

# Future of Management Education : Creating A learning Environment

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## Abstract

Management Education tries to train people in what is basically a practice, with little in terms of “FINAL” answers for every situation. We rate Management Institutions only on earnings and placement and not on what they are learning. This is detrimental to whole society. We must change this mindset and move to make management education a real education and not a mere stepping stone to high paying jobs.

Functional and Technological knowledge is an important component of Business School Curriculum, but it is not the essence of management Education. Vital is that Business Schools understand themselves primarily as Learning Environments where Individuals develop attributes rather than as Teaching Environments where students are presented with a body of functional and technical content.

Present paper entitled ‘**Future of Management Education : Creating A learning Environment**’ focuses on key principles – that will help build a vibrant Business sector.

**Key Words: Learning Environment, Attributes, Mindset, Real Education**

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## **Introduction**

Traditionally, a Quality Management education depends in a distinctive way on the curriculum, candidates, faculty and facilities an institute may provide. Let's see if our users (students) and our consumers (corporate) think in the same way.

Balasubramaniam(2006) found that “the corporate leaders have produced an extensive list of qualities they desire in future recruits and almost none involved functional and technical knowledge. Their requirements could be summed up as follows- for instance- need to be more thoughtful, more aware, more sensitive, more flexible, more adaptive, capable of being moulded and developed into global executive. These requirements are attributes rather than skills. They are intrinsically soft and indefinable. A finding from survey MBA Alumni of Cambridge University and London Business School, when asked in terms of usefulness of their college curriculum in their careers, they valued the Learning Environment above the curriculum itself.”

The environment within which people learn can be more powerful than the specific material taught. None of this is to say that the functional areas are unimportant rather we need to broaden our perspective on Management Education. The combination of Text Book learning and class room discussion is an effective way of course, but it would be a mistake to think that Management Education stops there.

This paper presents a model based on factors that help in creating the “Learning Environment” in Management Education.

## **Self Regulation**

During the recent economic crisis B-Schools have come under fire for allegedly failing in their obligation to educate socially responsible business leaders. True professions must have codes of conduct and the meaning and consequences of those codes must be taught as the part of formal education. There have been lots of controversies in Management Education. These have to do with low fees, autonomy, reservation etc. but there has been very little discussion about governance, curriculum, faculty up gradation and value systems. The reasons behind it may be----

1. Government gives no autonomy to Management-Institutes .
2. Little effort of money is available for research and less effort on number of Ph.D.s for creating a better faculty pool.
3. Little emphasis on quality of faculty, research and publication and industrial projects.
4. Rating of Management Institutions is non-standard and more emphasis is on placements.
5. AICTE has little statutory powers to derecognize and punish the faulting institutes.

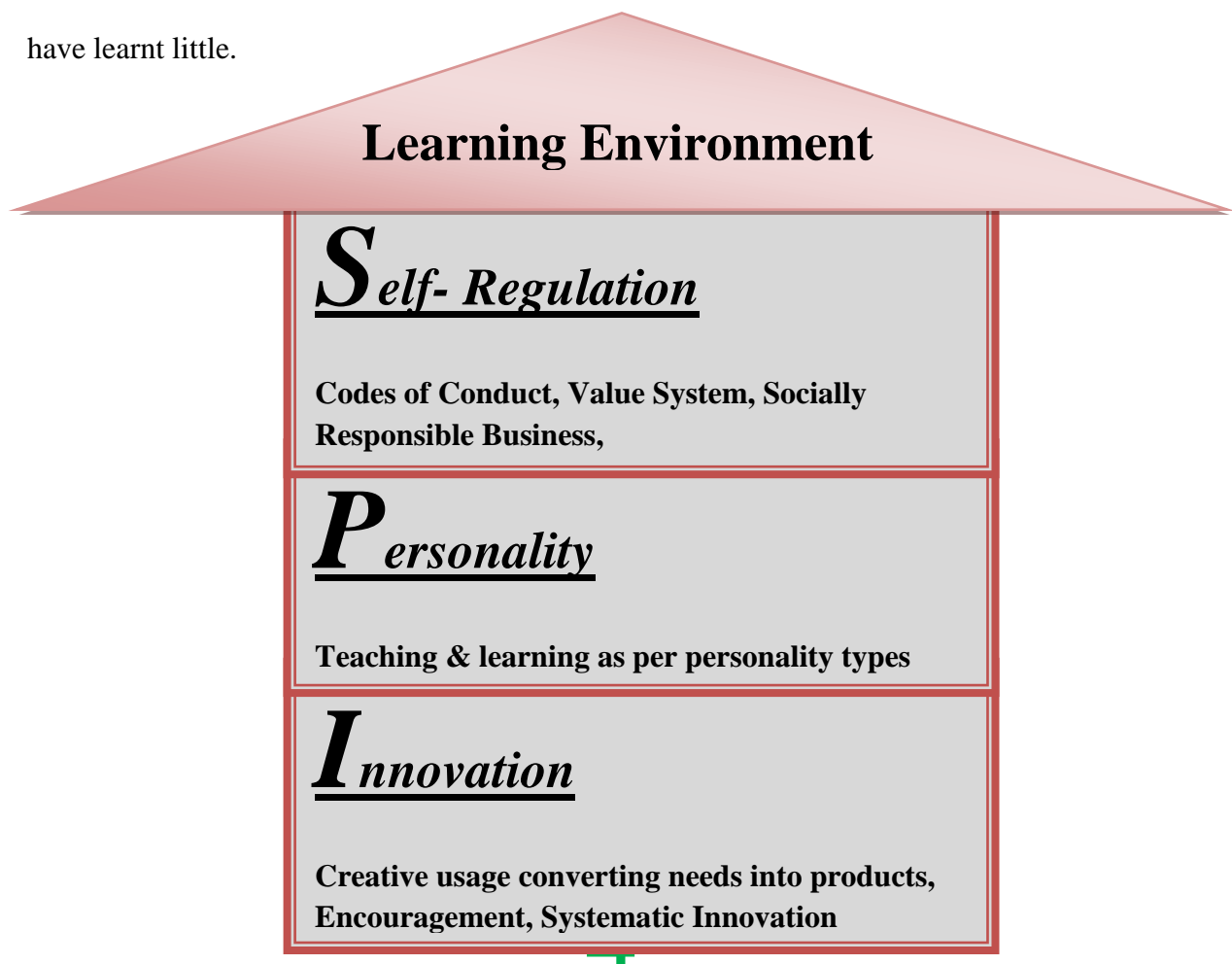
Few actions are required to overcome these problems –

1. All Management Institutes must have independent Board of Directors, Audit Committees, published accounts and transparency in managing funds, so that students get value for their high fees.
2. AICTE should become Self Regulatory Body with statutory powers and wide ranging autonomy and authority. AICTE should conduct its own ratings for each recognized institution and publish details annually showing number of faculty, research

publication etc. apart from infrastructural details. It must recruit inspectors to verify and report from among reputed managers and management associations.

3. The Quality role of the Faculty must determine curriculum, pedagogy and value system. Their Research work ,Industrial Projects and overall performance should determine their incentives and payments because its only the qualified faculty that will envision future needs
4. Management institute should take a move to transform management Education into a real education and not a mere stepping stone to high paying jobs. The emphasis on placement and salaries cannot substitute good education.

The government must give up authority over Management Education after passing necessary legislation and educational institutes must respond to self regulation. Employers must tap a wider pool of more responsible citizens rather just graduates in management, most of whom have learnt little.



## **Collaborative Approach**

**Integrative Subjects, Co-Teaching**

## **Entrepreneurial Breeding Ground**

**Entrepreneurial Ecosystem, Workshops,  
Overseas Liaisons, Institutes directly associated  
with Entrepreneurship**

### **SPICE Model in Management Education**

**(for creating learning environment in management institutions)**

#### **Personality**

Our entire education system has long suffered due to absence of an appreciation for the personality differences. We have always believed in teaching students the “right things” irrespective of student’s own natural preferences. Further, our belief that a Management student should develop “sequential, logical and analytical” skills for effective decision making have made the Management Education a little rigid. The irony is that we teach relevance of personality types as a part of MBA curriculum but fail to apply it practically in our own education system. An interesting research was carried out by “TAPAEI” Management Institute, Manipal, where questionnaire based on MBTI was used to understand the different personalities of students with a focus on learning and teaching styles in business schools. It was observed that students with different personalities indeed have differing learning styles. For example students with preference for Extroversion may be comfortable

with concrete experiential learning style and may prefer projects, simulations and peer teaching. They enjoy working in groups, group exercises and projects. ISTJ (Introvert, sensing, thinking, judging) would like to be taught in a concrete and sequential style – practical with applications that are useful.

A change in pedagogy demands a change in mindset of faculty and management institutes. It demands change in curriculum, academic administration, evaluation methods and student – faculty interaction. These points raise questions related to validity of present day curriculum, teaching pedagogy and delivery of courses at our B- Schools. These questions will eventually be answered by the users and consumers of MBA Graduates i.e. the industry.

### **Innovation**

Peter Drucker wrote that a company has only two basic functions- Marketing and Innovation. To win customers and stay ahead of the competition, innovation is critical. Marketing has already been developed as a core subject and part of Management Education. It is now time for innovation to follow the lead.

Innovation is the specific tool of entrepreneur by which they exploit change as an opportunity for a different business or a different service. For example What really made ‘universal schooling’ possible- more so than the popular commitment to the value of education, the systematic training of teachers or the pedagogic theory- it was the lowly innovation of the “**text book**”. Text book was probably the invention of great Czech educational reformer Johan Amos Comenius who designed and used the first Latin printers in the mid 17<sup>th</sup> Century. The text book has been an inseparable part of schooling since then. By 1914, the time the first world war broke out, inventions had become research-a system and purposeful

activity with high predictability. Something similar now has to be done with respect to innovation.

Entrepreneurs and students will now have to learn to practice systematic innovation. The biggest cry is an experiment with different options and creative urges flow. Arvind Sodhani, President Intel comments that “ India is a very entrepreneurial country, I don’t find them lacking in any respect. The only drawback is maximum hurdles in India than in any other part of the world.” In innovation that are based on process needs- everyone in the organization always knows that the need exists, yet usually no one does anything about it. However, when the innovation appears, it is immediately accepted as obvious and soon becomes standard.

The key is creating an environment that encourages entrepreneurship and innovation.

In China, the Government goes out of its way to encourage entrepreneurship and innovation on technology by providing Incubation centres, building and other facilities. Environment for success and growth or efforts made by Government to encourage entrepreneurship and innovation are different. Let’s not wait for the Government to take the first step instead why not start providing an environment with the knowledge and encouragement the institutes can do for the students, because until all the needed knowledge can be provided, the least knowledge based innovation is premature and will fail.

### **Collaborative Approach**

MBA programs are already straight jacketed by encouraging the development of narrow function expertise rather than the Collaborative skills that define effective management. Management education is more about acquiring the skill of integration rather than about mastering a set body of knowledge. The skill of integration distinguishes managers from

other professionals. Management schools have always wrestled how best to help the students acquire this skill and the difficulty is partially structural. Faculty members almost universally specialize in one functional area and typically lack the expertise to teach in other areas. Even the case studies are typically written from a functional perspective, which reinforces this limitation. The key is to recognize that the integration is learnt rather than talked. It must take place in the minds of MBA Students, who link the various elements of the program. Management education is not one-size-fits-all. Thus it should be collaborative rather than competitive. It is vital that the Business school understand themselves primarily as learning environments where individuals develop attributes, rather than as teaching environments, where students are presented with a body of functional and technical content only.

The YALE SCHOOL OF MANAGEMENT has pioneered a curriculum based on the co-teaching of integrated classes but introducing the same model in our environment is challenging and let's see if we can implement the same in future successfully.

### **Entrepreneurial Breeding Grounds**

Rwanda's president, Paul Kagame, put it recently, **“Entrepreneurship is the most sure way of development”**. Studies consistently link entrepreneurship with job creation and GDP growth. Behind almost all surprising entrepreneurial success stories there is one thing in common –**“The Environment that nurtures and sustains entrepreneurship”**. Let's name this as **“Entrepreneurship Ecosystem”**. There are various elements in this complex ecosystem , each is conducive to entrepreneurship but insufficient to sustain it. These elements have to be integrated into one holistic system, to create a proper entrepreneurship ecosystem. This is where government efforts are needed, otherwise only one or two elements are considered at a time. But the government cannot do everything on its own. The private



and non-profit sectors too must shoulder some responsibility. For instance – Initiate entrepreneurship education, Conferences, research and policy advocacy.

Although there are various principles and prescriptions for creating an entrepreneurial ecosystem but our focus will be on what Management-Education can do for this. It can play a key and vital role to jump start the growth of entrepreneurial ecosystem and can serve as perfect breeding ground for entrepreneurial activities by –

- 1.-advocating entrepreneurs and promoting entrepreneurship.
- 2.-creating effective institutions directly associated with entrepreneurship (Research Institutes, Overseas Liaisons, forums for public private dialogue)

Similarly Non-Profit and Industry Associations help Business Students by promoting and allying themselves with entrepreneurship(such as software and biotechnology associations)

- 3.-Respecting Entrepreneurship as a worthy occupation.
- 4.-Inspiring Business-Students through success stories as would be entrepreneurs.
- 5.-Providing workshop by knowledgeable and experienced people to Business-students about creating organizations, hiring and building structures, system control and capital sources through mentorship and contacts.
- 6.-Giving Entrepreneurship subject as a mandatory status in the MBA Curriculum.

Following are the examples of certain countries who have opened their doors to entrepreneurship development-

- Sergio Fajardo, Medellin’s Mayor, created a legitimate entrepreneurial business environment. With a coalition of Universities, Fajardo established “**Innovation Centres**” and earmarked a whopping 40 percent of his budget for education to stimulate entrepreneurship. The result was that Medellin in Colombia turned from Crime-Warped city to entrepreneurial breeding ground and it is considered now statistically safer than Washington DC.
- Rawandan Coffee, Fresh Fish from Chile, Generic drugs by Iceland, USB’s invented and manufactured by Israel are palpable evidences of surprising Entrepreneurial success stories- thanks to their Government leaders who help build environments turning these countries into fertile grounds for entrepreneurship.
- SABIS, an educational management organization founded in Lebanon many years ago as one school, now it is one of the world’s largest EMOs, teaching more than 65000 students in 15 countries, with the goal of reaching 5 million students by 2020.
- Even one success can have a surprisingly stimulating effect on an entrepreneurship ecosystem by igniting the imagination of the public and inspiring imitators

### **Conclusion**

We have a number of levers at our disposal but we need the vision and help to leverage these better ideas and inculcate them deeper into our systems and converting these better ideas by taking initiative will only transform our Management Education System if we really want it to.

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