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MANAGEMENT EDUCATION IN INDIA: ISSUES AND CONCERNS

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ABSTRACT

In today's Internet age, industrial battles are fought not only on scale of capital investment but on knowledge. Thus all countries are putting huge emphasis on higher education. Among various courses of higher education, Management Education has gained huge popularity over past few decades as it is often linked to high paying jobs and profile. Thus over a period of time, there has been huge expansion in both demand and supply of management education in India. With phenomenal growth in the number of management Institutions especially private institutions, there are greater concerns over maintaining the quality of management education in India. Indian management programmes are often considered obsolete and not suited to industry needs (Reddy, 1992). Major issues facing management education are increasing rate of unemployment among Business Graduates, poor quality of teachers, neglect of Research and innovative methods, inadequate infrastructure in B-Schools and lack of governance in many private institutes and negligible attention to innovation in teaching content and methods. The paper recommends that institutions should improve the infrastructure, train their faculty, work on industry linkages, spend money on research and knowledge creation, as well as pay their faculty well in order to attract good teachers.

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KEYWORDS

Management Education, MBA, AICTE.

INTRODUCTION

Higher Education has always been important not only to individuals for the sake of enriched lives, greater earning capacity and higher status but also to the economy for the sake of economic prosperity. Skilled human resources have always been considered to be the biggest assets of a modern & progressive country. However, the relevance of skill development has never been greater than present time. In today's Internet age, industrial battles are fought not only on scale of capital investment but on knowledge.

Earlier, while India was a traditional agricultural economy, land was considered to be the main source of wealth and income, but with the advent of Industrial evolution, machinery gained importance. As India embarked on its journey towards industrialization, demand for educated and skilled professionals grew. This demand proved to be financially beneficial for skilled professionals & hence there was immediate desire for higher education to maximize rewards. Far from the earlier Industrial age, even in today's Internet age, industrial battles are fought not only on scale of capital investment but on knowledge. Higher education Institutions are the greatest enabler to capture & spread that knowledge. Hence we see, knowledge based economies placing greater emphasis on the production and distribution of knowledge. Among various courses of higher education, Management Education has gained huge popularity over past few decades as it is often linked to high paying jobs and profile. Masters in Business Administration (MBA) is considered to offer immense opportunities to individuals and a 'ticket' to raise fast in the corporate ladder. Thus over a period of time, there has been huge expansion in both demand and supply of management education in India. As of now there are 2450 Management Institutions which are run by societies, trusts, university departments, Deemed University and affiliated colleges. In Delhi region itself, there are 101 Institutions which are approved by AICTE to provide Management Education. (AICTE, 2013)

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Gupta (2011) in her study has highlighted the importance of Management Education. The study discussed how business education can open window of job opportunities and helps in generation of wealth provided the required competitive spirit and ability to take decision is developed. It further depicted the paragon of management education in the forms of effective business model. Study highlighted how when present business world is undergoing changes, the types of jobs and demand for job performers also tend to change. It recommended that: Management institutes should drill their students by rigours training along with curriculum covering the ingredient of value based education. Entire teaching programme should be aimed to bring about a proactive convergence of various stakeholders. Business schools in India should design curricula to ensure that students have appropriate skill and knowledge to perform anywhere in this cosmos. World is shrinking as global village and it will not be enough to prepare Indians students to serve only in India. Field exposure should be the prime concern. Efforts should be made to sharpen the personal skills & other technical skills. Entrepreneurship spirit should be nurtured among the real beneficiaries. Values based education based on holistic approach is a dire need for bringing revolution in the system of business education.

Akilandeswari, Kumar (2012) has examined the management of Turbulence and Uncertainties in Management Education. It discussed following Five Global Challenges in Management Education:

- Growth • Managing Global aspirations and local needs. • Quality Assurance • Sustaining scholarship • Aligning with the future needs of managers. In the end author recommended following for the Future: • Assure quality globally and locally. • Invest in mechanically to engage business and government leaders in envisioning future organizational and societal needs. • Facilitate and encourage investments in doctoral degree education and other infrastructure development.
- Create an international clearinghouse for data and information related to Business- schools and management education structures trends, practices.
- Facilitate multilateral collaboration among B schools.

Suriseti, Jain, Sarkar (2012) has showcased present scenario of management education in India and shed light on various challenges and proposes new roadmaps to deal with the various challenges. The study categorised challenges into three categories: conceptual, pedagogical and motive-based. Conceptual challenges are those challenges which pertain to the concept of management education.

Afza (2011) has highlighted the growth of higher education and mushrooming of business schools and the issues and challenges faced. The study revealed following pressing issues facing business schools: • B-schools face the shortage of quality faculty members with doctoral degree or substantial industry experience, • Management education requires a massive experimentation in terms of extended summer internship for four to six months or in terms of experiential learning which involves several live projects of shorter duration. • B-schools face lack of soft skills among students, which is necessary for becoming successful managers.

Nangia, Sharma, Mahajan (2012) has suggested the application of a novice research approach for rationalizing management education in India finalized through an experiential process of interviews of stakeholders, review of literature, feedback from conferences and discussions amongst the authors of the paper. The study concluded that though management education has gained increased prominence with a tremendous rise in the establishment of management institutions, yet some problems pose a serious threat to its survival.

Kumar, Dash (2011) has analysed the trends prevailing in management education in India, and identified the implications of management education in India on Industry and individuals. Also it has explored the present situation of management education in India after financial turbulence of US and the case like Satyam in India. This paper further examined the emerging issues of management education, and implementation of possible direction and policy towards improvement of management education in India.

NEED AND IMPORTANCE OF THE STUDY

With phenomenal growth in the number of management Institutions especially private institutions, there are greater concerns over maintaining the quality of management education in India. Indian management programmes are often considered obsolete and not suited to industry needs (Reddy, 1992). Due to immense expansion in supply and demand of management education, it becomes imperative to examine the issues faced by management education in India and give suggestions for qualitative improvement of management education.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

To examine the growth of management education in India and various issues faced by management education in India.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To identify the trajectory of growth of management education in India.
- To analyse the issues faced by management education in India
- To give recommendations for qualitative improvement of management education in India

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study is qualitative study based on secondary data.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

GROWTH OF MANAGEMENT EDUCATION IN INDIA

As discussed above, there has been phenomenal growth in number of management Institutions in past two decades. This growth trend is also in line with the progress of Indian Economy. Kraft, & Vodopoviec (2003) rightly said that “When a nation makes a transition from a protected economy to a market economy, there is a surge in the demand for management education. To match this demand, there is usually an increase in the number of private schools running courses in business management.”

In first 3 decades of Independence, 118 Business Schools were added in the country. This rate has accelerated so much especially after 2006 that in the year 2012-13 alone, 65 new institutes were added.

Growth of Management Institutions in last 7 years is presented in Table 1.

TABLE 1: GROWTH OF AICTE APPROVED MANAGEMENT INSTITUTIONS IN LAST SEVEN YEARS

Year	Number of Institutions	Increase in number of Institutions	Annual Growth Rate
2006-07	1132	-	-
2007-08	1149	17	1.50%
2008-09	1523	374	32.55%
2009-10	1940	417	27.38%
2010-11	2262	322	16.60%
2011-12	2385	123	5.4%
2012-13	2450	65	2.7%

Source: All India Council for Technical Education, Approval Process Handbook (2012 – 2013), AICTE Quarterly Bulletin, Vol.1, No. 1, Jan-March 2013

CHART 1: GROWTH OF AICTE APPROVED MANAGEMENT INSTITUTIONS IN LAST SEVEN YEARS

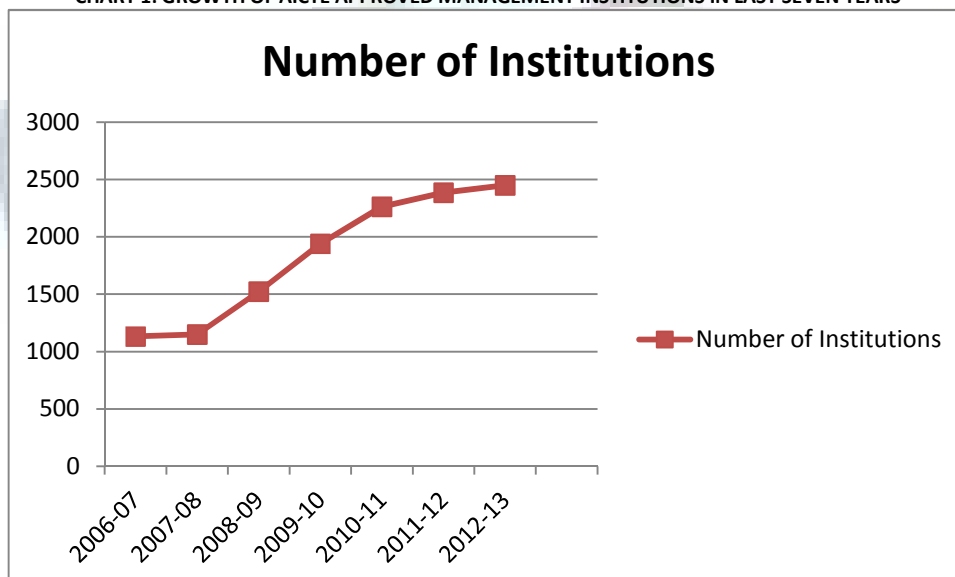


Table 1 reveals that Growth in the number of Business Schools has accelerated over the last 7 years. Number of Management institutions in country has increased from 1132 to 2450, a 116% increase in last 6 years. However in 2012-13, the growth rate fell down to 2.7%. As reported by a TOI article, this year more B-schools applied for closure than those that took wing. This academic year, 94 management colleges have sought consent to shut down. The article also reports that between 2011 and 2013, the AICTE received 231 applications from management colleges wanting to shut down. The AICTE has Okayed about 80 of them. S S Mantha, AICTE chairman, said: "This is a critical phase for the professional education sector. Professional education must be in line with industry. If you don't offer placements, students are not going to come. Colleges in remote India and institutes of poor quality are not getting students. There is just one key to attracting students: institutes need to be top-of-the-line. There is no payoff in running a bad college." But things seem to be looking up. "As the economy revives, we will see a larger pool of applications from colleges wanting to start. We have received close to 120 applications from B-schools for the next academic year," added Mantha. (Times of India article dated 01.07.2013)

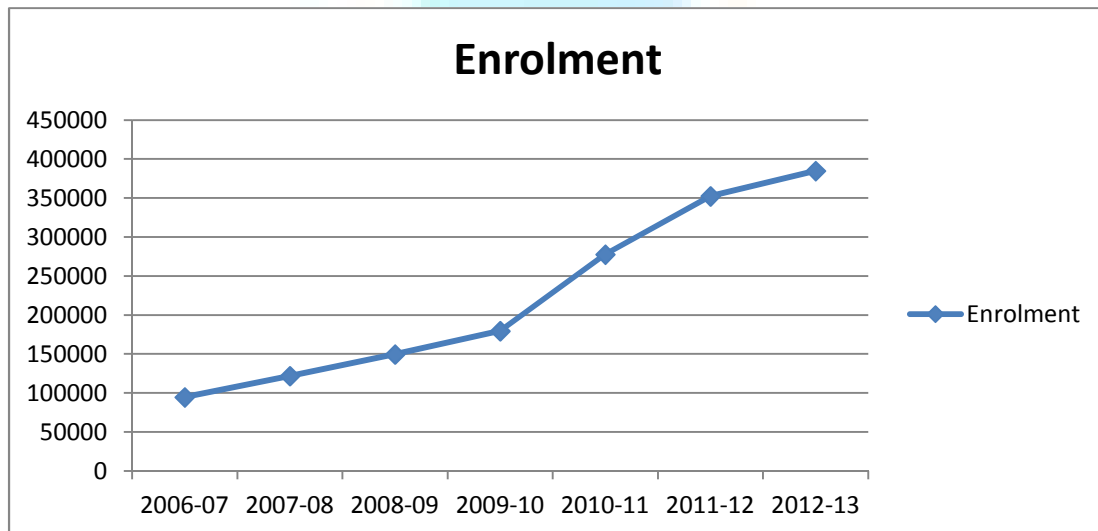
Over the years, India has experienced increase not only from supply side but also from demand side. The incentive of good job and better living standard has lured many young graduates, who want to pursue management Education even if it means taking huge loans. Thus number of MBA aspirants has increased over a period of time. This increase in demand side is reflected through growth in student enrolment which has also increased since 1950. Table 2 presents the Growth of Enrolment in last seven year.

TABLE 2: GROWTH OF ENROLMENT IN LAST SEVEN YEARS

Year	Enrolment	Increase in Enrolment	Annual growth rate
2006-07	94704	-	-
2007-08	121867	27163	28.68%
2008-09	149555	27688	22.72%
2009-10	179561	30006	20.1%
2010-11	277811	98250	54.7%
2011-12	352571	74760	26.91%
2012-13	385008	32437	9.2%

Source: All India Council for Technical Education, Approval Process Handbook (2012 – 2013), AICTE Quarterly Bulletin, Vol.1, No. 1, Jan-March 2013

CHART 2: GROWTH OF ENROLMENT IN LAST SEVEN YEARS



It can be seen from table 2 that number of students has increased from 94, 704 to 3, 85, 008, a 306% increase in last 6 years. In last 7 years, year 2010-11 has experienced highest growth rate, where enrolment increased from 179561 to 277811 i.e. a growth rate of 54.7%. In the latest year 2012-13, though the growth rate has reduced because of Economic slowdown (TOI article) but it is believed that economic recovery will lead to increased demand for management education. (S S Mantha, AICTE chairman in a TOI article)

VARIOUS ISSUES SURROUNDING MANAGEMENT EDUCATION

According to Pfeffer & Fong, 2004, an important function of business schools is to develop important, relevant knowledge, serve as a source of critical thought and inquiry about organizations and management, and thus advance the general public interest as well as the profession of management. In this role, business schools would stand connected to but also somewhat apart from business and other organizations, providing objective research and critical consideration of business, business practices, and their effects on people and society in an effort to serve not only business but also broader social concerns. Suriseti, Jain, Sarkar (2012) in their paper also views that management education should target new competences both from individuals and from society as a whole.

With phenomenal growth in the number of management Institutions especially private institutions, there are greater concerns over maintaining the quality of management education in India. Indian management programmes are often considered obsolete and not suited to industry needs (Reddy, 1992). Various researchers have criticised Indian Management programmes for various reasons. A few of the criticisms are as follows:

- With significant changes taking place in trade, industry and economy, the Indian management education programmes are becoming less and less relevant. (Reddy 1992)
- Though, India produces a large number of graduates perhaps next to U.S. but still a scholarly debate on curriculum pedagogy and innovation is negligible. (Saha, 2012)
- The ultimate challenge of Management Education approaches is to become more practical oriented and industry focus reason being theory-based developments and teachings are worthless, due to the fact that they will be of little use in concrete situations(Kumar, Dash 2011)
- Indeed, it is time to reflect on the future of Management education in the global context. Business schools today find themselves in a position to make a very significant and very socially valuable contribution to society, in as much as they can improve the efficiency of markets and the confidence of the public in markets and organizations (Patry, 2010). However, they are reeling under institutional crises at the same time. There is a gap or imbalance between theory and practice in both management research and management teaching (Thomas, 2010).

For maintenance of the quality, AICTE has been designated responsibility of regulating management institutions in the country. However critics have argued that the regulatory framework and implementation has been unable to link the entrepreneurial initiative to performance in terms of educational quality. It has a control perspective focusing on inputs such as land, faculty, and other infrastructure rather than on the outcomes such as quality of education, research, access,

cost effectiveness or relevance (Working paper on management education NKC). Also it has been argued that heavy regulation would take away autonomy and flexibility from the institutions which in turn will also affect quality. Manimala (2006) also states that dilemma is in maintaining the balance between regulation and autonomy. While autonomy is necessary for the institutions to make dynamic adjustments to the changing environment and thereby maintain and improve the quality levels as appropriate for the prevailing environment, regulation is necessary to ensure a minimum level of quality in all schools.

Between these two concerns, there has to be greater emphasis on autonomy, as the need of the hour is a dynamic and continuous improvement of quality rather than static non-responsive level of quality, often prescribed in terms of certain numbers of faculty, classrooms, computers, books, journals, etc. The current emphasis, therefore, is on autonomy rather than regulation both at the levels of policy-makers as well as practitioners. (Manimala, 2006)

Major issues facing management education can be summarised as follows:

1. INCREASING RATE OF UNEMPLOYMENT AMONG BUSINESS GRADUATES

Although supply of management graduates is still less than the demand of management graduates but still rate of unemployment is increasing among graduates. The major reason behind this phenomenon is poor quality graduates. A survey by the Associated Chambers of Commerce and Industry of India (Assocham) reveals that despite the robust demand for MBAs, only 10 per cent of graduates are actually employable. Further the survey reveals that barring graduates from IIMs, the b-schools are losing fast shine of attracting corporate India Inc. for campus recruitment and are increasingly facing their survivals. DS Rawat, Secretary General Assocham (2013) has commented that there is no quality control, the placements are not commensurate with fees being charged, the faculty is not good enough and there is no infrastructure. According to him "The biggest reason for the gap is the rapid mushrooming of tier-2 and tier-3 management education institutes that has unfortunately not been matched by commensurate uplift in the quality of management education."

2. POOR QUALITY OF TEACHERS

Non availability of adequate proficient faculty is a major constraint for sustainable growth of quality management education in India (NKC). It is also observed that some of the institutions either engage part time faculty or appoint them on contractual basis where they have a little involvement either with the institution or with the students. (Saha 2012). Also Institutes are engaged in appointing new faculty member on low salaries and heavy teaching load which further deteriorate their quality and they are left with no time for further development. It is also observed that often newly joined faculty members adopt only lecture methods & impart theoretical or conceptual knowledge to the students rather than brainstorming or its application and they deliver only the lectures mainly drawn from the text books.

It is also pointed out that the teachers are usually not dynamic and thus are able to impart only theoretical knowledge. As observed by Reddy (1992), though Management Institutions do need to have faculty members with a strong grounding in the basic disciplines, they also need to have a larger proportion of faculty members without great depth in any single discipline, but having greater breadth and inter-disciplinary orientation.

3. NEGLECT OF RESEARCH AND INNOVATIVE METHODS

Manimala (2006) observed that the faculty and students in general do not have the inclination or competence for doing research and hence they do not generate any new knowledge relevant for the economic, political, cultural and organizational context of management available in India. He further notes that the exclusive use of Western research and knowledge of organizations and management have often given rise to the complaint that what is being taught in business schools are irrelevant for managing Indian organizations. Saha (2012) also noted that the management Institutions do not have culture that is supportive of research. Imbibing a research culture requires a good library support system. NKC also noted that Management Institutions do not provide conducive environment for research. Management institutes should inculcate proper motivation and interest among faculty for research. This can be done by providing incentives to faculty involved in research, giving due weightage to research activities and providing a good library support system. University Grant Commission has already taken step in this direction by giving due weight age to research and publication for promotions. This need to be extended and implemented not only in government universities and institutes, but all institutes imparting business education.

4. INADEQUATE INFRASTRUCTURE IN B-SCHOOLS AND LACK OF GOVERNANCE IN MANY PRIVATE INSTITUTES

As discussed above, although AICTE has mandated minimum requirements for infrastructure, books, teacher faculty ratio, most Institutions lacks adequate infrastructure and governance. Jagadeesh, 2000 also noted that Although AICTE has laid down standards which are not difficult to follow, many institutes do not comply with the prescribed standards once they get approval (Jagadeesh, 2000). Management Institutions are also often criticized for taking annual inspections as just a process and misusing autonomy given to them throughout the year.

5. COURSE NOT SUITED TO NEEDS OF INDUSTRY

It is often criticized that with significant changes taking place in trade, industry and economy, the Indian management education programmes are becoming less and less relevant. (Saha, 2012). Reddy (1992) also noted that to cope with the increasing competition and globalization, due to liberalization, Indian organizations are trying out newer and newer management systems and techniques like TQM (Total Quality Management), JIT (Just-in-Time Inventory). But management education has not been able to keep pace with the dynamics of the practicing world.

6. NEGLIGIBLE ATTENTION TO INNOVATION IN TEACHING CONTENT AND METHODS

Focus of the management education may need to be shifted from conceptual learning to skill development, attitude change and value clarification. In many schools, curricula are not frequently revised and updated to make them more suitable for the emerging job markets. Developing a curriculum is a challenging task and has to be continuously updated to keep pace with the advancements. Curriculum should be change driven and periodically reviewed to match the industry needs. But in most of Indian universities and B School it takes years to get syllabus revised due to bureaucratic setup and private B School also don't show much enthusiasm towards revision of syllabus because it may call for appointing new faculty and updating existing faculty which could be a costly issue.

RECOMMENDATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

1. Institutions should improve the infrastructure, train their faculty, work on industry linkages, spend money on research and knowledge creation, as well as pay their faculty well in order to attract good teachers.
2. Institutions should recruit practising managers with sound conceptual abilities in greater numbers as faculty. Faculty members, having no experience of working outside of the academia should be given a feel of the practising world so that they develop a better understanding of the practitioner's perspective.
3. Also scholars should be invited to undertake research in certain areas of national interest. Regarding the research grant procedure there is a need to support more to individual project proposals. Encourage to those institutes who have adequate support system to start Ph.D. programme (Saha 2012).
4. Industry interaction has to be strengthened by inviting senior person from industry to deliver lecture and ensuring student get associated with live industry projects (Dash 2011).
5. There is need for enhancing industry exposure which will lead to enhancement of experiential learning. Exposing students to real life situations which are more complex, demanding, critical, messy, will bring them closer to reality. When it comes to decision making, experience that lies with decision maker is detrimental. One of the issues that management education has to consider is the manner in which experiential learning elements could be enhanced.

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