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MOOCs: Need in Management Education

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Abstract:

In view of globalization, the management education itself has become very dynamic. It involves understanding and formulating regional and global problems, evaluating risks and opportunities, analyzing strategies in the context of its social, legal, economical, statutory and environmental implications, managing team with creativity and encouraging talent without external or internal influence, optimizing team effort with best strategies for better decisions and feasible outcome. For developing such skills, the B-Schools must adopt innovative and creative teaching pedagogies; integrated multi-disciplinary approach and collaborative teaching consequently work for holistic development. In the above context, leaving apart a few well-known B-Schools, most of the B-schools are not able to meet the expectations of global challenges. We will analyse why the existence of B-Schools is becoming difficult. We discuss the reasons for placements coming down severely as reported by ASSOCHAM on "Appetite for MBA tumbles down". Recently the registration for CAT candidates has witnessed a decline of 9.5% in 2014 from 8.5% in 2013, which also needs to be analysed.

Does management education need any support of non-traditional method? Why the MOOCs are becoming important in higher education and consequently what is the future of MOOCs in management studies. We also discuss the importance of customised MOOCs that is SOOCs, BOOCs and SPOCs as the management education is highly specialised and needs updating. Managers of today and yesterday need to update themselves with global strategies. The world of MOOCs has taken another leap by presenting itself in regional languages and making them culturally rich with the partnership of local expertise.

Thus, MOOCs, which has local presence and global effect, can benefit management education in three folds: managers of tomorrow for getting latest skills, managers of today can update while faculty members can introduce themselves with the latest practices in management education.

Keywords: Management, MOOCs, Massive Open Online Courses.

1. Introduction

In the recent paper on "Appetite for MBA tumbles down" by Associated Chambers of Commerce and Industry of India (ASSOCHAM), reveals that there is a grim situation of placements in B-School campus hiring. It has gone down severely and only 18% of students got placement this year. Also, ASSOCHAM paper on 'B-Schools and Engineering colleges shut down- Big Business Struggles' reveals that since 2009, the recruitments at the campus is down by 40 per cent in the year of 2012. As a result, in 2013, more than 220 B-Schools have already closed down in the major cities Delhi-NCR, Mumbai, Bangalore, Ahmedabad, Kolkata, Lucknow, Dehradun while another 160 are struggling for their survival. The reasons include job opportunities for management students have not grown in proportion of the population of management students, rapid mushrooming of B-Schools, which could not match the quality of management education, expertise of faculty in their domain, poor linkage between industry and academic strength, quality infrastructure and other facilities pertaining to management training. These schools never cared to update the teaching faculty and encourage them to adopt latest research in management education and training. The students also compromise with the selection of institutes for studies on the flimsy ground e.g. fee.

For admission in the masters' course in management in IIMs, and other Top B-Schools in India, CAT (Common Admission Test) is the main entry point for graduates. Apart from 19 IIMs, around 89 member institutions accepted CAT 2014 scores for admission to their programmes. In 2013, 125 institutions accepted CAT scores while in 2012, 150 institutes. The number of students registering for CAT has also decreased, in 2013, 1.94 lakh candidates registered for the examination while in 2012, 2.1 lakh candidates registered for it.

The GMAT (Graduate Management Admission Test conducted by the Graduate Management Admission Council) score is accepted for admissions to more than 200 programs offered by 100 business schools in India. The number of institutions accepting this score in

India has also increased to 235 in 2013 from 37 only in 2010. This score is used by 1500 universities and institutions spread over more than 83 countries for more than 5400 programmes. In India, the third-largest citizenship group in the world, took 30, 213 GMAT exams, a figure that increased 19% in 2012. The number of Indian institutions accepting GMAT scores has also increased. The popularity of CAT is declining while GMAT is rising. It indicates that future managers prefer shorter executive programmes, which give international exposure as well. They are looking for skills to create strategies for local and global management issues.

2. Objective

In this paper, we will try to find out answers to the following using the quantitative and qualitative analysis:

- Why the existence of B-Schools itself are becoming difficult? Many of such schools have closed down recently.
- Why the B-Schools hiring is coming down severely?
- 3. Why are the MOOCs becoming important in Higher Education? What is future of MOOCs in Management studies?
- Why the registration of CAT candidates has witnessed a decline of 9.5% in 2014 from 8.5% in 2013?

It is also suggested that how MOOCs and its variant can be used to augment the teaching of management studies. The management studies give knowledge and skills to be practiced when a candidate assumes management position in different kinds of organizations. Management studies programmes provide students with a solid foundation in core disciplines like organizational behaviour, human resource management, finance, accounting, economics, etc. while understanding labour-management relations, negotiation, marketing, conflict resolution, etc. These courses give an understanding of working of organizations, its management, and interaction with local, national and international environments.

3. Methodology

The proposed research includes the collection of data from various sources, including ASSOCHAM, ICEF Monitor. The information in the context of the present situation of management studies from various research papers and reports have been analysed. A brief analysis of management studies in B-School and practices is also discussed.

4. Discussion

The B-Schools have to make a choice for designing curriculum on the premise of market equilibrium. It largely ignores the development of professional, managerial and leadership skills. Most B-Schools are trying to instil a belief that economic markets are innately stable and human actions can be anticipated with the help of conventional theories. The three challenges to current practices of management education are : (a) obsolescence: keeping pedagogy apace with new knowledge realities; (b) slowness: appropriately integrating new communication technologies into pedagogy; and (c) constrained choice: designing institutional arrangements to encourage pedagogical innovation (Bilimoria Diana, 1997). In this era of globalization, where every conventional method must be questioned at every step and innovation led learning must be inculcated. The current economy, which bends more on innovative, entrepreneurial ventures, including information and communication technology and multinational corporate management demands that B-School must teach the art of blending analytical and managerial skills for the future leaders. The distance learning courses are just worth enough of catering few concepts and theories to the students rather than questioning its implications and consequences. It lacks any practical application of such concepts in the real world. The rote education in management has rotted its essence. The skills in view of globalization like understanding and formulating problems, evaluating risks and opportunities, analyzing ideas in the context of its social, legal, economical, statutory, and environmental implications, managing team with creativity and encouraging talent without external or internal influence, optimizing team effort for better decisions and outcome. For developing such skills, the B-Schools must adopt innovative and creative teaching pedagogies, integrated multi-disciplinary approach and collaborative teaching and work for holistic development of the learner.

Thus, in this world of globalization, where the demand of international leaders is increasing, the course must be designed and administered by international experts to overcome obsolescence, slowness and constrained choice.

The management course fee at IIM (Indian Institute of Management), top management B-Schools, varies from 4 lakh to 16 lakh while in US it varies from \$10,000 to \$35,000 (Figure 1).

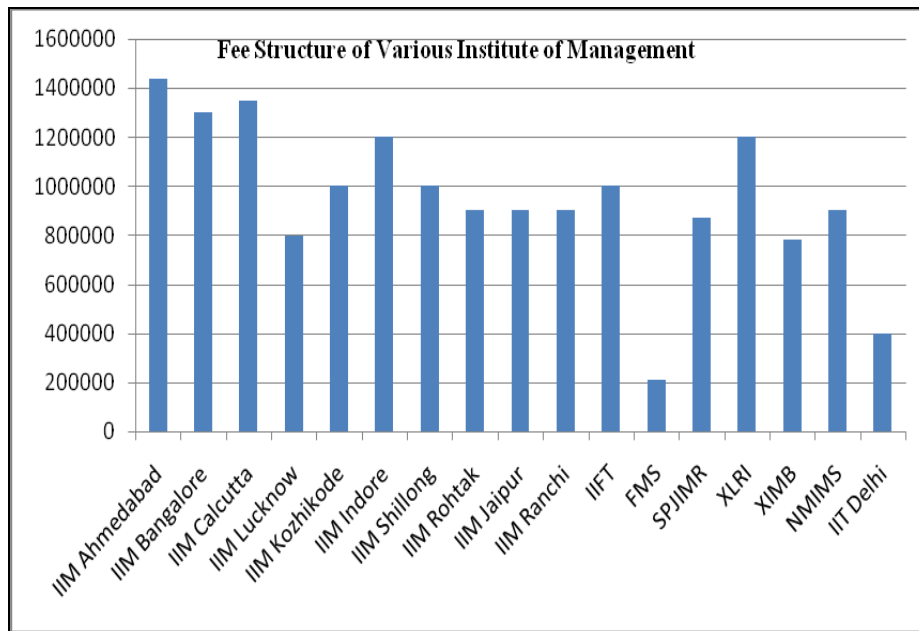


Figure 1: Fee Structure of Various Institute of Management 2011-13
Source: Official and other websites

A different study done by the Associated Chamber of Commerce and Industry of India estimated that the hundreds of thousands of Indian students now studying abroad cost India as much as US \$17 billion a year in lost of revenue (ICEF Monitor, 2014). Applications for the full time MBA soared more than 20% from last year at several business schools of US, including the University of California at Los Angeles, Georgetown University and University of North Carolina (Figure 2). This indicates that popularity of international management courses is rising in spite of huge fee.

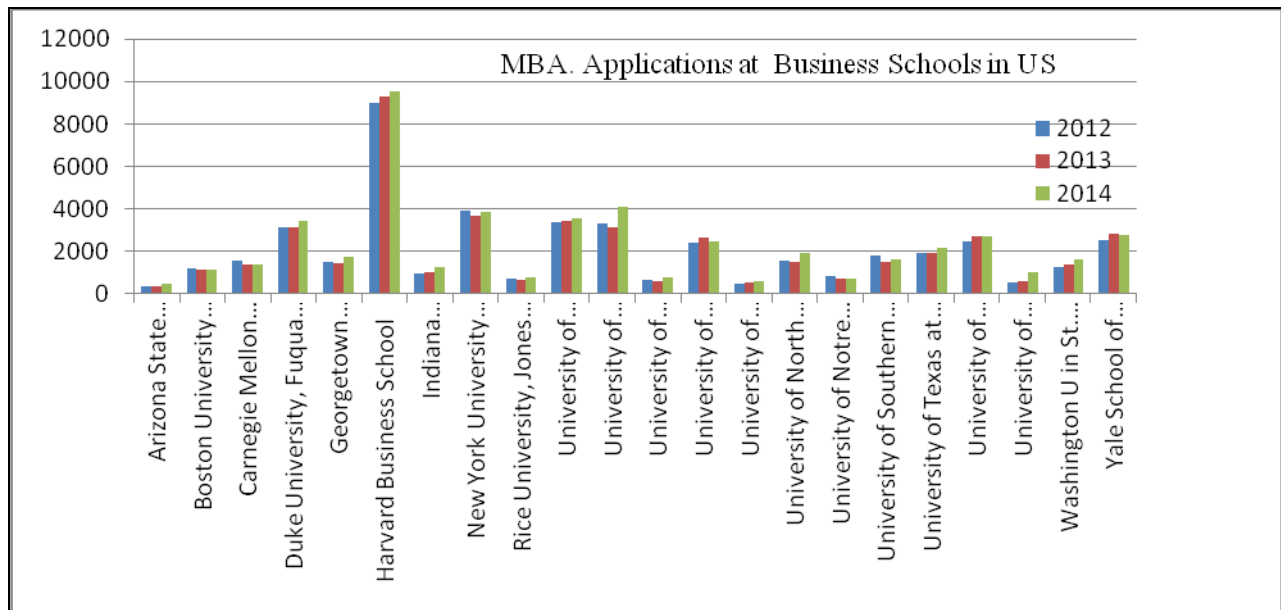


Figure 2: MBA Applications at Business Schools in US
Source: <http://online.wsj.com>

The talented aspiring students of management who cannot afford the fee cannot get admission and a big pool of talent will be deprived of management education. The need of the hour is to make available the international courses either at low cost or free with all the desired skills. In addition, the in-house training and life-long re-skilling process must be continuous and affordable.

5. MOOCs, a Viable Solution

MOOCs (Massive Open Online Courses) are structured courses with a syllabus, discussion board, and assessment through peer and/or machine. These courses are administered through online platforms, with or without fee may or may not include certificate of

accomplishment. Dave Cormier and Bryan Alexander coined the term MOOC in 2008 to describe a particular model of online courses developed by Stephens Downes and George Siemens. A University may not accept these courses for admission unless a particular university provides credit for it. However, it is an opportunity for non-traditional or returning students to enter in the higher education environment without initial cost, making higher education more accessible to a larger group of students (Fomin, 2013). The online resources can be accessed any time and can even be stored offline or printed depending upon the type of resource for further reference (Saxena, Saomya, 2013). MOOCs are a new and amplifying phenomenon, in the context of shrinking budgets and rising education costs (Welsh, Dianne HB and Mariana Dragusin, 2013).

MOOCs are innovative and provide a blend of technology and knowledge. It is for learning and widening the horizon of knowledge through international experts of the subject. The MOOCs have the potential to become a global higher education game changer (Dennis, Marguerite, 2012). However, MOOCs are augmentation rather than replacement of formal educational Models and universities should contribute to improving public knowledge by offering free online courses (Cann, Alan, 2013). One time investment, openness and scalability of MOOCs will certainly help the Indian education system and conserve Indian financial resources and culture (Tuteja, Gurpreet Singh, 2014).

The MOOCs are yet to be loaded with degree or diploma but are taking valuable space in resume of an aspiring employee. The participants in MOOCs are mostly limited to highly motivated learners who have access to high-bandwidth internet connections, and the majority has already earned at least a bachelor's degree (Hollands, Fiona Mae, and Devayani Tirthali, 2014). A snapshot of data of registered students for MOOCs provided by HarvardX with academic qualifications is analysed. It can be observed that more than 30% registered students are graduates which is highest as compared to secondary/postgraduates or any other qualification (Figure 3).

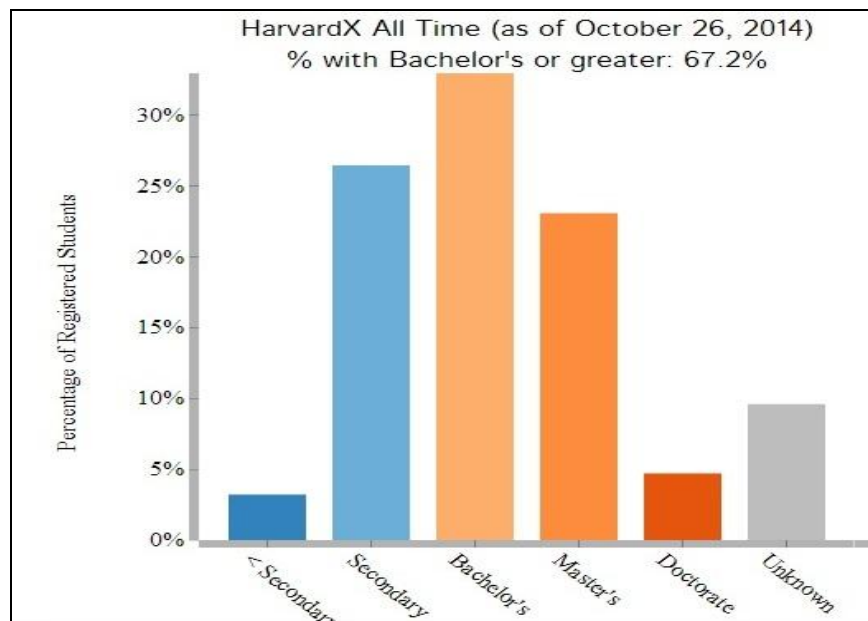


Figure 3: Percentage of Registered Students with Academic Qualifications

One approach adopted in many B-schools is to engage faculty and students in a virtual learning experience via MOOCs and SOOCs (Selectively Open Online Courses). The learning strategy offers the promise of both increasing student access and reducing costs. (Hall, Jr., O., 2014). These courses, offered online, well structured include assessment and certifications. They are based on either xMOOCs and cMOOCs or blend of both. The current discourse is around the concept of xMOOCs (primarily based around interaction with content and essentially adopting a behaviorist learning approach), and cMOOCs (which focus on harnessing the power of social media and interaction with peers, adopting a Connectivist learning approach), is an inadequate way of describing the variety of MOOCs and the ways in which learners engage with them (Conole, Grainne, 2014). MOOCs promise to open up higher education by providing accessible, flexible, and affordable and fast track completion (Yuan, L and Powell, S, 2013).

6. Customised MOOCs (SPOCs)

Another improvisation of MOOCs are SPOCs (Small, Private Online Course) which are designed to provide what MOOCs cannot. In Colorado State University-Global Campus, students with more than 12 credit hours come here to finish their low cost 100% online fully accredited bachelor degree (Goral, Tim, 2013). It is a business-to-business concept that Armando Fox at University of California, Berkeley has dubbed SPOC, for small, private online courses. The management studies being dynamic in nature and ever-changing scenario of socio-economic environment always keeps the managers on foot, confronting new problems, analysing them and finding their best solutions. The SPOCs are costly affair, but viable for corporate, institutes and big houses, which need highly specialised training for their employees, e.g. a software company needs to introduce a new cyber security strategy in their company, can take help

of SPOCs instead of sending all employees abroad for training or inviting experts for in-house training every time. It is an offshoot of the MOOC model, which has revenue potential as well.

7. BOOCs: Blending Online and On-Campus Courses

A special kind of MOOC is BOOC, which blends the Online and On-Campus facilities. This potential of MOOC development will positively influence on-campus learning, as it is better than flipped classroom. In this concept, the potential of MOOC resources is to enhance out-of-class learning materials for on-campus learners in order to create high-value interactions in in-class settings (University of Hong Kong, 2014). This is the best optimization of online resources, including videos, assessments, and research papers administered in the guidance of local experts. The application of this concept is best suited for novices and starters, using best of both online and offline potential.

8. MOOCs can be Language and Culture Sensitive

Data from India Human Development Survey (2005) shows that surveyed households reported that among men, 72% do not speak English, 28% speak at least some English, and 5% are fluent. Among women, the corresponding proportions were 83%, 17%, and 3% (IHDS, 2005). Now, non-English language courses are offered by universities in 20 countries, including India, Mexico, France, and Hong Kong e.g. 12 Chinese institutions launched their own platform, XuetangX, Queen Rania Foundation in Jordan opened up similar portal, Edraak, to provide Arabic language content from three Middle Eastern schools, it adapted to display text from right to left (Leber, Jessica, 2014). The courses in regional languages, which are more cultural rich, are accepted easily. In the context of teaching management studies, the language barrier is least as students are graduates. However, in order to understand local issues, the future managers should be sensitive towards the local cultural.

9. MOOCs are for Lifelong Learning

In 2013, Harvard Business Publishing surveyed said only 8% of learning professionals were using MOOCs regularly for learning programs and is expected to increase dramatically in 2014. MOOCs as corporate learning offerings, complementing existing programs and gives the latest updates on the subject (Carvey, Ray, 2014). The MOOCs or customised MOOCs are beneficial for the managers of today. They can brush-up their concepts and exchange their ideas through Connectivism with the international peers. They can also look for solutions through mutual consent and learn from other's experience.

10. Conclusion

Thus, in this world of globalization, where the demand of international leaders is increasing, the course must be designed and administered by international experts to overcome obsolescence, slowness and constrained choice.

The talented aspiring students of management who cannot afford the lofty fee cannot get admission and a big pool of talent is left out. The MOOCs are innovative and provide a blend of technology and knowledge. It is for learning and widening the horizon of knowledge through international experts. This will not only be beneficial for future managers, but also for the faculty members. They will be able to update themselves with the latest research and teaching pedagogies in management education.

In addition, the in-house and lifelong re-skilling process must be continuous and affordable. The MOOCs or customised MOOCs are beneficial for the managers of today. They can brush-up their concepts and exchange their ideas through Connectivism with the international peers. They can also look for solutions through mutual consent and learn from other's experience.

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