

EXPLORING AREAS OF MANAGEMENT RESEARCH AT EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION

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ABSTRACT

There has been a tremendous change in the perspective for “Management Research” in recent years. But too little efforts had been given to explore the new areas where management research will be helpful. Management Research is about searching systematically for solutions to management problems. There are a number of areas where management research can act as a boon and can help us do better work in the related area. Commonly research topics are selected focusing on the organizations perspective, related to the issues or problems which arise in organizations. The purpose of this paper is to explore new areas where management research will be helpful and focus on the issues where management research can make things better. A thought is given to the areas where “Management” is a new word; involving new concept of management to such areas can help do things in a better manner.

Exploring new areas will also help the researcher to work in a variety of field and discover new ways to help the organization to focus on the issues and constructively work on it.

A case study of educational institution has been suitably presented in this paper.

Keywords: Management Research, Managerial Anticipation, Academic Culture

INTRODUCTION:

Management research in today's world in any organization is influenced by the society and economics and with rapid growth of global commerce; managers at all level need accurate and timely information, for managerial decision making. Whether the decisions made are technical, tactical or strategic levels; good, accurate and timely information always leads to better decision. Gathering of information is done through a sound and scientific process i.e. management research. Every now and then organizations spend enormous amount of money for research and development in order to maintain their competitive edge. The research done helps the management or organization to plan different strategies to compete with challenging world. Thus accurate information is obtained through research and leads to enormous benefits of the organization.

However with ever changing and challenging environment the problem or the issues related with the different areas and fields have grown in number and scope and complexity over the years, exploring different areas of management research will lead to success. Thus a sophisticated understanding of the various fields of management research can help individuals as well as organizations lead.

OBJECTIVE OF EXPLORING AREAS OF MANAGEMENT RESEARCH AT EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS:

1. Exploring areas of management research at educational institution provide a road map to get more information in the related field.
2. Exploring areas of management research at educational institution will help finding the different areas where improvements can be done at educational institution.
3. Exploring areas of management research will help understand the nature , influences and solutions for the different problems or issues which are raised or may raise in the organization.
4. Exploring areas of management research at educational institution can help achieving the goal by providing a better solution.

CONCEPT OF MANAGEMENT RESEARCH:

Management in all business and organizational activities is the act of getting people together to accomplish desired goals and objectives effectively and efficiently. Management comprises of planning, organizing, staffing, leading, directing and controlling an organization (a group of one or more people or entities) or effort for the purpose of accomplishing a goal. As organizations can be viewed as systems, management can also be defined as human action including design to facilitate the production of useful outcomes from a system.

Research can be defined as the search for knowledge or as any systematic investigation with an open mind to establish novel facts using scientific method.

Thus Management Research can be defined as a form of systematic inquiry that contributes to the knowledge in the field of management.

1. APPLICATION OF MANAGEMENT RESEARCH AT EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION:

The topic of promoting and strengthening research activities within educational institution or management schools is familiar around the world today. The management research can help identify the needs to promote and strengthen the educational pattern and the research activities in the educational institution. This will also help understand the nature and scope of management research at educational

institution, the changing expectations from the management research, and the ever growing number of problems or issues before the educational institution.

1.1 NATURE AND SCOPE OF MANAGEMENT RESEARCH AT EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION:

Management can be defined as “the art and science of planning, organizing, directing, controlling and executing human efforts so as to make the best utilization of the available resources to achieve organizational objectives”. However there are various other facets of management which should be taken into consideration, like the need to identify and make available new forms of resources, the need to devise organizational system and practices to facilitate a collaborative spirit among a culturally diverse set of people, the need to evaluate and reform the existing organisations so as to make them more responsive to the new demands on them etc. The other issues at the workplace are the issues of leadership, organisational culture, skill up gradation, process innovation, future-orientation, organisational renewal, risk management, selection and recruitment, virtual workplaces, relationship with customers, group decision support, changing environment of organisations, social responsibility of organisations, emerging global order guiding the evolution of technology, finance, and trade, and so forth. As far as educational institutions are concerned the management research can make a lot of difference in improving the working in the educational institution and also help in achieving the ultimate goal of educational institution i.e. better education.

1.2 EXPECTATION FROM MANAGEMENT RESEARCH AT EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION

The Educational world is becoming increasingly competitive due to rapid environmental changes and growing number of educational institutions. Many educational institutions find it difficult to manage and sustain in today's scenario and finally collapse. Management research is an important medium that facilitates improvement of leadership qualities and turns out excellent solutions to the problems. The educational institution's main role is to help improve and enhance the existing skills while passing on competence and confidence to students with a good knowledge base. Young aspiring students in the educational institution expect to achieve a reputed degree (look for better education) to turn out to be survivors, the educational institution should be able to provide such education to the students so that they should be able to sustain themselves in an environment of intense competition, globalization and ever-evolving technologies. In fact, producing powerful and competitive individuals is the biggest challenge that educational institutions worldwide face today. The management research will help explaining the different areas where educational institutions can improve and achieve their goal of providing better education.

1.3 PROBLEMS BEFORE EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION:

History proves that with the progressing days the new problems emerge even before the old ones could be adequately resolved. Presently, India is placed the third largest higher education system in the world in terms of enrollment. With such a large system, the Indian education system is in an impoverished condition; the higher education system is not available to the people below poverty.

Some common problems of the educational institution are:

- a. Availability:** Though the education system has grown progressively in certain decades but the availability of faculty, funds and sometimes infrastructure is commonly noticed.

- b. Changing ownership patterns:** Educational institutions are being built up by public-private, private institutions have arrived as 'high profit areas driven by shortages'. The demand pressures, in particular employment-oriented ones and have shifted the ownership structure of education. Also every now or then the Norms and Regulations keeps changing as per the Governments policy.
- c. Regional Disparity:** Within individual states, the course has been for colleges to open in certain urban areas. For instance Maharashtra, a state where the capacity of higher education institutions is almost high, the combination of availability of certain courses in certain cities is clear cut. More than 50 government colleges in India are in urban centre and not a single one is in rural areas. The regional distinction is not only at a macro level, but also within regions in terms of quality and attention of the institutions.
- d. The differential nature of educational costs:** Altered department is conducted by raising the costs in some areas of higher education. More employment-oriented are explore as an investment for future income generation. Courses that do not guarantee employment remain relatively cheap and this is where the country's economic difference is reflected, especially in higher education. Increasingly, education which would accomplish future income is becoming available to those who can afford it.

Also What motives teachers or faculties to work effectively? How to get productive work from them? Which work system promotes efficiency? How to resolve conflicts, if arises? How to attract students? How to improve decision making under uncertain circumstances? How to set long-term objectives? How to achieve sustainable superior performance over a long period of time? However the problems seem to have grown in number, scope and complexity over the years, one expects that the accumulation of information through management research will lead to general rise in the competence in recognizing and resolving the problems.

Every academic institution needs an academically inspiring goal to work for.

2. EMERGING RESPONSIBILITY OF MANAGEMENT RESEARCH:

Management became recognized as an area of stud, it is becoming clear that the subject is likely to involve multiple research epitomes. This is perhaps because no unique way has been found that could sufficiently characterize the complex reality associated with the activity (or phenomenon) called management and the role of research with respect to that reality. At one level, there is the concrete external reality of material, money, or manufacturing that could be objectively described. Observations on these could be compared and patterns could be identified, for example, the degree of operational flexibility associated with alternative manufacturing systems or the relationship between financial risk and return. At another level, there is the internal reality of human thought, emotion, behavior, mental models, or the so-called "defense mechanisms." This aspect of managerial reality poses unique challenge to the research approaches that depend solely on objective data, i.e., those obtained through classical observations. Researchers have made use of alternative forms of observation, e.g., participant observation (sometimes using "observing participants"), unobtrusive observation, etc. Some others have relied on reports (including self-reports) instead of observations. However, there are difficult methodological questions pertaining to the truthfulness and validity of such reports. At yet another level, there is the intermediate reality of social and organisational structures that simultaneously shape and are shaped by human behaviour. The methodological issues in studying such intermediate reality are still a major topic of academic debate in management.

Although the above does not clarify what the key difficulties in management research are, it supports the position that management research is likely to be multi-paradigmatic in nature. Therefore, the most fundamental responsibility for management research is to allow the healthy flourishing of multiple research epitomes retaining the possibility of a constructive interaction among them.

Management researchers, in their zeal to make a useful contribution, sometimes arrogate to themselves the responsibility of improving practical situations through planned interventions. In certain circumstances this might constitute a type of colonisation of others' work environment and their life-worlds. It is an responsibility of management research to respect the intentions and interests of those who are supposed to benefit from such research.

Many research studies in management often conclude with a set of recommendations. However, researchers are not the only ones producing recommendations. There are other actors who produce recommendation as well, for example, politicians, spiritual leaders, public officials, family heads, and so forth. Of course a researcher might argue that research-based recommendations are superior to other recommendations because of the supporting data and theory. This leaves little space for the other actors to defend their recommendations. In a way, it silences them. This is being viewed as "violence" in contemporary thought (e.g., Lyotard's notion of Différend).The violence is particularly serious when the data, theory, and analyses of management research are known to be methodologically deficient in many ways. There is a responsibility for management research to ensure that others' voices are not silenced in a violent manner.

Popular management idea like TQM certainly have their merit but their propounders and advocates fall short of clarifying some of the basic things one needs to know in order to adopt or apply these in a self-conscious and critically-reflective manner. These include the background challenges, questions, problems, and thoughts that gave rise to such idea. Besides, the literature referring to these ideas does not clarify how a critical reader might compare these with the other ideas in management. For example, there is no systematic comparison between TQM and cybernetics or either of these with the idea of interactive management. Therefore, a serious reader (or student) might accept or reject these ideas without being able to explain the rationale behind that decision. What is more significant, a practitioner would not be able to interpret and learn from the experience of deploying these ideas. As a result of these (i.e., uncritical acceptance or rejection, inability to learn from the use of these ideas, etc.) the ideas themselves are deprived of the necessary intellectual and empirical nourishment, which are nevertheless required to systematically enrich and improve them. It becomes a responsibility of management research to provide this intellectual and empirical nourishment.

2. EXPLORING MANAGEMENT RESEARCH:

By distinguishing augmentation here is a case study to show the possibility of shaping and presenting the individual efforts in a manner that the overall effect of work carries a unique import in some branches of management research. For exploring areas of management research at educational institution two basic factors can be considered i.e. (a) Managerial Anticipation (b) an Academic culture

3.1 MANAGERIAL ANTICIPATION:

Different issues need to be addressed in managing the future of any educational institution. The present environment of the educational institution is characterised by the following trends:

- (a) Lack of clarity about the Goals of educational institution in general: The notion of education is historically constructed and undergoes evolutionary as well as epochal revisions from time to time. The advent of the 21st century has perhaps fuelled the need for a major revision in the goals and methods of educational Institution.
- (b) Emergence of several alternative organisational arrangements: With the changing and challenging environment there is emergence of several alternatives for the provision of educational and research services. Examples of such alternatives include corporate universities <http://www.corpu.com/>, course accrediting universities (e.g., the Wipro University programme in India), Web-based virtual universities <http://vu.wu-wien.ac.at/english/>, global universities <http://www.worlduniversity.org/>,

knowledge ecologies <http://www.knowledgeecology.com/>, learning communities, etc. Many of these alternatives have emerged in the recent past after the Internet has made physical distances less important and educational interactions much faster and easier.

- (c) Increasingly new and more complex challenges before the management profession: Those who study the sociology of professions recognise that the management profession is experiencing some kind of a structural readjustment. Two major social tendencies can be recognised immediately: the contraction (or downsizing) of the state apparatus in many societies and the simultaneous expansion of the range of activities of the corporate organisations. Both of these pose an ever-growing list of new challenges before the educational institution. There is a strange expectation among the educated elite in our country and somehow management research can provide the answers to the most vexing and the most intractable social and organisational questions of our times.
- (d) Process of unprejudiced occurring even in educational institution: Continuing with the above point many of the new models of educational institution emerging now have one feature in common: They tend to provide a direct link between those playing the roles of learner and teacher. This implies that the professional role of the academic is undergoing a transformation.
- (e) Increasing scarcity of the appropriate mix of skills in higher education and research: As a corollary to the above, a new range of skills are becoming necessary for the professional academic. For example: the skills of designing Web-based educational resources, developing educational software, supporting the learner with information management, crafting new educational goals more relevant to the current reality, specialising on methodologies that build competence in client organisations, reducing the time required to convert useful data to research output, etc.

3.2 Academic Culture:

Educational institutions can run into corruption in the absence of an academic culture. They become affected by the confusion in the wider society instead of providing a meaningful direction and an inspiring leadership to it. Various non-academic criteria begin to dominate their operation. Several educational institutions in the region and in the whole country have fallen victim to such a process of impairment. I feel academic institutions can improve by paying attention to building academic culture.

- (a) **Comprehensiveness:** One of the key difficulties in building an academic culture is that one does not know who might be in a position to contribute to it. Therefore, there is an advantage in maintaining an atmosphere of Comprehensiveness. This means that it should be welcoming to anyone interested in participating in it, irrespective of one's history. However, contemporary institutional designs might require that the person should have demonstrated an interest and a capability to participate in an academic environment. This is difficult to judge. Therefore, we should provide various alternative ways and means through which one can still participate irrespective of one's history of achievements.
- (b) **Critical thinking:** An academic culture is inconceivable without an ambience of critical thinking. An educational institution interested in developing such an ambience has to invent practices and forms of interaction, which promote critical thinking. A spirit of experimentation, an attitude of tolerance, a desire for responsiveness, and recognition of authenticity are necessary to develop such an ambience.
- (c) **Reflective practice:** Any practice, academic practice included, requires an effort towards continuous improvement. The notion of reflective practice refers to a process by which people, engaged in some creative field of action, pay attention to their practice in a collective and self-reflective manner. In doing this, they study their own actions and their own thinking jointly and explore alternatives for the future. Such a process must be facilitated by an institution.
- (d) **Support:** Contemporary academic activity requires various kinds of support. Several educational institutions tend to assume carelessly that they already know what forms of support might be required.

Given the continuously changing nature of academic work in the contemporary world, there is a need to consider new forms of support and provide these as and when these become necessary.

- (e) **Recognition:** Like every practitioner, an academic also needs recognition for his or her contributions. Not only does it satisfy and inspire the individual academic, it also strengthens an environment in which mutual respect and appreciation is fostered. The process of giving credit for someone's contribution also builds trust in a social environment.

CONCLUDING REMARKS:

The study helps understand the context within which the management research at educational institution can be done and help do things better. It focuses on describing the context by first focusing on the nature and scope of management research, the changing expectations from management research, and the ever-growing number of problems before the educational institutions. It also enlightens the various issues related with educational institutions. This paper will help open new avenues for further research work.

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