Chapter 9
Utopian B-School Classroom Where Expectation Meets Reality:
An Admission Strategy for B-Schools

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ABSTRACT

The supremacy of some business schools like Harvard and IIMs in the ranking ladder makes them desirable to the students as compared to the clusters down the ladder. The result is a greater number of admissions in the former category as compared to the latter. The question that arises is, What makes the top-ranking institutions a class apart? The answer is, the creation of the product that is a class apart. The chapter discusses various means including the pedagogy and curriculum to make the business school classroom a conducive environment to create an elite class of future managers and entrepreneurs. The main objectives of this study are to understand the differences in the students and the need for reinventing the pedagogy as to suit the needs of individual student thus converting the conventional classrooms into utopian classrooms for them. The chapter also explains the importance and attributes of a good curriculum in a business school.

INTRODUCTION

The quantitative data of admissions in business schools depends on their position on the ranking ladder. The Students strive to seek admission in those placed higher up while the ones placed in the bottom rungs strive to get better number of admissions. The ranking responsible for admission data in each business school depends on a series of factors like Placement records, alumni, Infrastructure, an updated curriculum, research, and the quality of faculty. Each of these factors shape and are in turn shaped by the others in the list. Directly or indirectly all the factors mentioned above are dependent to a greater or lesser degree, on the knowledge imparted in the classrooms and the pedagogy used to impart it thus

making the students ready for the industry and capable of being selected in the placement drives. With the intent of training the corporate elite, the renowned Business schools are in a continuous process of resampling and reinventing their curriculum and infrastructure. The most important question that remains to be answered is –What should a Business School offer to its students in the classroom space to make them self-sufficient and well equipped for the industry? Deserving teachers and desiring students form the most essential components of the ideal class. The employers and competitive job market desire something more than the knowledge provided in the textbooks. The need of the hour is to complement the core textbook knowledge with industrial exposure and professional skills, which include communication skills, team building and leadership qualities, decision making aptitude, problem identification, analytic and problem-solving skills and ethical education. Business studies should aim at lifelong learning and impart a holistic education with clearly formulated course objectives. The concept of Students' learning outcomes, Course Learning Outcomes and Program Learning Outcomes has punched the conventional model of teaching and learning based on lecture delivery, paper–pen assessments and rote memorizing of data, at various points. The millennial student expects a lot more from the modern-day classroom. With an exposure to the wide world at a mouse click, the expectations give a toll towards adopting modern technical teaching and learning methods. The chapter will attempt to investigate the weakness of the conventional classroom, the means and methods to evolve a conventional classroom into a Utopian classroom meeting everybody's requirements and expectations.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Minni Wolverton and Larry Edward Penley (2004) observe that Students willingly pay high tuition fee at Harvard than "at a state university, and the recruiters suspect that MBAs are better there." (Wolverton & Penley, 2004, p. 4) According to them many business schools have managed to attain the similar rank as that of Harvard and the others aspire to reach there. They conducted a study on 28 Business schools with a difference. The study concluded that the only correct answer to achieve higher ranking is to "reinvent business education." (Wolverton & Penley, 2004, p. 213). This can be done by introducing new programs in specific and desirable domains, reinventing the curriculum to include all he desirable traits desired by the recruiters, and hiring excellent faculty. An important dimension that cannot be ignored is the cognitive differences of the learners. The Utopianism in Business Education that is being discussed in the current study can only be achieved when the pedagogy is designed in such a way as to serve the curriculum in its best and to obtain the maximum learning outcome from each student.

A perfect business school curriculum (which is again a utopian term) must aim to take into consideration the cultural, social and ethical dimensions along with the core subject teaching. It must carve out the essential skills like team building, effective communication, conflict resolving, problem solving, critical thinking, situation handling, ethics and corporate social responsibility. Business Ethics and Corporate Social Responsibility are the much talked about issues in the contemporary Business education. MacDonald G. Jeffrey (2007) is of the view that the "Ethical behavior at the top requires better training". The interpretation of a study conducted by Sharon V. Thach and Tilden Curry (2007) on 120 Business School Deans worldwide, deduces that the "Business Ethics is influenced by the prevailing cultural climate of a country." They opined that the present day Business Schools lay much more emphasis on Ethics than those 20 years ago. (Curry & Thach, 2007) Norman Wright and Hadyn S. Bennet (2011) discuss the importance of Sustainability, Ethics and Corporate Social Responsibility in Business Educa-

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