

Missing Link between Management Education and Examination System ¹

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Abstract

The examination reform in particular and reforms in higher education in general has been talked comprehensively since recent past. When it comes to implement the reforms, lot of problems occur. Particularly in management education, the present state or mechanism of examination does not satisfy the stakeholders' viz. industry, professionals and even students. University examination system is a dominating system though it has some problems particularly when it comes to professional management examination. It is expected that the learner is benefited from the entire system. The present examination system has shortcomings like emphasis on memorization, subjectivity, resistance to change etc. Some of these short comings are being overcome but still there is a need for speeding up examination reforms in management education. This paper makes an attempt to study the present system of examination and to give suggestions as well for the betterment of examination system particularly in management education.

Key Words: Examination Reforms, Higher Education, Management Education, Learner

Introduction

For decades, examination reform has been a prominent theme in discourse and deliberations. The manner in which examination has taken shape in educational programmes with regard to the objective of modern courses developed in recent decades, the examination reforms are inadequate. The system of examination is full of stress for both; for Universities as well as for the students appearing for it. Though there have been some changes in recent past, the instruction is effectively reduced to coaching for examinations. Therefore, though management education has extended its scope over the years, now the time has come to look at, and if needed, correct the system of examination being applied in management education especially the system which is run by the universities.

¹ A Paper to be presented in the Two Day National Conference on 'Innovations in IT and Management organized by Sinhgad Institute of Management and Computer Applications, Narhe, Puner on 21st and 22nd February, 2014

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Major problems in the present examination System:

Though some steps have been taken in the recent past to strengthen examination system, there are few problems which still persist in the system; some of the important problems are listed below:

- **Excessive significance on memorization,**

In the present examination system, it is expected that the students have to remember and recall whatever has been taught and further the students are required to write down the memorized facts/study. This gives more importance to memorization than knowledge. For some subjects like languages and mathematics, it may be applicable: but for management education this is not expected.

- **Subjectivity**

The present system of examination is not free from subjectivity. The paper setters, examiners may have a varied judgement and therefore it is possible that the same answers written by two students are awarded different marks as per judgement of respective examiners, Especially in management education, behavioral subjects are examined subjectively which may have unfair assessment.

- **Resistance to Change**

There is a general tendency of any individual to resist any change that is taking place. The change, brought in curriculum should be supplemented by according change in examination also. But, in general, the examiners and paper setters resist changing which does not result in the expected outcome. In order to simplify the entire process of setting of question papers as well as assessing the same, any innovation brought in the system is not well received by the concerned.

Prospective Change in examination system for betterment of management education.

In the following text, an attempt has been made to give some suggestions and prospective changes that can be applied to overcome the problems faced presently in the examination system of management education.

- **Weightage and methodology for internal assessment**

Presently 20 to 30 % weightage is given for internal assessment. In management education, where it is expected that 50% of the learning takes place outside the classrooms, the present weightage of 20% to 30% looks to be very modest.

Similarly the components of internal assessment include test and presentation again which gives extensive importance to memorizing. If students are given case lets/cases for understanding real life situations, it would be a fruitful exercise. On the basis of ability of Students to apply the knowledge to solve the real life problems through case studies, there can be fair assessment of learners.

- **Result Declaration**

The results are being declared on the basis of pass/fail or percentage of marks obtained by the students. Giving grade points to the students would be a better option than allotting a percentage of marks to the students. Similarly, analysis of results has to be done properly. Instead of just calculating percentage of pass students to total students, the progression, ability and understanding of the students have to be analyzed which may require more time, but that would clearly analyze the progress of student as well as an institution.

- **Continuous Evaluation**

The management examination is different from traditional examination. The students need to be continuously evaluated on the basis of various techniques. Group discussion, role play, peer reviews, quiz, sudden tests are the techniques which keep students continuously alert about their academic development. This would also facilitate all round development of Students.

- **Decentralization of setting of question Paper.**

Presently one person draws one question paper set and therefore, problem of subjectivity remains unsolved. If instead of having different question papers by various paper setters, two or three paper setters come together to draw one set of paper, it would be more precise question paper free from personal bias or subjectivity. Similarly, marking scheme should be clearly spelt out to avoid subjectivity in the assessment.

- **Question banks**

It is always better to have a question bank prepared so that randomly, few questions can be selected on the basis of required objective. This avoids the problem of last minute

hurry in preparing the question paper set. This would also facilitate having options while selecting the questions.

- **Innovative Ways of Examination**

Instead of having examination with stress and threat, if the informal and non – threatening exams are conducted, they would certainly achieve high value both for examiners and the students. This would also minimize the threat of examination from students mind.

As far as written examination is concerned, there has to be improvement in questions set for the examination, there should be less number of options for students. The marking scheme has to be clearly spelt out to avoid ambiguity.

In case of oral or practical examination, more scope for objective assessment is required to be given. In order to have oral examination free from any personal bias standardization of process of oral examination with multiple examiners panel would be better.

- **Feedback Mechanism**

Almost all the examinations in management education stream are conducted on semester system. Further there is a need for continuous internal evaluation and credit system. The entire system should be transparent. There is a requirement of feedback mechanism from the stakeholders so that their expectations from the system can be fulfilled.

Prospective change in written and oral examination

In the earlier part of this paper, the problems in the present examination system have been elaborated and similarly, prospective changes needed to be done have also been discussed. After carefully understanding the problems as well as prospective change, it would be better to come out with a model which elaborates the manner in which the written and oral examinations can be conducted. As the present authors have worked in different capacities in the examination system for management education, the following composition has been humbly presented herewith.

Considering the demands from the stakeholders and in order to minimize the drawbacks of present examination system in management education, following model for written examination can be thought of:

Application of knowledge	40% of total marks of written examination
Logical thinking	30% of total marks of written examination
Ability to apply judgement	20% of total marks of written examination
Skills and presentation	10% of total marks of written examination

In this composition, fixed response questions (objective type questions) should have 30% weightage, Short answers to have 50% weightage and remaining 20% weightage be given for essay type questions.

For Evaluating oral examination or viva, following weightage may be applied.

Pronunciation	10% of total marks of oral examination
Grammar/Language	10% of total marks of oral examination
Vocabulary Usage	20% of total marks of oral examination
Thinking and Contents	30% of total marks of oral examination
Delivery of answers	20% of total marks of oral examination
Manners	10% of total marks of oral examination

Conclusion

Management education has a history of almost one and a half century. There are thousands of educational institutions providing management education in India. Though thousands of management professionals are brought in to the job market every year, it is popularly said that what is being taught in the classes and what is required in the industry, is different from each other. Therefore, improvement in the contents of the syllabus is required and even more important is perhaps the reforms in examination system. Instead of relying on examination system which significantly involves memorizing and subjectivity, there has to be transparent, objective, informal and non – threatening examination system. In order to enhance the employability of the students, the examination system should be students oriented and not teacher oriented. Sometimes, the changes are not applied in examination system as the system of paper setting, assessment may change. But, if such resistance persists, there is no significance in changing syllabus if according changes have not been made in the examination system. Therefore, though

management education has extended its scope over the years, now the time has come to evaluate the system of examination being applied in management education and as per the requirement of the stakeholder, the changes need to be applied. Particularly, considering management education objectives, this change is the need of the hour. This would facilitate the management education to achieve the desired objectives and more importantly, the students and other stakeholder would also find value in the education.

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