

MANAGEMENT EDUCATION - BEYOND THE CURRICULUM

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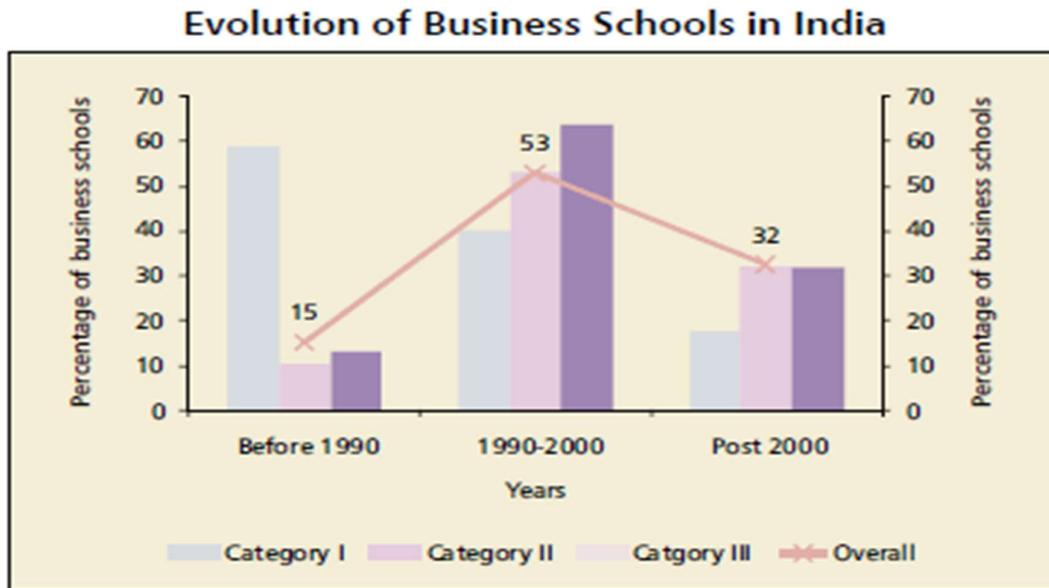
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“It is not the strongest of the species that survives, not most intelligent that survives, it is the one that is the most adaptable to change”- Charles Darwin (1809-1882)

The changing scenario of the present Management Education offers students more openings, greater self-confidence and out of the box ways to hone their skills. It includes internationalization with increased focus on international partnerships, international internships, student exchange programs, joint degrees and many other things. The use of new technologies in Management teaching is a trend that is catching up fast. Greater usage of social media to reach the students is on the rise. The era of persuasive technology has significant implications for higher education and especially in Management Education. It is said that “Technology allows students to become much more engaged in constructing their own knowledge, and cognitive studies show that ability is key to learning success”. This is followed by offering more interdisciplinary programs to the students in the classes and to stimulate them to arrive at solutions in critical situations through team work is in vogue.

Once upon a time food, clothing and shelter formed the basic needs of human beings. But with the development of the industrial age eventually, one more very important element, Education got added up to this list. As time passed, getting things done would become more complicated and with the advent of the internet revolution, the need for the Management Education was felt very badly and it started playing a pivotal role in discharging the daily chores of people. It has become a very core concept in the field of business too. It plays a very dynamic role in Business Environment and the outcome is the emergence of B Schools, imparting Management Education both conceptually and analytically to enable the young minds to meet the accomplishments of the potential companies. Now the Management Education is considered the elitist as it attracts young men and women in the most positive sense, so the number of B Schools in India is witnessing an exponential growth. As a result of Globalization, Liberalization, Privatization, rapid technological changes and mounting cut throat competition, it is very difficult to manage things on the spot, the importance of Management Education was increased manifold. The premier B Schools like IIMs at Ahmedabad, Bangalore, Calcutta, Lucknow and ISB at Hyderabad are doing a wonderful job in moulding thousands of young and energetic minds into very dynamic leaders. So the need of the hour is “Out of the Box Thinking” to carve a niche among the young students and ignite their minds to become very effective entrepreneurs.

The chart given below gives a birds’ eye view regarding the evolution of Business Schools in India. It is observed that in post 2000, there is a drastic change in the evolution of B schools.



Source: D&B survey results

According to Sydney Harris, “the whole purpose of education is to turn mirrors into windows”. The education institutions need to strike a balance between the education cost and quality. The business schools also need to maintain their standard of excellence by paying attention to performance measurement. In order to maintain the quality of education, it is necessary for the B Schools to remain in close touch with the industry. At the same time the B schools are in a position to see that there should not be any gap between theory and practice. This implies that the present day management education does not focus on one particular discipline or area of specialization. It is basically heterogeneous in nature. The pedagogy and teaching method presently used is more related to the lecture method with a little practical exposure and lacks creativity. This certainly affects the career orientation of the students. In the light of this back ground, it is very much essential to strike a balance between theory and practice.

According to the CIPD (Chartered Institute of Personnel Department) Management Employee Careers Survey report, the following are the current trends in Career Management:

1. Individuals need to be more proactive in looking after their own careers (97%)
2. Career support is critical (90%).
3. Companies increasingly use lateral job moves to develop their managers (86%).
4. Less clear career paths on offer in organizations continuing in the future (73%).
5. Increasingly employees are changing organizations to move up the career ladder (68%).

A progressive outlook and sensitivity to the concerns of the above issues is mandatory to the B Schools in order to maintain their niche effectively. So some logical reasoning and learning concepts are required to make sense of these by being not only aware of them but also see that how to make out in real practical life. This is the reason why premier B School like ISB desire some work experience that may be useful for properly appreciating the courses that are taught in Management Education. Another live example is the booming demand for the Executive MBA offered by most of the B Schools. This shows that the aspirants of Management Education should have proper focus towards their future goals as well as willingness to work hard.

As Technology advances with the net revolution, the B Schools should be aware of the following emerging technologies in the field of Management Education and the chart given below emphasises the need of it.

Emerging Technologies for Management Education

- Digital storytelling
- Online meetings
- Communities of practice
- Personal broadcasting
- Wikis
- Educational gaming
- Massively multiplayer online games (MMOGs)
- Extended learning
- Intelligent searching
- Speech Synthesis
- Webcams and video from cell phones
- Social computing
- Peer-to-peer file sharing
- Mobile learning
- Context-aware environments and devices
- Augmented reality and enhanced visualization
- Smart mobs
- Cloud Computing

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Most of the students opt for a good B School based on its reputation. Program content comes after reputation. In fact the syllabus is very crucial. It is time the B Schools gave up some of the old papers and started subjects based on current issues. Tradition is a welcoming thing but it is not enough. It should be judiciously combined with modernism and individual talent.

Great writers like F.W. Taylor, Elton Mayo, Mary Parker Follett, Peter F. Drucker, Philip Kotler and many others produced enduring text books of MBA and thus helped the spread of Management Education. These books are a result of their grasp of traditional and current knowledge, their ability to classify it and reduce it to laws and formulas. Their research approach enabled them to do all this successfully. Mark McCormack's book, "What they do not teach you at Harvard School" refers to the practice of B Schools concentrating on past practices and case studies. It is not enough if the students only learn how a company was run 10 years ago. They should also know how to run the company now and also in future. Subjects and topics necessary for the current and future changes are to be included in the syllabus. In addition to the usual papers, new papers like Luxury Brand Marketing, Sports Management, Stress Management, Online-Shopping, Green Marketing are to be incorporated in the syllabus.

The following are some of the challenges faced by the B Schools in India in their delivery of quality education:

1. Information management skills
2. Information Technology Management skills
3. Decision making in a very dynamic environment
4. HRD skills
5. Innovation & Credibility
6. Service Sector Management skills
7. Time Management skills
8. Stress Management skills
9. Environment Management skills
10. Entrepreneurship
11. Customer Services management skills and
12. Employability skills

To overcome the challenges, the following measures have been suggested:

1. Reengineering of Management Education
2. Developing the right mindset and attitude through focusing on the quality of education.
3. More interactive sessions for the students rather on preaching what is mentioned in the text books.
4. Making accreditation mandatory to ensure quality of education.
5. Providing value added courses in Languages besides English
6. Exposing the faculty regularly to refresher courses for updating their skills.
7. Shifting the focus to project work on the contemporary and current issues.
8. Providing industry interface to the students on regular basis to understand the practical problems in the corporate world.
9. Arresting the spread of unauthorised B schools which may dilute the standards.
10. Giving top priority to promoting the employability skills among the students.

We can take care of the ever-changing world only by our research. It is sine-qua-non for any vital department, hospital or school. Research should be as intensive as the patient care in an ICCU. The Management Education is full of life brimming with vivacity, energy and enthusiasm. Its professors and students should burst with vitality and new ideas. They should always be innovative and for this there is no other way except research. Research leads to development and development leads to wealth and happiness.

Therefore, it can be concluded that a high-quality B School is noted for promoting social, intellectual, aesthetic, emotional, spiritual and physical development of the student. It not only focuses on continuous improvement of its existing facilities but also takes active part in the continuous and sustainable development of the community. To sum up, a quality B School provides a stimulating, vibrant, effective and broad-based learning environment and skills suitable for the integral development of the student.

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