

QUALITY OF MANAGEMENT EDUCATION IN INDIA – CONCERNS AND CHALLENGES

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ABSTRACT: Management education has a vital role to play in today's dynamic business environment since the management graduates play a key role in the economic development of the country. With the dynamic changes taking place in the economic scenario; it makes it even more difficult for organisations to survive in the competitive environment. This has led to the need for business schools especially in developing nations like India to impart relevant management education to students, which reflects the changes in economy. Management institutions have mushroomed in India, but quality delivered by them still remains elusive. The research indicates that less than 10% of the management graduates are employable. And this calls for the urgent need to transform the management education. The main purpose of management education is producing employable, ethical, creative and life-long independent thinkers to lead the economy. Why is the management education not able to provide the industry with the required skills? What are the main concerns and challenges the management education is facing? Hence, the *main objective of the paper is to study the present quality of management education from the primary and secondary sources and present the concerns and challenges of management educations with due suggestions.*

Key words: Management Education, Quality, Employability Quotient, Concerns, Challenges

Introduction

Education is a beacon that shows the mankind the right path and direction to surge ahead. It is the backbone of any society as it plays a vital role in the development of the nation. The Indian Higher Education sector is considered as one of the largest operating systems in the country and is the second largest education system in the world. Management education has proliferated all over the country in higher education for training future business leaders.

In the modern economic scenario "Management" is treated as a stream of education and training that can have an immediate impact on the operations of any business. The field of Management is dynamic in nature and requires innovative problem solving tools and techniques to solve various functional activities in the organization to improve its efficiency, effectiveness and profitability of any organization. Today, the business environment is undergoing a metamorphosis. Continuous changes in the economy and information technology, along with the speed of change, require executives to be continuously engaged in a learning process. Creativity and Innovation in the increasingly competitive economic environment are considered to be the engine of rapid economic growth.

Management is not mere academics; it is an outlook, discipline and must be deeply percolated in one's attitude. Global competition has brought some changes in management education, offered by Business Schools. Business Schools must cater to industry demands churning out professional and dynamic managers to perform better and act as a catalyst for innovation. Hence, Management education has become a major profession that attracts significant attention to the world.

The term 'Quality' is generally associated with consumer satisfaction. But, every stakeholder (student, staff, society (Nation), recruiters) understands the term quality according to his or her own interest or perception. For a student, quality means its ability to provide the basic and adequate facilities to help him to continue the process of advancement of knowledge. For a nation, it is the production of qualified, responsible leaders/managers. Similarly, for an organisation or recruiter, it means students graduating with flexible minds to acquire the required skills and adapt to new methods (Reynolds 1990 quoted by Singh 2008). There is no uniformity in each one's expectations and perceptions about the outcome of Management Education.

The accreditation framework formulated by National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC) is based on the following five core values (Prasad 2005) and emphasise that Higher Education Institutions should work for.

(i) Contributing to National Development by ensuring equity, increasing access to higher education and serving the cause of social justice.

(ii) Fostering Global Competencies among Students by establishing collaborations with industries, network with the neighbourhood institutions and bodies to foster a close relationship between the "world of competent-learning" and world of skilled work".

(iii) Inculcating a Value System among Students by re-emphasizing through appropriate learning experiences and opportunities for cooperation and mutual understanding.

(iv) Promoting the Use of Technology to keep pace with the latest developments across the globe and enrich the student learning experiences.

(v) Quest for Excellence by contributing to nation-building and skills development of students. Excellence should be visible in all the aspects including teaching-learning process and contribute to the overall development of the education system of the country as a whole.

Therefore, taking the above core values formulated by NAAC as the basic foundation for quality, one can say that Management Education should have the following multi-fold Agenda:

- **Contribute** to National development
- **Focus** on entrepreneurial orientation to inculcate the entrepreneurial skills
- **Foster** Global competencies among future managers
- **Inculcate** values and sense of social responsibility
- **Sharpen** analytical and problem- solving capabilities
- **Enrich** students with emotional, spiritual and intellectual intelligence
- **Build** sustainable competitive edge through research by creating knowledge.
- **Aligned** to corporate requirements
- **Ultimately, develop** as centers of excellence

Objectives of the study:

The objectives of the present study are

1. To study the purpose of Management education
2. To study the present quality status of Management Education in India
3. To present the concerns and challenges of Management education in India

Research Methodology:

The study is based on descriptive and exploratory research. The data sources are primary and secondary. Primary data is collected by interacting with the recruiters and academicians. Secondary data is collected from the journals, newspapers, books, magazines and internet.

Review of Literature

Rao S.L. & Bowondor B. (2004) in his research study on Management Education in India concluded that management education need to focus *on the topics to be taught (what has to be taught) and method of delivery (how it has to be taught) relevant to the Indian Context*. Management education needs to incorporate an element of on-the-job training, with a mix of concepts, cases, exercises as well as simulations. The present corporate world finds the business school graduates are deficient in people- centric competencies like interpersonal skills, leadership, teamwork, and managing diversity and conflict. They feel that graduates are more individualistic in nature than showing team-building skills. The corporate world rates very high the above skills in the desired list of competencies.(Asha Bhandarker, Shaping Business Leaders, 2008). The major concerns are lack of industry relevant curriculum, well-trained faculty, research and consultancy (Guha and Nikhil, 2006). Philip J. (2008) stated that the massive growth in last twenty-three years of Business Schools in India has brought in its wake some serious problems, especially the shortage of faculty almost 5000 business faculty, but unfortunately, the supply side did not catch up with the need, resulting in a huge gap. Zubin R. Mullah (2008) stated that the Business schools will continue to grow and business education will continue to be in demand. She emphasized that fundamental theory building in the global context and especially in the Indian context need to be focused. Report of Yashpal Committee in 2009, mentioned that though there existed 20,000 colleges in the country, of which only 1500 very good colleges were identified which could be upgraded as universities (p 66) and also mentioned that the absence of interest in university-level teacher training has resulted in poor academic quality (p21-22). It means barely 8% of the colleges are offering quality education. Shweta and Manoj Kumar (2011) analyzed the issues and challenges of Management education in India in the emerging scenario and provided remarkable insights into revitalizing B-schools that may benefit all the stakeholders. They felt that a broad-based consultation with the stakeholders might help in developing a holistic framework for effective Management education. Kumar Sanjeev and Dash M K (2011) in their study mentioned that *management education need to be more practical oriented and industry focus, holistic, targeted and customized with an objective to fill the gap that exist between industry requirements and present education system*. Sanchita & M. M. Goel (2012) in their study on *identified that efficiency, sufficiency and equity is necessary in the present education system to develop required employability skills needed for entry level employees*. Prof. Goutam G. Saha (2012) identified major issues like *Quality faculty, Research culture, Faculty development programs, reading materials relevant to the Indian context, Interaction with Industry, a proper system of Accreditation & Rating, independent Institutional mechanism, corporate governance, specialization, Internationalizing Management education* etc., and felt that Indian management institutions need to be context specific and focus to develop the manpower with multi-skills rather than simply knowledge oriented. Patel Bhavin Arvindbhai (2012) revealed that corporate houses stress B-Schools to be more professional in their approach. He stressed that *the curriculum of Business management*

education to be modified as per the globalized industry needs of today and fulfil the requirement of required skilled human resources. According to National Employability Report, MBA Graduates 2012, Employability of management graduates in functional domains remains below 10%, whereas 32% management graduates lose out because of lack of Communication and Cognitive skills, at least 50% students are not employable in functional domains for lack of conceptual understanding and technical knowledge of the domain.

Balaji. R. (2013) mentioned that there is a strong need to focus management education globally (i.e. think globally but act locally) and improve the services through various quality programs. He also emphasized that the course content to be customized based on the market needs and be creative and innovative in preparation of curriculum and methodology of teaching. Dwivedi et al., (2014) viewed quality management in education from the systems view comprising *the inputs, processes and outputs*. The inputs include factors relating to the *students, teachers, administrative staff, physical facilities and infrastructure*, the processes include activities of *teaching, learning, administration*, and the outputs included *examination results, employment, earnings and satisfaction*. Gangaiah B., Viswanath J. (2014) mentioned that the present academic curriculum is unmatched with the industry needs and the quality of the students is not up to the mark. They emphasized that the existing management education system is not giving much scope for recognizing the need and developing the entrepreneurial interests among the young managers and a positive relationship between management education and entrepreneurial aspirations and attitudes. A recent study conducted by ASSOCHAM Education Committee (AEC), 2016 claims that out of 5,500 Business Schools, only 7% of the MBA graduates are employable and blames the reasons as low quality control, poor infrastructure, poor teacher quality and low paying jobs.

Concerns of Management Education

At present we have more than 5000 Business schools. While supply has risen to meet the fast-growing demand, lack of quality has left the graduate with mere degree but no career. To make the Indian MBA graduates more employable, Management Institutions need to “make a conscious effort to bridge the gap between the academia and industry that is theory and practice”.

HR managers from 10 companies in Hyderabad were interacted to understand the present quality of management graduates. The Managers perceived that the following attributes were lacking in students:

1. Technical skill
2. Passion/interest in career development
3. Analytical skills
4. Communication skills
5. Awareness about industry
6. Career decision making skills
7. Flexible/adaptable attitude
8. Problem solving skills
9. Awareness about career options
10. Application of knowledge
11. Goal setting
12. Values and ethics
13. Business knowledge
14. Learning skills

15. Enthusiasm

Academicians perceived that the following skills were lacking in the students

1. Communication skills
2. Technical/domain skills
3. Language skills
4. Learning aptitude
5. Ethics
6. Leadership skills
7. Team building skills
8. Time management skills
9. Etiquette
10. Decision making skills
11. Critical thinking skills
12. Lateral thinking skills

Challenges of Management Education

With globalization, competition between educational institutes is increasing and to survive in such an environment, educational institutes need to be concerned about the quality output. Hence, if the institution does not provide the quality education and satisfy its stakeholders, it cannot survive.

Presently the Management institutes are facing varied challenges, encompassing attracting the good student input, qualified faculty, marketing of the institutions for admissions, recruiters for placements and managing the operations and resources effectively and efficiently. For strategic competitive advantage, an institution not only has to have the required resources, but also monitor and sustain the same.

The present curriculum in management education does not incorporate the latest trends of the business environment and latest courses as per the requirements of the industry. The curriculum is taught more from the theoretical aspect that from the practical aspect. Most of the management institutes do not include case method of teaching because of the lack of qualified faculty. Faculty are not provided proper work environment to develop and pursue research.

The primary challenges of Management Education are qualified and inspiring faculty, designing and developing industry relevant curriculum by institutions, usage of proper infrastructure facilities, visionary leadership, proper delivery mechanism to develop the practical skills, providing the learning opportunities, right mentoring and counselling at the right time, fostering global competencies and entrepreneurial spirit, inculcating the values and above all a good internal quality system for monitoring and implementing the best practices.

Suggestions for improving the Employability Quotient

The following are the suggestions which the management education institutions need to focus on:

- Industry – Institute collaboration in the areas of curriculum, teaching, research and training.
- Industry relevant courses need to be designed
- To improve the students basic skills by educating them using the right methodology

- To build a proper system to check their basic level of knowledge and train them accordingly
- Proper selection procedure to recruit quality faculty
- Formation of global networks of innovation for research and scholarship
- Leaders/ Heads of the institution need to be oriented for creating a learning environment and proper work culture
- Students need to be given proper goal setting orientation at the beginning of the course
- Faculty to assist the students in the right direction after they are clear about their goals
- Faculty development programmes need to be taken seriously and implemented.
- Faculty to be encouraged to take up consultancy works with industry
- Proper evaluation methods to evaluate the skills of the students need to be taken up.
- Students need to be encouraged to participate in the extra – curricular activities like online activities, events, paper presentations, workshops etc..
- Students need to have strong career path in their mind, be clear about what they want to do and to focus on one job at a time. Hence, career development programme need to be taken up by the institutes
- Students need to be counseled by Professors, seniors, placement officers on regular basis.
- Innovation labs need to be established to create working space where industry, academics and students can develop, test their new ideas and get trained in creative skills and finally link with start-ups.
- Social responsibility activities need to be focused to inculcate values

Conclusion

The quality of management education very much depends upon the combined efforts of the educational system as a whole, the educational institutions and the teaching faculty. Quality can be upgraded only when these pillars are equally efficient and collaborative. Management Education Institutions are already experimenting with different approaches to address some, if not all, of these challenges. But further strategies are needed by the institutions. Proper leadership in the Institutions, inspiring faculty, students having learning aptitude will make a difference in the student exit quality. Innovation is critical to growth of the country by finding solutions to key global challenges. Hence it is the responsibility of the business schools to innovate and change accordingly to produce ethical, creative, talented and independent thinking leaders.

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