

Guest Editorial

International Conference on Educational Leadership

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It is patently obvious to even a casual observer, that the country's current educational delivery system is in serious trouble and needs drastic reexamination. The need of the hour is to imbibe:

- Wisdom to Visualize,
- Wisdom to Organize, and
- Wisdom to Energize People,

in order to conceive, design and implement an affordable, world-class educational system not just for the elite few or those in urban areas, but also for the masses across the country commensurate with our ambitions to become a major force on the global scene.

What do students from our Primary schools to Doctoral programs represent?

They represent *"The Idea of India!"*

As Swami Vivekananda cautioned: *"Shall (the idea of) India die...? Then from the world all spirituality will be extinct, all moral perfection will be extinct, all ideality will be extinct; and in its place will reign the duality of lust and luxury as the male and female deities, with money as its priest; fraud, force and competition its ceremonies and the human soul its sacrifice. Such a thing can never be!"*

With this in mind, International Conference on Educational Leadership held at Indian Institute of Management Bangalore (IIMB) in January 2009 brought together eminent educationists, grass roots NGO

workers, Teachers/Faculty, administrators of public and private educational institutions, policy makers and titans from the corporate world, to chart a future course of action intended to transform the current rickety system and enhance our international stature.

In organizing this conclave on Educational Leadership, we took the position that **THE NON-PROFIT BUSINESS MODEL IS NOT AN OXYMORON, BUT A SOCIALLY AND ETHICALLY RESPONSIBLE BEHAVIOR!** In doing so, we were inspired by the late Dr. G. Venkataswamy, founder of the Madurai-based Aravind Eye Care System (AECS).

Dr. Venkataswamy (popularly known as Dr.V) adopted an approach that **judiciously combined both business and social orientations – the 70:30 model**, in which two free patients were covered by one paying patient. The result: an ETHICALLY SUSTAINABLE organization, consistently generating surpluses to fund various related ventures and expansion activities with minimal dependence on external sources.

Today, this institution that was established over three decades ago has grown by leaps and bounds, encompassing the Lions Aravind Institute for Community Ophthalmology (LAICO) – the training arm, Aurolabs – the manufacturing entity, and five hospitals in the states of Tamilnadu and Pondicherry. This success has legitimized AECS's "social marketing" model. Its management and systems have earned AECS accolades from admirers and well-wishers all over the world.

To rephrase Rabindranath Tagore's poem, Gitanjali:

- "Where the mind is without fear and the head held high;
- Where knowledge is free;
- Where the organization has not been broken up into fragments by narrow departmental walls;
- Where words come out from the depth of truth;
- Where tireless striving stretches its arms towards perfection;
- Where the clear stream of reason has not lost its way into the dreary desert sand of habit;
- Where the mind is led forward into ever-widening thought and action –
- Into that heaven of freedom, let our organizations awake."

Our challenge is to conceptualize and deliver an educational system which, at the very least meets, if not exceeds Tagore's dream.

With this in mind, the papers we have selected for publication could contribute to rethinking the current system. The paper by W. Benoy Joseph and Freda Swaminathan, highlights how philanthropic partners— from organizations (business, not-for-profit, and public sectors) to private foundations, alumni, and friends— can help business schools to make wishes come true.

The paper by Christopher Lubienski emphasizes the need for "...competitive institutional environments as a means to leverage market-style incentives, thereby inducing school managers to be more entrepreneurial in responding to consumer demand for education."

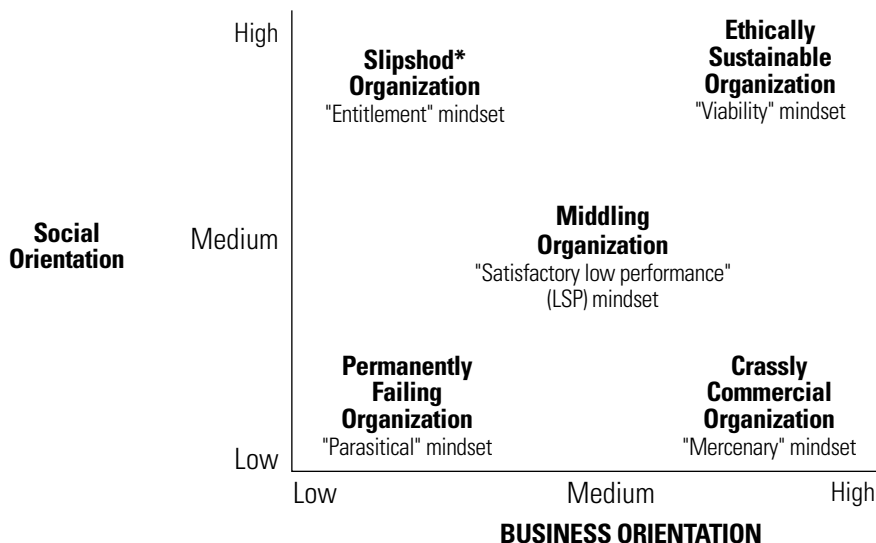
Kumar Alok's paper explores the core nature of leadership on the basis of the philosophy of the Bhagavad-Gita that expatiates on Sankhya Darshan in the human context.

Priyanka Chakravarty's paper reviews "...certain concepts in leadership, like that of entrepreneurial culture, fast track leaders, wisdom-ization of leadership, orchestration, transformational leadership and ethical leadership."

The paper by Mokbul Ali Laskar looks into the dynamics of the governance of public higher education institutions (HEIs) and postulates the increasing difficulty, particularly because of increasing role of external political power.

We hope these will start a dialogue that sets us on the path of rejuvenating the country's educational system from primary schools to the hallowed hall of doctoral institutions.

..... Continued in page 78



* Inefficiently or sloppily run by very dedicated individuals with little or no aptitude for management