Management Education Pedagogies: Designing Engaging Experiences for Students

[1]Rinki Rola & [2]Vinod Varghese

[1] *Associate Professor, Shanti Business School, Ahmedabad, India*
[2] *Assistant Professor, R.B.Institute of Management Studies, Ahmedabad, India*

Abstract: Management education received lot of criticism in recent times for not able to address the gap between industry expectations and students skillsets. The pressure is to make management education pedagogies more aligned with contemporary workforce requirements to work in the real life scenario in organization. The paper is based on extant literature on the management pedagogies per se, as well as need to innovative management teaching pedagogies in management education as reported by other researchers. The paper discusses the innovative management pedagogies can be applied to management education programs / institutions in the Indian context. Revamping the pedagogy of management education will leads to creation of better leaders and their participation in the dynamic global economy. Students must be actively involved, they must engage in such higher order thinking tasks such as social projects, live projects, Micro Start Ups. Use of such techniques in the classroom is vital because of their powerful impact upon students' learning and overall development into an successful management professional.

Keywords: Pedagogy, Management Education; Micro Start Ups; Live Projects; Social Projects; MBA Graduates.

1. Introduction

Management education in India today is facing enormous challenges due to changing student values, shifting demographics and increasing impact of internet. To handle this situation they need to develop a pedagogical system that is unique to the situation. It is important for every management institutes to innovate their pedagogy according to the dynamic scenario or they end up creating unemployable students. But very few top management institutes in India are reviewing and adapting the innovative pedagogies to impart quality management education. Many management institutes have been following a tradition lecture based method. This format may have worked in the earlier decades when there were no smart phones or internet. But, today with all the information available to everyone at a touch of a button, it seems difficult.

Based on most recent data of more than 16,000 students who completed their MBA in 2011, the "National Employability Report, MBA Graduates 2012" identifies patterns in employability across different regions and kinds of colleges, analyzing in detail the distribution of employability among management students. Findings of the report agree in no uncertain terms that there exists a huge employability skill gap among students in majority of B-schools - a pointer to the quality of management education imparted. Also there has been a recent trend among the corporates where they are recruiting candidates directly after their graduation not necessarily management graduates. These candidates are imparted training for a period of a month or more and are absorbed into the organization. There are two major reasons for this change. Firstly, organization get candidates at a very low cost as

compared to post graduate students. Secondly, the corporates feel management students don't possess a higher impact factor as compared to graduate students due to the declining quality of education. It is therefore evident that the gap between teaching and skilling has to be bridged by appropriate environment, curriculum and teaching pedagogy so as to develop employable individuals. It has become imperative today that if management education has to maintain its charm then it needs to undergo a disruptive change. Otherwise, it will lose its shine and die a slow and painful death.

The student learning process in any management institution mainly depends on the teaching pedagogies been used to facilitate learning outcomes of the participants. It is the need of the hour that we design a new pedagogy leads to engagement of both faculties and students in their development. The authors attempt while writing this research paper is to explore the various teaching pedagogies. The growing use of pedagogical tools like micro startups, live projects, social projects etc suggested in this paper can provide much needed impetus to the application of various management theories. Students should constantly update their knowledge on contemporary issues by participating in conferences and management meets. Like thinking out of the box has become a must and this paper focuses on developing a pedagogy that improves the quality of management education in India. Students must be actively involved, they must engage in such higher order thinking tasks as analysis and evaluation. Use of suggested pedagogical techniques in teaching is vital because of their powerful impact upon students' learning.

2. Literature review

Swetha and Manoj (2011) studied that management institutes in India are lacking requisite transformative class room delivery process Also they lack focus on employability and innovative thinking. There are more than 2500 B-schools in India. Unfortunately, these business schools are not able to place more than 30% of student except few top B schools. This is really an issue for concern. These reasons can

be attributed to the institute's quality imparting education, student quality, the lack of practical approach in programs offered, testing patterns and the assessment and training methodology adopted. "Management" is more about the application of experiential knowledge to real life situations than just the 'chalk and talk pedagogy' (Sankaran, 2012; Preetika, 2012; Raman, 2013).

India's Management education is currently undergoing a major transition. Internationalization, cross cultures, strategic alliances, partnership & mergers are the new trends in management education which calls for new pedagogical changes (Saha, 2012). Based upon the various studies available in literatures, the quality of management education being imparted by a majority of the management institutes is not up to the mark. Management education need to be holistic, targeted and customized with aim to remove the gap that exist between industry requirements and academic curriculum focusing on attitude, corporate awareness, grooming and developing managerial skills (Kumar and Dash, 2011).

Management Institutes should also need to be able to develop increasingly effective learning methodologies that enable meeting the challenges facing management education today. Enabling students to develop competencies such as obtaining a global perspective of the business world or being able to integrate theory, practice, and experience has to be achieved through innovative learning methods that are appropriate for management education (Avolio,2012). There is an urgent need to develop a dynamic environment as to encourage quality management education institutions and such persistent efforts are required to revolutionize management education (Hall, Agarwal, & Green, 2013; Shukla, 2013). Developing a strong pool of skilled people is appeared to be inevitable to meet requirements of the challenges of the global environment (Subrahmanyam and Shekhar, 2014; Devaraj and Srinivasagowda, 2013). Multinational Organizations also demand Management institutes to provide global standard professional education.

3. Suggestive Pedagogies

Micro – Startups

Micro startups is a new concept on the lines of microfinance where in the students should be given money in the range of 5000-10000 Rupees and asked to start up any project during the tenure of the program. The student can start anything and everything which they envisage as a project. It should have all the fundamentals of an actual business and if they students wish to continue with the same project after finishing the course they can do so. This is important because this will help the students to know the ins and outs of a business. Now, what this does is give the students a hands on experience of running a business. They will see any enterprise with respect and will understand what it takes to run a business successfully.

Communication Devices Free Projects

There should be specific projects wherein no communication devices or internet should be used. We have now become more and more reliant on search engines for every single decisions. Every project starts searching on internet and ffinishes with it. The students' imagination is now limited to the search results thrown out the search engines. Internet should be used for information purposes only and not for anything else. This would have a huge impact on the development of the candidate. Authors are not saying anything against the modern devices. They are just trying to state is we should try out a new way of learning for the students so that the perspective of the candidate can be developed.

Character Building Projects

In the western world, there is a concept of taking up part time jobs from a very young age. This includes taking up roles like gardening, dog walking, housekeeping, babysitting etc. This make students look at each and every job with respect and don't say no to any job. The tradition is unfortunately lacking in India. Here we see that the higher the post, higher the status and we tend to look down on low level jobs. Management graduates today have a

feeling that they would be able to take strategic decisions but they are unwilling to understand the fact that they need to work up the way from the bottom. We need to build the character of graduates and this needs to be done by taking up different roles in an organization right from the janitor to the chief executive officer.

Survival Training

Survival training helps students to develop their killer instincts. Also, they are brought face to face with their biggest fears. Working on such fears would help the students to become more resilient. This skills are very important as the stress level in today's organization are very high. Today's students are unable to take any stress as they are very protected and cared for. They break down at the first signs of pressure. They feel the pressure the most in the first 6 months of the job. In fact, most of the students leave their first job within 6 months. Survival skills, would help the students with any amount of pressure and they can attain new heights.

Entrepreneurship Projects

Entrepreneurship is a word often misunderstood. We often believe that only those who are want to do business should go for entrepreneurship. But this is not the case now. Entrepreneurship inculcates lots of skills in a person. Entrepreneurship helps the person to get prepared for the unprepared. Many corporates look for entrepreneurial qualities in their recruits. They need people who take the initiative and work fearlessly. Entrepreneurship inculcates a sense of fearlessness in the students. They are ready for any and every situation. Similarly, entrepreneurship also helps the students to take more initiatives and go outside the boundary of regular roles.

Counseling Sessions

Faculty cannot be a facilitator anymore but he or she needs to be a counselor or a mentor for a student. There is need for counseling because today students are very confused about what they want to do in life and they are not aware of the jobs which would match their skill sets. Also, industrialists should be called for

mentorship purposes so that students are aware of the requirements of the industry. This is very important as usually students are in a bubble where they feel they are the best. However, most of them get a reality shock when they go for the placement process. They need to be guided in the right direction by motivating and appreciating their achievements and talents.

Live Projects

Live Projects or on the job training are also important for management students. This is because no matter how much a student excels in theoretical knowledge it can be best utilized only when students apply the same in practical situations. Live Projects also help in acclimatizing the students with regards to the demands of the job and where they stand currently. On the basis of the this knowledge, students can take corrective actions during the course duration itself and by the time they go for placements they will be in a much better position.

Social Projects

Students also need to undertake social projects. This is important as a student will get aware of the ground realities. There are many things that students take for granted in their day to day life. Social projects would make the students more aware of what is going on around them. Such projects also help in making students more confident and resourceful. This is because many times students are working with people who have very limited funds and resources available to them. But, this is not a hindrance to them and they find out unique ways to get around things. Projects of this nature help students to develop out of the box thinking and they become more innovative.

Two years credit based PDP's

Today, students need to possess good personality. However, the biggest problem today is students feel that the personality development is not important. They put negligible efforts in developing their personality. Also due to the mushrooming of management institutes in every nook and corner of the country the standards of management education is constantly falling. The emphasis today is more on certification than on knowledge. This is a big blockade which stops a student from developing their personality. A management student has to deal with customer's day in day out and he is the extension of the brand of the company. He does not have the luxury of coming to office shabbily dressed. There are many factors which contribute towards a good personality. They include good body language, communication, ethics, etc. They need to be developed constantly during the duration of the program.

4.Conclusion

Gold attains its shine only when it is purified, melted and remolded. Faculty today has to take up the role of the artisan who works very hard to make gold shine and attain its true value. Students also need to go through the grind because only when they are purified and melted would they be remolded. The researchers feel undertaking activities like social projects, entrepreneurship projects, micro start up activities, survival trainings, industry internships would play a pivotal role in order to get the transformation that we are looking for in a management graduate. Micro startups are important as this would be a live project that would be undertaken by the students during the course of the program wherein they would be doing a real business. The students if they are successful in their micro start up project would be able to identify their calling at a very early stage and they can pursue their career on the chosen path. Survival training is another important aspect which the researchers feel very strongly about. This is because as the adage goes life is not easy and the management graduates need to be prepared for each and every situation. Survival training would give them that added edge which would make them stronger mentally which is the need of the hour. The pedagogies focusing upon the engagement of students will make them aware of their limitations and they become more appreciative of the opportunities. They also become aware of a very important fact and that is you need

to work up the ladder and there is no shortcut to success. The researchers have also come to a conclusion that personality development and good communication skill is also a mandatory requirement which all candidates should possess. The same can be inculcated through role plays, on job trainings and entrepreneurial projects.

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