

Excavating Strategies to Bridge up The Industry – Institute Gulf in South Asian Higher Education System

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Abstract:

In the era of Liberalization, Privatization and Globalization (LPG) where spearheading competitiveness is offering new unforeseen challenges everyday, the only one can survive in the industry is the one who has meticulously inculcated specializations through the rigorous process of skill up-gradations. The cut-throat competition across different industries demands excellence in terms of knowledge and skills. Now the herculean question to be answered is whether the stakeholders of academia are really conditioning students in institutions so well as to be absorbed by the industry directly and meet out the increasing national demands? The rejoinder to this question is ambiguous and forces us to be skeptic. The paper thrives for suggesting some strategies to encourage and help teachers and professionals to use in their respective domains. Any particular institute should run in such a way that every single minute of the staff members, both teaching and non-teaching, as well as of the students is fruitfully utilized. The paper throws lights on methodologies and tools that may encourage and help academic professionals to use this in their lessons. Through this paper authors will try to address the lacuna

of academia that comprises of three poles i.e. the institutions, staff members and students, as well as to coin some valuable suggestions to bridge up the industry-academia gulf in order to cater to the emerging demands of generation – Z professionals.

Keywords:

Academia; industry requirements; Liberalization; Privatization; Globalization (LPG); technical education

Introduction

The academic stakeholders who are accountable for running the whole educational system of the nation, whether education minister monitoring national or state academic policies, vice chancellors taking care of their respective universities, directors/principals of the institutes or professors catering to their specialized domains, should understand the very basic fact that, the students whom they teach, train or groom are the outgoing products and furthermore, the same are to be utilized by the industry as the end customers. Until and unless the professionals of academia do not have a clear pulse of industrial demands and

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specific requirements of the customers, they cannot deliver the desired services or design, mold and shape products (i.e. students as invaluable human capital and assets) of lasting usages. In this era of LPG where the competition is cut-throat, no one can last longer without targeting to fulfill the requirements of the customers. As the longevity or durability of a product matters in the market the sustenance of the students in the industry also matters. The another issue worth discussing is that of education specially professional, technical and medical education is moving beyond the reach of commoners. The educational institutions are set up with huge investments and their fee structure is too exorbitant to be tolerated by the parents whose wards take admission. For this and also for the betterment of individual future and national development, whatever is ongoing in educational institutions should have accountability. The objective behind any such initiative should have to be totally convincing. For example, the products of all the technical Education Institutions should be conditioned on the patterns of catering to the nascent and emerging demands of the twenty first century industries. Those who opt or being recruited for teaching as a profession must have natural inclination, enthusiasm and zeal for the same, a passion and eagerness to teach, to give knowledge, to inspire and motivate students in right direction which may, in turn, prove productive to both individualistic and nationalistic goals. One of the main ways in which industry can contribute towards sustainable development is through providing industrial exposure to students; through visits at industrial sites; providing seminars and consultancy to the pursuing engineers. Syllabus up-gradations; sensitizations of faculty members towards emerging trends and technological

advancements through workshops, short term courses, faculty development programmes, orientation programmes and refresher courses; and teaching of new topics are also crucial to their dissemination in society and requires the development of methodologies that facilitate understanding of the critical concepts and at the same time, make it attractive to students and to industry leaders.

Reconciliation

As illustrated in the figure-1, the reconciliation model can be applied to identify the potential, productivity and effectiveness in teaching and learning processes. The model identifies relationships among students and the teachers, but it does not account all the possible factors related to teaching. It also does not offer any solution.

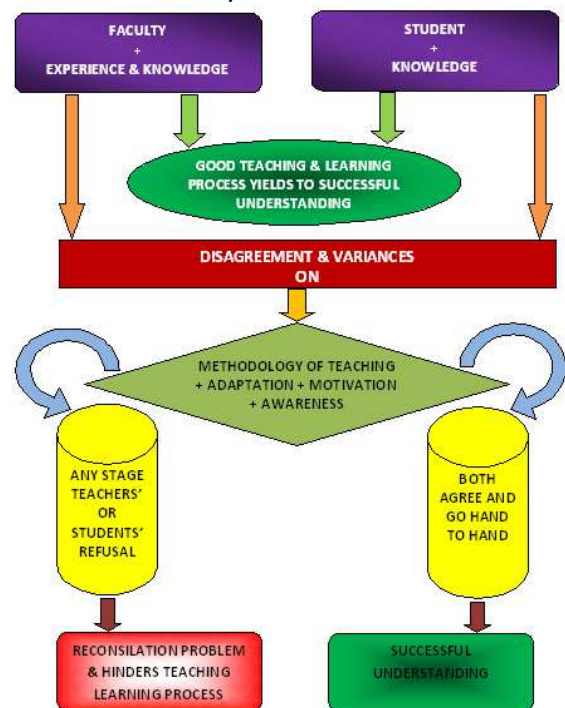


Figure:1 Modeling Reconciliation

Present Scenario

In the present era of LPG, lacuna of the most of technical and academic institutions can easily be figured out by the projection and centralization of the observations through concentrating on three major influencing factors:

1. Universities/ institutions
2. Faculty
3. Students

Universities/ Institutes

- a) The syllabus prescribed by most of the universities and institutions in the national curriculum framework must be fine tuned with the current trends of the industrial demands and technological advancements.
- b) Lack of correlation between theory and practical classes must be addressed with top priority. Most of the students and academicians are engaged in outdated experimental procedures which has nothing to contribute to industrial productive processes.
- c) Many institutions offering academic services in higher education do not have required lab and other infrastructural facilities. For having a competitive mileage fundamental infrastructural facilities must not be compromised at any cost as they directly affect the intellectual property of the nation and waste the efforts of the generations.
- d) In present scenario there is very little involvement of industry people in teaching and learning process consequently industry and academia are dreaming and striving for their success by standing aloof. This gap has to be bridged up and somewhere they are required to thrive for the establishment of a forum where they should start

working together for developing uniformed strategies to their goal actualizations. This will not only facilitate them in getting employ-worthy human resource readily available at their disposal but at the same time reduce their cost of preemployment training upto a great extent.

- e) The subjects taught in the degree are not in the proper sequence. Extensive exercises are required for the syllabus alignment. Teams of subject matter experts should engage their efforts to streamline academic curricula as per the futuristic technological requirements.
- f) The syllabus emphasizes more on theory part and less on practical exposure. Theoretical emphasis should be curtailed as and when applicable and practical exposure should be emphasized by increasing practical contact hours. Lecture, Tutorial and Practical (LTP) hours should be readjusted and (2 0 2), (3 1 2) practice should be shifted to basic science teaching courses and any how (2 1 3) system should preferably be opted. New choice based optional credit courses should be introduced to provide all round development of human mental faculties and their credit must be counted and added to the curriculum with due attendance benefit as and when applicable.
- g) Facilities provided, whether infrastructural such as LCDs, OHPs, video-lecturers, library contact hours, faculty consultancy services, other academic and internet amenities are not utilized with proper optimization. The resources

should be exploited judiciously and with due care to have jurisprudential outcomes.

Faculty

- a) Most of the faculty members are not comfortable in adapting the rapidly changing professional environment. They practice teaching focusing on what they know and not what actually is required by the industries.
- b) In some of the cases faculty preferences are more inclined towards creating their own specializations than catering to the broader aims or extending services towards society at large or even shaping and molding the destiny of the future citizens and professionals.
- c) Gone are the days when chalk and talk had been sole method of teaching. Even today in most of the developing countries major teaching time is wasted in drawing diagrams and graphs on the black board, dictating notes etc.
- d) In a few cases teachers are entrusted teaching subjects in which they have no interest rather they are teaching subjects which they are forced to teach in non-availability of educated faculty members in the areas of specialization as required.
- e) There are sufficient number of cases in which teachers lack in applied knowledge and their advanced practical applications. Rural areas are key concerns in this regard.
- f) In case of non availability of regular faculty staff temporary and time being management is done by the recruitment of ad-hoc, probation and visiting faculty members where

their approach and dedication towards discharging their duties remain highly casual and they heavily lack the sense of responsibility and bonding.

- g) Teachers feel secure in confinement of their self created cocoon shell, i.e. if they do not know anything; they hesitate to accept it and demotivate the students in that particular area.
- h) Demotivation amongst teachers due to managerial policies and non-transparent and other mental stresses or social pressures.

Students

- a) Students tend to be more examination oriented than knowledge oriented.
- b) Most of the students adopt the stream with incomplete knowledge and wrong information, hence they lose interest.
- c) Students are not interested in attending the lectures, specially the lectures by guest faculty or visiting faculty.

Suggestions

- a) A strong bond between institute and industry should be established and maintained.
- b) Industry people should also be involved in the curriculum design and syllabus formation process.
- c) The syllabus must be revised frequently and it should be so flexible as to integrate industrial exposure and practical applications of the theories.
- d) Industrial visits and lectures by industry people should be arranged by the institutions.

- e) Proper infrastructure and well qualified staff (teaching and non teaching) should be recruiting there in the institutions putting aside all the adherences of personal, communal and racial preferences.
- f) Synchronization of theory and practical classes should be there.
- g) Hi-tech teaching methodologies should be adopted by the faculty so as to devote more time on understanding the topic.
- h) Students should be motivated to concentrate on gaining knowledge rather than only on passing the exams and fear of failure should be curtailed by psychological counseling and various round of professional sessions conducted by the experts of different streams concerning to the required areas.
- i) There should be proper promotion for the faculty members for attending Faculty Development Programmes, Faculty Training Programmes, Staff Teacher Training Programmes, Refreshers Courses and Orientation Programmes for the sensitizations of teachers and they must be encouraged by the institutions to attend such kind of programmes for honing their skills.
- j) Teachers should design the assignments and class tests in such a fashion that it elicits their interests.
- k) Proper feedback should be taken from the students on regular basis and should be considered in the course of further planning.

Conclusion

In this era of globalization, the industry and academia should come under one umbrella

share the single platforms for curriculum designing, framing the course work and contribute to the technical growth by proper conditioning of the engineering potential of students. It is very loud and clear that industries are the customers for the institutions. Therefore, a proper justice should be made by the teaching community to their job. In this world of specialization, institutions should understand the industry needs and nurture the temperaments of the students and modify the plans accordingly to pave the way for nation's development. With profound wish we hope this may help in bringing the students to the desired levels of the industry and enable them to cracking easily the interviews and fetching them better placements and higher pay packages.

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