

Management Education System in India

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Management education is in great demand especially after the change towards liberalization, privatization and globalization. There are several challenges of management education which require change in the character and structure of management education, integration of management education with corporate sector, upgradation of curriculum and course content, designing of different programs for executives, maintenance of an efficient and effective regulatory system of check mushrooming, and emphasis on research. India being the part of global linkage in the aftermath of WTO agreement is becoming a technology driven society. Nearly one lac management graduates pass out every year in India, providing a tremendous potential to contribute to the creation of a 'knowledge society'.

With its plurality and paradoxes, India never ceases to fascinate. And education in India is only one among various other elements that have captured the attention of the world. While the United Nations is worried about the presence of a large number of illiterates, various other countries are amazed by the quality of some of the human resources that the Indian education system has produced. The growth of the Indian economy in the recent past and the compulsion to sustain it is also forcing the Indian government to accelerate the process of developing all the branches of the Indian education system. Therefore, it would be very interesting to understand and analyze the various structures of education in India, its present condition and future developments.

India Education: Chronological Background

The Vedas, Puranas, Ayurveda, *Yoga*, Kautilya's Arthashastra are only some of the milestones that the traditional Indian knowledge system boasts of. There are evidences of imparting formal education in ancient India under the *Gurukul* system. Under the *Gurukul* system, young boys who were passing through the *Brahmacharya* stage of life had to stay at the *Guru* or the teacher's home and complete their education. Although the ancient system of education has produced many geniuses and still a major area of research, it was hardly egalitarian. Women and people of lower castes gradually lost their right to educate themselves. The spread of Jainism, Buddhism, Bhakti and Sufi movements did have some liberating effects on the condition of the women, *sudras* and *atisudras*. But it is the English language and the reformation movements of the 19th century that had the most liberating effect in pre-independent India. Thus, the britishers although rightly criticized for devastating the Indian economy, can also be credited for bringing a revolution in the Indian education system.

India Education: Current Scenario

Soon after gaining independence in 1947, making education available to all had become a priority for the government. As discrimination on the basis of caste and gender has been a major impediment in the healthy development of the Indian society, they have been made unlawful by the Indian constitution. The 86th constitutional amendment has also made elementary education a fundamental right for the children between the age group- 6 to 14. According to the 2001 census, the total literacy rate in India is 65.38%. The female literacy rate is only 54.16%. The gap between rural and urban literacy rate is also very significant in India. This is evident from the fact that only 59.4% of rural populations are literate as against 80. In order to develop the higher education system, the government had established the University Grants Commission in 1953. The primary role of UGC has been to regulate the standard and spread of higher education in India. There has been a marked progress in the expansion of higher education if we look at the increase of higher

educational institutes in India. The higher education system in India comprises of more than 17000 colleges, 20 central universities, 217 State Universities, 106 Deemed to Universities and 13 institutes of National importance. This number will soon inflate as the setting up of 30 more central universities, 8 new IITs, 7 IIMs and 5 new Indian Institutes of Science are now proposed.

The present education system in India mainly comprises of primary education, secondary education, senior secondary education and higher education. Elementary education consists of eight years of education. Each of secondary and senior secondary education consists of two years of education. Higher education in India starts after passing the higher secondary education or the 12th standard. Depending on the stream, doing graduation in India can take three to five years. Post graduate courses are generally of two to three years of duration. After completing post graduation, scope for doing research in various educational institutes also remains open.

India has around 1400 Business schools accredited by All India Council for Technical education (AICTE) and produces management graduates seven times than that of United Kingdom. But we could not produce the best business leaders and managers across the world from our B Schools. We often glorify frequently about our quantity of management education but not about the quality. Presently Harvard University stands first in the top US list of B schools and INSEAD stands first in the non-US list of B schools in the world. What is the official ranking of Indian management institutions across the world? Unfortunately none of our B schools stands in the top 100 list. What ails our B schools? It is high time we introspected honestly and thoroughly.

Education for the Marginalized in India

As education is the means for bringing socio- economic transformation in a society, various measures are being taken to enhance the access of education to the marginalized sections of the society. One such measure is the introduction of the reservation system in the institutes of higher education. Under the present law, 7.5% seats in the higher educational institutes are reserved for the scheduled tribes, 15% for scheduled castes and 27% for the non creamy layers of the Other Backward Classes (OBCs). Under the Indian constitution, various minority groups can also set up their own educational institutes. Efforts are also being taken to improve the access to higher education among the women of India by setting up various educational institutes exclusively for them or reserving seats in the already existing institutes. The growing acceptance of distance learning courses and expansion of the Open University system is also contributing a lot in the democratization of higher education in India.

Conclusion

The present management education survived for nearly five decades in India and struggling to expand beyond national and geographical boundaries. With the boon of rapid changing technology and communication, the educational system is undergoing drastic changes although the pace is slow. The students in B schools develop the ability to network and grow fast. The alumni links serve as strong launching pad. Despite all the efforts to develop the education system in India, access, equity and quality of education in India continue to haunt the policy makers till this date. This has mainly been due to the widespread poverty and various prejudices. The inability to check the drop out rates among the marginalized sections of the population is another cause of worry. However, the renewed emphasis in the education sector in the 11th five year plan and increased expenditure in both primary and higher education can act as palliatives for the Indian education system.