the quality of management education being imparted; there is again a strong need to follow strict and standard code of conduct while recruiting the staff. The institutes should make a point to hire only qualified, experience and meritorious staff. Training and development of Faculty members is another neglected area which calls for immediate attention from the top management. This is an urgent need to plan a crash program to train management teachers at selected management institution and also to limit the expansion of the system to what is sustainable without sacrificing the faculty quality. Regular faculty development programmes have become the need of the hour to sustain the pressure of the changing and the competitive world. Some of the initiatives which can be taken in this regard are:

Recruitment of Experienced and Qualified Faculty: Faculty should at least have a post – graduate qualifications in the relevant field and industry experience ranging from 5 to 10 years. Industry experience should be given more weightage to the doctoral qualifications.

Induction of Visiting Faculty with core competencies: Guest lectures by the industry experts and induction of visiting faculty from the industry should be arranged regularly to substantiate the theory with industry experience

Regular evaluation of Faculty: Regular evaluation of the faculty is required in the fields of consulting and research work so that they are further able to guide the students. The academicians should act more as a facilitator mentor to impart applied learning.

Constant contribution to research and consulting: Research and consulting bring in a fresh perspective from the industry as well as serve as practical learning experience for faculty. This would further enhance knowledge imparted by faculty to students.

The below mentioned figure 2 illustrates ways to handle some common issues:

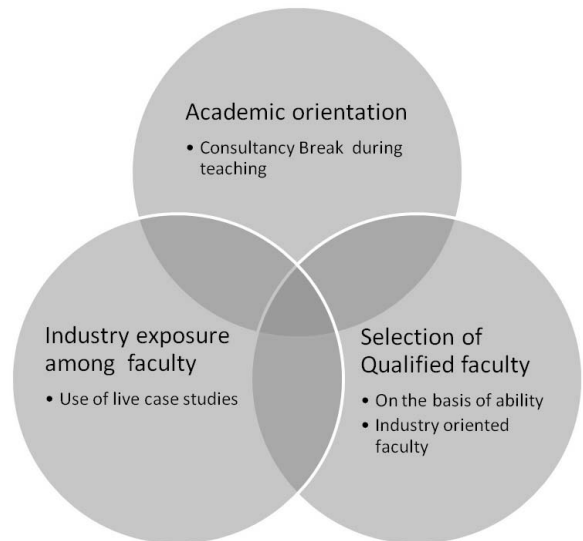


Fig. 2: Faculty Development Programmes: A look around the issues which are pertaining to faculties & how the issues can be solved

PEDAGOGY IMPROVEMENT

The burning issue in pedagogy is the understanding between students, contents & the middle men. The information technology period has brought forward new approaches in pedagogical styles but still the main focus of the pedagogy remains the art of spreading the related knowledge. It is the necessity that pedagogy should be customer oriented rather than trainer oriented having more case studies, workshops than lecture to emphasize on the subject. There should be more exposure for industrial environment in term of live projects, role play etc. Following improvement in

pedagogies & teaching methods need to take place

- ❑ Focus on student's personal development through participating in national/International seminars.
- ❑ Based on students background/ awareness & work exposure, trainer should adopt the strategy
- ❑ Bridging the gap between academic & profession through industry interface
- ❑ Case Studies approach: Indoor exposure to students through case studies for outdoor environment.
- ❑ Group building approach: Gathering, discussing & sharing the contents based upon the analytical approach.
- ❑ Power Point Presentations
- ❑ Computer Based Training
- ❑ Brainstorming / Reverse brainstorming/brain writing
- ❑ Industry interface during lecture
- ❑ Information and Communication Technology
- ❑ Research Projects
- ❑ Live Projects
- ❑ Paper Presentation
- ❑ Situational Exercises
- ❑ Workshop
- ❑ Industrial Visits
- ❑ Market Surveys

Government Responsibility

- ❑ Transparent selection of experts on the panel based on their professional background
- ❑ Government role should be to supervise & organize.
- ❑ Conviction based relationship between AICTE/Government & Colleges/Institutions

- ❑ More authority with control should be endowed to private institutions.
- ❑ Revamping of University system to take place going by present environment
- ❑ Only one body with norms specified for accreditation or ranking of B-schools
- ❑ Government bodies should not interfere with ranking and accreditation issues
- ❑ Institute to follow all the norms, rule & regulations as laid down by government.

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