

A Relook into Teaching Pedagogy in Management Education

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Introduction

To ensure that management education is able to deal with global, technological and market changes, it is imperative for business schools to use appropriate curricula, course materials and teaching models that are not only up-to-date but also internationally competitive". Interactive and participative teaching methodologies are the need of the hour. Management education is a process of leading in thought and action. Today there is a lack in focus on holistic education for the students aspiring to pursue MBA. Hence the student is not gainfully employed nor is he prepared to start his own venture. The core competencies of a business school offering management education lies in its unique and innovative teaching pedagogy to enable meaningful learning and development of skill sets that the employers think deem fit to employ. This paper analyses the present system of management education its pitfalls and presents how teaching pedagogy has to be developed to make management education process more meaningful and productive from the perspective of the stakeholders at large. This paper examines the issues that need to be addressed and a possible direction so that management education can be rejuvenated.

Management Education Today

There are more than 2500 B-schools in India where students invest a massive sum hoping to find their dream career after completing their program. Unfortunately, these business schools are not even able to place more than 30% of student except few top B schools. This is really an issue for concern and various reasons can be attached to it. These reasons can be attributed to the institute's quality imparting education, student quality, and rigid controls of affiliating authorities. Quality has deteriorated from both ends Institutes imparting education and student gaining education. There are fundamental issues of student

input quality. In addition, there are fundamental issues of academic delivery quality as most run-of the-mill colleges spend less than 10 per cent of their revenues on actual academic delivery. Most college managements complain of not being able to have enough admission in spite of investing huge money on College infrastructure and startup costs. And those that are able to fill capacity they admit anyone who applies for admission thus resulting in poor input, leading to poor placements. It is clear that management education will emerge as one of the most sought after programs of higher learning, due to its growing demand. It has been stated that business schools, if they have to survive, have to focus on research to solve problems of enduring importance and to build such curricula and adopt innovative pedagogies that can actually prepare students to be effective in practicing the profession and face real life.

Review of Literature

Indian educational system has been subjected to fast, radical, and ever revolutionary change over recent years. Knowledge and knowledge-creation will be far more central to them management education of the future rather than technology. Education doesn't stop with providing information but must transfer knowledge, wisdom and ideas. This fundamental transformation of management education is both inevitable and necessary because the present consumption patterns of mankind can only take him thus far in its evolution and no further. We are therefore going to experience in the next decade altogether different focus of organizations and management systems. It will, therefore, be necessary to anticipate and study some of their contours so that we design appropriate system of management education as early as possible. The values are of utmost importance and are inseparable irrespective to any form of education. Management education should produce persons with

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such value orientation, who, through example of dedicated hard work in a spirit of service, can change the attitude of the people they manage towards work, and towards each other to ensure quality of life and of work life.

Management institutes are often criticized for focusing more on theory and on quantitative analysis while neglecting interpersonal relationship. It is often stated that management education should be experience-based, active, problem oriented and modified by feedback and action learning serves the purpose. Due to globalization and advancement in information technology the role played by management education in enhancing countries' knowledge base has been placed under a sharper focus thus it has become imperative to look at management education from the market oriented perspective and take a strategic view to better align business education with the requirement of the global market. Management education can be more meaningfully viewed as a process, rather than a program with twin objectives first, change in role behavior and second, effective influence of individual practicing managers upon their organization. Management education in India today has acquired the characteristics of a commodity, to be bought and sold in markets like other commodities.

Global Management Education

Over the last decade, management education has been challenged by the increasingly competitive environment brought about by globalization and internationalization. Corporations have come to view management education as having become too theoretical and not practical enough, and graduates as being ill-equipped for the kind of corporate leadership positions. In short, there is a widening gap between the level of skills and competency which corporation expect and the skills imparted by these business schools. Hence, there is a need for modern business schools to transform themselves and operate as centers of excellence in learning and impart knowledge and skill for life. Today, management education should aim at developing a holistic personality capable of maintaining a balance among contradictory demands, taking charge of functional responsibilities, being accountable for one's

action, and contributing to creating a desirable future for businesses in particular and the economy as a whole. The ultimate goal of management education is to prepare students to achieve professional success in business management. Keeping in view this larger purpose of management education, business schools should thus focus on developing a number of aptitudes and skills, specifically:

1. Management Schools should provide an education that combines both generalist and specialist components.
2. Management Education should be much more holistic in character. It needs to be more integrated - incorporating a number of functional, quantitative, and analytical fields including the humanities and sciences - to educate the "whole" manager to meet the responsibilities and challenges of the future.
3. Management schools, thus, should aim to develop future managers with a "portfolio of Capabilities" quantitative, computer and other analytical skills, functional knowledge and communications, interpersonal, bargaining, negotiation, entrepreneurship, administration and other non-cognitive skills.
4. Management education involves a lifetime process - a "continuum of learning" - with self teaching and initiative beyond the business school, work experience, on-the job training, and management at the corporate level and possibly refurbishment of management knowledge at business schools at least once during a career.
5. Management schools should teach more effective environmental scanning and analysis which is particularly important for domestic and international business.
6. A closer partnership should be developed between educators and managers in the future.
7. Management schools should strive to develop experiential courses in creativity and managerial innovation.
8. Develop state-of-the-art domain knowledge, skills and competencies;

9. Impart generic skills transferable across domains and situations - creativity, innovation, problem-solving, strategic thinking and communication;
10. Build thinking-ability skills and emphasize cognitive development (conceptualization, analysis, synthesis) dealing with abstraction; Management Education in India
11. Foster a spirit of inquiry and critical evaluation of and experimentation with new ideas, information, approaches, assumptions and frames of reference;
12. Inculcate research ability, research value, and methodological rigor;
13. Cultivate one's ability to learn on one's own and instigate learning how to learn, autonomous learning, life-long learning and one's ability to reflect one's own learning process;
14. Promote original thinking and the critical examination of prevailing concepts as opposed to merely conforming to existing notions and approaches;
15. Generate cross functional perspectives and mind sets, systemic orientation, and system thinking;
16. Build one's ability to convert ideas into practice - delineating, planning, implementing and evaluating ideas and concepts;
17. Instill professional and human values;
18. Further the right and relevant attitude to grow and learn and an openness to change;
19. Teach behavioral skills like cooperation, collaboration, team work and inter-personal Competence;
20. Breed entrepreneurial leadership-like initiatives, risk taking, mobilizing support and Resources, and self discipline;
21. Instill a transcendental ability such as vision, aspiration, transformation, or inspiration;
22. Develop self-efficacy, positive self regard, self directing and self regulating Capabilities, positive outcome judgment;
23. Focalize on integrated personality development, congruency among values, attitudes, thoughts,

feeling and actions, and integrity;

24. Create an understanding of the societal context and sensitivity to social developmental issues;
25. Imbue the holistic perspective by way of a balanced emphasis on often-conflicting constituents of the system within the framework of the larger purpose of life and society.

Skill Set of MBAs

The skills MBA students should acquire by the time they graduate have been classified into three major groups: (i) learning and thinking skills; (ii) information and communication technology literacy; and (iii) life skills

- (i) Learning and thinking skills include critical-thinking and problem-solving skills, communications skills, creativity and innovation skills, collaboration skills, contextual learning skills, and information and media literacy skills.
- (ii) Information and communications technology literacy is the ability to use technology to acquire and develop 21st century content knowledge and skills.
- (iii) Life skills include leadership, ethics, accountability, and adaptability, personal productivity, personal responsibility, people skills, self-direction, and social responsibility. Management Education in India

Innovative Pedagogical Techniques

(i) Action-Oriented Leadership

The focus is on leading in turbulent and uncertain environments, driving fundamental change throughout the organization, and achieving longer-term objectives. Students discover new insights about themselves; how they analyze problems, what constitutes their leadership style, and how they can best contribute to the success of their organizations. The ultimate measure of success is the positive impact MBA graduates make when applying their new leadership skills and insights across all levels of the organization. In addition to implementing their personal action

plans, students begin the process of lifelong learning. One vital ingredient of management education and training in a globalized environment is students' experience with mobility. All management students should have the opportunity during their studies to undertake a recognized period of study or a work placement in another country. Management education should include a mobility window as an integral part of the studies.

(ii) **Inculcating a Global Mindset**

London Business School published a study that identified the knowledge, skills and attributes the young leaders need in order to succeed. The competition is nothing but a race for mastering knowledge and skills. If Indian industry has to compete globally we need executives with world class talent. The issue is how to inculcate a global mindset, though managers may act only locally.

A survey brought out some issues viz.:

1. Executives have to move from the cheap seat to the front row of business leadership, and business schools must develop a new approach to teaching and learning. How can business schools carry this out rapidly?
2. Business schools have traditionally provided a reflective learning space, a place to absorb information and knowledge. How can they be made to imbibe an agenda that is practical and action oriented?

(iii) **Inculcating Values**

B-Schools face a number of problems, many of them as a result of offering a value proposition that primarily emphasizes the career enhancing, salary increasing aspects of business education as contrasted with the idea of organizational management as a profession to be pursued out of a sense of intrinsic interest or even service. These arise from a combination of a market-like orientation to education coupled with an absence of a professional ethos. The issue in India is to make B-Schools create greater impact

by focusing on values and ethics as the guiding principles.

(iv) **Teaching Techniques**

Students learn in many ways through class room interaction. Therefore one of the main challenges a good lecturer faces is how to get students actively engaged. Beneficial teaching methods are those that encourage students to debate on the topic on hand, arouse their curiosity, and lead them to ask many questions as a way for them to know the subject in depth. This process helps students internalize the various dimensions of the management Education in India. It also creates genuine excitement and creativity in the minds of the learner by combining theory with practice. Student engagement through interactive learning events is critical in preparing student for 21st century careers in a global business environment. Techniques like questioning skills, worksheets, and presentation slides and films help to produce interactive lectures. The role of the teacher has thus changed and a new emphasis put on being a designer and facilitator of learning. Defining student learning outcomes is a critical first step in course design and technology tools can help to facilitate a more efficient and effective delivery of concepts, ideas, and analyses.

Co-operative learning is another key teaching methodology in management education. Activities such as, for example, management games and projects help students hone their personal as well as professional work skills. These management games give students simulated opportunities to put theories into practice. The simulation technique enables them to learn from each other. Student-centered active learning forces all students to participate in the learning activity. It also helps them fully grasp the benefits of team work in real work situations.

In a nutshell, management education pedagogy should focus on:

1. Being more student centered;

2. Developing case input so as to integrate theory into practice;
3. Including workshops to develop deep thinking on the subject;
4. Giving students more exposure to the realities of the industries;
5. Creating a work environment and adopting project methods those promote discovery learning; and,
6. Putting more emphasis on themes or simulation, role playing, and socio-drama.

Implications for Management Education in India

Management educations have to focus on the topics to be taught (what has to be taught) and method of delivery (how it has to be taught). Management education has to give emphasis on making management education relevant to the Indian Context, the themes to be covered, and the way the topics have to be dealt with. Detailed coverage has to be developed for each subject. Since management is a practice oriented domain, management education has to incorporate an element of on-the-job training. This will need a mix of concepts, cases, exercises as well as simulations for themes such as business strategy, market planning, business negotiations, leadership, business ethics and team work. The main lesson that one can glean from an analysis of US Business education is that they give considerable attention to context design and theme delivery modes.

Conclusion

Business schools have no choice but to cope with the demands of a fast-changing business environment and produce future managers equipped with all the skills required to articulate the best possible strategies. The teaching methods should focus more deeply on leadership, team work, communication skills, and on how to prepare students to play a critical result oriented role in terms of changing an organization for the better.

In addition, the business school curriculum should zero in on a holistic development; building ethical values, strengthening the moral compass, managing innovation

and prioritizing the art of governance as the approach to management. It should also promote social accountability and environmental responsibility and inculcate the skills enabling business school graduates to take up business, community and environmental issues at all levels. In other words, business schools must be innovative, flexible and responsive to the dictates of the changing environment. It is the joint responsibility of Government, public sector and private firms and educators, to put management education on a new growth trajectory. Today, an MBA has gained importance due to the emergence of professionalism in corporate sectors and globalization. The competitive business environment has paved the way for increased demand for management graduates in the employment market. This has led to a significant expansion of management education across the country. Today, business schools have the challenging task of developing the competency level of students to meet corporate expectations. Given the developments in today's business environment, preparing our students for their future will require significant change in the curriculum and pedagogy and pose great challenges to all involved in the process of management education.

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