

Strengthening Industries and Educational Institutions linkage in INDIA-An empirical approach

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Abstract: In this paper we have tried to bring out the actuality that the educational institutions and industries relationship-linkage for the growth of the Indian economy. This paper discusses about relationship between the industry-institute, integration of industrial practices at the institutes, employability skills and its development. We found that the industries require graduates with employability skills and educational institutions are the centers, which generates the graduates. There is a gap between graduated people that they lack in employability skills as what they have learnt is different and what the industries do is different. There is a need to fill the above gap by creating integration of industries and institutions. There is a need to information communication between the two. The practices of the institutes are to be developed to the level of requirements of the industry. Measures are to be taken while designing curriculum, syllabus, assignments, internship, projects and seminars to fill the gap between these two.

Introduction

India has been always observed as economically growing country in the recent years. Now it is one among the knowledge economies. Skill-based activities have contributed to the maximum to this growth. These activities are dependent on qualified workforce which is fed by higher education system. Now it is widely accepted that higher education is critical to India's emergence in the global knowledge economy.

Educational Institutions have long been recognized as source of knowledge creation, innovation, technological advances and entrepreneurs. Across the world, educational institutions and universities are being positioned as strategic assets in innovation and economic competitiveness, and as problem-solvers for socio-economic issues affecting their country and its people. In order to fully take advantage of the potential of educational institutions and universities in this aspect, governments and institutions are actively pursuing strategies to strengthen and raise educational institutions linkages with industries through research, projects, assignments, internship programs, industrial visits and other forms of alliance.

Educational institution and industry linkages for development of trained and skilled manpower:

An educational institution - industry linkage is very essential to bring skilled and efficient manpower. The linkage between institution and industry should not be partial, it should be a kind of partnership between both parties where both work with a common goal of developing human resources. It should not merely be confined to providing on-the-job training, lectures or seminars to the vocational students by the experts form industry, but should include the industrialist's cooperation right from the planning of core curriculum stage to the placement stage. A strong and healthy linkage between the institution and the industry has several benefits to the institution, learners and the industry as well. The institution can start courses after identifying the various manpower needs of the industry so that the students find employment on completion of the course. The institution can also develop the curriculum for the courses and revise and update it on a regular basis based on the changing and flexible needs of the industry. Thus keeping the course in demand among the student community - The students would be benefited with the sharing of infrastructure and sharing of expert services form the industry.

The institution can also make use of the on-the-job instructors for evaluation of their students based on their skills. Finally, for the placement of their students as well. On-the-job training which is an important feature in higher education can be greatly facilitated with a strong linkage with the industry. This would in turn provide for the industry trained and skilled manpower to meet its requirements.

Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between institute and industry:

Establishing of a MoU with the Industry is necessary as the institute can be sure of its students been absorbed by that particular industry for a job. This would benefit the students of the institute in obtaining effective training/internship and a job in reputed organizations. It would also expose the students to latest technology in the case of science, engineering, commerce and management courses. Students of all courses would also get the experience of working in a more professional and high-tech environment. When asked the Heads/Principals of Educational institutions whether they had established any MoU with the industry, 50% and 25% of the Principals at the UG and PG level respectively, claimed that have not made an attempt in maintaining this linkage. It was mostly the Commerce and Management based Colleges that had not made a serious attempt in maintaining this linkage. From the above responses given by the heads of educational institutions on the absence of MoU with the Industry by a large number of institutions both at the UG and PG level, it can be concluded there is inadequate interaction on the part of the institutions with the industry. This in turn is definitely going to affect the quality of education, training and internships/ placements provided to the students. Hence it can be said that the, inadequate interaction of Education institutions with industrialists in making Education more work oriented is true.

Institutions interest in establishing MoU with industries

Interest to establish MoU with industries			
Streams / Fields	Interested	Not interested	Total
Commerce & Management	90%	10%	100%
Engineering	80%	20%	100%
Humanity and Social Sciences	05%	95%	100%
General Foundation Courses	100%	0%	100%
Total (in %)	68.75%	31.25%	100%

Educationalists & Industrialist Opinion on New Courses to be introduced:

The heads/principals of educational institutions as well as industrialists were at an opinion based on their experience and knowledge to suggest some new courses that would give scope for greater employment opportunities in the country. There were many who preferred not to make any suggestions. But those who made suggested the following courses:

- (a) A course in Purchasing and Storekeeping could be introduced as apprenticeship slots and employment opportunities are available in this field.
- (b) A course in Multipurpose Health Worker or Nursing to be introduced and also could have vertical mobility in B Sc (Nursing) course.
- (c) A course in Building Maintenance be introduced taking into consideration the growing number of Housing co- operative societies which can generate a lot of employment for the passed-outs who can undertake maintenance & minor repairs of the buildings.
- (d) A course in Health and Beauty culture is to be introduced considering the demand for Beauticians.
- (e) A course in Plumbing could also be introduced considering the demand for plumbers for smaller jobs.
- (f) A course in Library and Information Science be introduced which would provide qualified and trained librarians at the village and local level smaller libraries, and also in Colleges and Schools.
- (g) Courses on Photography, Theater and Media Communication which would have scope for employment.
- (h) Travel and Tourism course should be modified to suit the needs of the tourists.

Industry Involvement in Curriculum Development and Management:

The curriculum is to be developed within the national curricular frame and it should be based on the identification of job opportunities, specification of duties or tasks to be performed in the job, and analysis of each task in terms of knowledge, skill and personality traits required to perform a particular task.

Sharing Infrastructure:

The facility to share infrastructure is one of the greatest advantage of having an effective institution- industry linkage. Modern industry today uses the latest technology to keep in times with the rapidly changing technology. This technology is many times too expensive and out of the reach of the private and common Government aided institution with limited funds.

Hence, the only way for students to get exposure to these new tools and equipments is in the industry where they have to undergo internship/project work/on-the-job training. Establishing a MoU with the industry, would benefit the students tremendously. For this, an extra effort has to be made from the part of the institution offering the technical and management course in establishing this relation.

Expert Services:

An institution - industry linkage also facilitates colleges in making use of expert services form industry in delivering class room lectures. Besides sharing of infrastructure, there can be sharing of expert services form the industry as well. These experienced and knowledgeable persons could be used as Guest Faculty/ Special Lecturers for the courses. The programme makes provision for Guest Faculty on Honorarium for teaching of the courses. These specialized experts from the industry could be used to share specialized knowledge with students. The institution should get successful entrepreneurs from the industry to address students so as to encourage and motivate them to go in for self employment. Experts are known to be busy with their own work schedule. Relations should be maintained with the industry such that, the experts are willing to spare time for teaching/training students. They should be willing to be flexible and adjust their timing with that of the teaching in the colleges or industry where ever it is planned to be conducted.

Evaluation of Students:

If the employers/industrialists are involved in the process of evaluating the student's performance, they can see for themselves the quality of the product coming out of this system. Hence, it is advisable to keep these experts as members of the panel of examiners, and suitable remuneration or honorarium may be paid to them for this purpose. However, the system in reality slightly differs. The industrialists grade the students under them at the end of the training. But the final grades are eventually given to the students by their college teaching faculty.

Placement:

If the linkages are properly established with the concerned industry, students can get employed by the industry where they underwent internship/project work/visit/on-the-job training. If the students cannot be employed by that particular industry, the student could be recommended by them for absorption in other organizations. The industry too would benefit as they would be in a position to choose from the many students, those suitable for their firm. The industry would be in a position to well in advance the capabilities of the student to be employed. Suggestions made by educationalists towards Placement of Students:

- (a) Campus interviews from the related industry could be help in the College campus. For example for courses like Bio technology, Bio- Tech firms can be contacted about the course curriculum and campus interviews can be conducted in order to absorb students.
- (b) Govt. and Non- Govt. agencies should be encouraged to coordinate with the Colleges to absorb graduate students.
- (c) Some posts should be reserved at employment exchange for fresh passed-outs.
- (d) Maintaining a good MoU with industry is the best solution that would encourage firms to absorb students soon after graduation.

Conclusion:

It can be concluded that with a strong institutions-industry linkage, not only does the institute and the students benefit from it, but it would benefit the industry as well. Industry can be involved in taking an active part in the general, technical and professional programme at different levels. Experts from the industry can be involved in the development of the curriculum of the courses and also their help could be sought in the active management of the programme. Sharing of infrastructure and of experts from the industry is another benefit to the institute. And finally, the industry would be benefited with the choice of skilled personnel to choose from. Students on the other hand would seek employment for themselves.

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