



LIFE SKILL EDUCATION IN MBA CURRICULUM FOR BETTER MANAGEMENT IN CHALLENGING ENVIRONMENT

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Abstract:

MBA is a life changing course where the students will change their outlook and perspective on life. The traditional pedagogy and syllabus is under the scanner because of the output given by the B-Schools. Since in this course the entire life is intervened and changed, there would be lot of critical things that an individual would be encountered in his life. For this he has to analyze the kind of resources required, the preparedness of facing the situation and the experience from his past life. This demands a requirement of learning a series of life skills. The goal of any B-School is not just short term of seeking placement but long term of personal change. Life skills are those skills which help an individual for this personal change and help him or her in the long term of an individual's life. Life skills are the skills that help people to succeed in different environments that they are exposed to like work place, family, neighborhood and society at large. An adaptive and positive behaviour is expected to be the result of the individuals who are exposed and taught life skills. This helps in the changed behaviour of the individuals to deal effectively with the demands and stimulating situations of life. It gives them an upper hand in emotional stability amongst the individuals which is required lifelong. It authorizes young individuals to take right positive actions to promote a healthy personality and social relationships for successful professional life and a sound life. This paper titled "Life skill education in MBA curriculum for better management in challenging environment" will explore the key elements in life skills and the benefits that the students would draw by learning it. A healthy mind with a healthy body is the need of the hour and the requirement from the young India especially the youth that will be representing the Corporate India who will be a role model to the generation that follows. The B-Schools should change their outlook and take a pioneer initiative in this regard. This will create positivity to all stake holders of B schools. The research uses secondary data for the collection of data. Conclusions, based on the outcome, hereby obtained were drawn and decisions were taken about the said objectives. The primary purpose of this paper is to stimulate further discussion amongst academicians and to be used in dialogue with stakeholders.

Index Terms: Life Skills, Emotional Stability, Pedagogy & B-Schools

Introduction:

Business schools now face the same fork in the road as the protagonists in the cases taught by teaching staff: to choose incremental improvements to what they are doing or to transition to something different. There is often merit in doing familiar things better but there are dilemmas too. The schools with the best reputation attract the best students and recruiters. Yet most recognize problems around curriculum content, student incentives, teaching faculty research and engagement and the recruiters' distorting impact on their process. Some have workarounds, hiring lecturers with business experience or pushing for more field-based and non-classroom experiences. Their business models are becoming unsustainable. Perhaps the management education industry should re-evaluate its broader goals. What skills do students really need to help their employers, themselves and their nations to succeed?

The pedagogical challenge is to complement the present curriculum's rigor. Managers need training in judgment because the facts necessary for purely rigorous decision-making are seldom available.

Executives spend much of their time persuading and being persuaded by others with words rather than figures, expressing sentiments and visions rather than quantitative models. Talk matters. So maybe business schools owe their students training in the rhetorical skills that complement, humanise, and socialise the analytical ones being purveyed so successfully. Indeed, perhaps business schools' deepest problem is that in embracing quantitative methods so comprehensively, they have stumbled into implying that the executive's judgment is irrelevant and that a well-programmed computer can do the job better.

Concepts:

Life skill competence is a person's ability to deal effectively with the demands and challenges of everyday life. It is a person's ability to maintain a state of mental well-being and to demonstrate this in adaptive and positive behaviour while interacting with others, his/her culture and environment. Life skill competence has an important role to play in the promotion of health in its broadest sense; in terms of physical, mental and social well-being.

Life skills are abilities for adaptive and positive behaviour that enable individuals to deal effectively with the demands and challenges of everyday life. Described in this way, skills that can be said to be life skills are innumerable, and the nature and definition of life skills are likely to differ across cultures and settings. However, analysis of the life skills field suggests that there is a core set of skills that are at the heart of skills-based initiatives for the promotion of the health and well-being of everyone. Life skills are behaviors that enable individuals to adapt and deal effectively with the demands and challenges of life. Life skills can lay the foundation for skills demanded in today's job market. These are listed below:

Self-Awareness includes recognition of 'self', our character, our strengths and weaknesses, desires and dislikes. Developing self-awareness can help us to recognize when we are stressed or feel under pressure. It is often a prerequisite to effective communication and interpersonal relations, as well as for developing empathy with others.

Empathy - To have a successful relationship with our loved ones and society at large, we need to understand and care about other peoples' needs, desires and feelings. Empathy is the ability to imagine what life is like for another person. Without empathy, our communication with others will amount to one-way traffic. Empathy can help us to accept others, who may be very different from ourselves. This can improve social interactions, especially, in situations of ethnic or cultural diversity.

Critical Thinking is an ability to analyze information and experiences in an objective manner. Critical thinking can contribute to health by helping us to recognize and assess the factors that influence attitudes and behaviour, such as values, peer pressure and the media.

Creative Thinking is a novel way of seeing or doing things that is characteristic of four components – fluency (generating new ideas), flexibility (shifting perspective easily), originality (conceiving of something new), and elaboration (building on other ideas).

Decision Making helps us to deal constructively with decisions about our lives. This can have consequences for health. It can teach people how to actively make decisions about their actions in relation to healthy assessment of different options and,

what effects these different decisions are likely to have. Problem solving helps us to deal constructively with problems in our lives. Significant problems that are left unresolved can cause mental stress and give rise to accompanying physical strain.

Interpersonal Relationship skills help us to relate in positive ways with the people we interact with. This may mean being able to make and keep friendly relationships, which can be of great importance to our mental and social well-being. It may mean keeping, good relations with family members, which are an important source of social support. It may also mean being able to end relationships constructively.

Effective Communication means that we are able to express ourselves, both verbally and non-verbally, in ways that are appropriate to our cultures and situations. This means being able to express opinions and desires, and also needs and fears. And it may mean being able to ask for advice and help in a time of need. Coping with stress means recognizing the sources of stress in our lives, recognizing how this affects us, and acting in ways that help us control our levels of stress, by changing our environment or lifestyle and learning how to relax. Coping with emotions means involving recognizing emotions within us and others, being aware of how emotions influence behaviour and being able to respond to emotions appropriately. Intense emotions like anger or sadness can have negative effects on our health if we do not respond appropriately.

Coping with Stress 95% of all the diseases is created by stress. Wrong beliefs like "I'm not good enough" or "Something is wrong with me" cause up to 95% of all illness and disease. The membrane of the cell is the brain of the cell, not the nucleus. Our beliefs are stored in the membrane of our cells. Unless we are fully aware of what we are doing and why we are doing it at every moment, we are always acting on our unconscious programming stored as beliefs in our cells. Scientific research has established that stress is the core factor in physical, mental, and emotional disease. Discovering how unconscious physical, mental and emotional habits create stress, aging, addiction and disease, through awareness and simple lifestyle changes reclaiming youthful vitality, joy and well being.

Need of Life Skills in MBA Curriculum:

As per NASSCOM (National Association of Software Companies) each year 3 million graduates and post graduates are added to Indian workforce. Young job seekers account for nearly 49 % of the total unemployed in India. Indian youth has upgraded itself with apps and technologies but lacks the necessary skills required for sustainability both in personal and professional dimensions. They are devoid of most of the life skills required for growth and job search. Though India has become a hub of MBA colleges with booming MBA or equivalent programmes, only 10 % of India's MBA graduates are employable. In an education hungry country, running a college has become something of a status symbol. Every year lakhs of B school MBA students appear in interview and try their luck for employability but they are lacking skills essential for survival. But the lacuna is that out of this only 25 % of technical graduates and 10-15 % of other graduates are considered employable. The disparity is evident. It points out the thin availability of high quality education in India. Still the galloping pace at which our service driven economy is growing, is faster than most of the countries around globe. Projections further indicate that India would require, in next decade, about six million additional software professionals. As per the 2011 census, youth account for 20% of the total population. More than 700 million Indians are expected to be in working age group by 2022. Recruiters are ready to pay a hefty package, but this comes along with high and demanding expectations. They are craving for candidates who are tailor-made for that particular job. This doesn't necessarily imply that they are

looking for superwomen or superman but certainly are looking for a knowledge worker who is adept with skills, abilities and attitude to perform the job. Employers are seeking initiative, motivation, integrity and the desired competency to meet deadlines, setting aside external or internal pressures and obstacles. They don't want an individual who requires months to brush himself. They want their job to be done efficiently from day one. In such a scenario what is lacking in our Indian youth? The curriculum is designed and redesigned to meet industry expectations; still we falter. A global study by Programme for International Student Assessment, PISA, conducted by OECD ranked India at 72 and 73 out of total 74 countries in the year 2009. This testing is basically done after every three years to test mathematics, science and reading skills of 15 year-olds or less school pupils. This claim further cements itself with FICCI skills report 2012, proving that only 10% Indians receive any skill training. The same report unfolds that the World Economic Forum indicates that only 25% of total Indian professionals are considered employable by organized sector.

The scenario is raising alarm, as by year 2030 half of India's population will be younger than 28. With these statistics, introspection is required from our galloping education sector. The quality at the top of the pyramid supersedes but falls at base. The reasons are obvious. Since day one the child is taught to memorize without understanding a single word of it. By the time they reach professional college they are parrots who reproduce everything without any logic. If only schools and colleges would have adopted life skills education, the gloomy scenario wouldn't have existed. The crux of the problem is that critical thinking, problem solving and application of concepts are in short supply among our youth as they never had exposure to it. As the gap widens between industry expectations and talent available, it leads to suffering of industry's competitiveness which calls for life skills learning.

Outcomes of Life Skills-Based Education:

Developing of life skills have produced the following effects: lessened violent behaviour; increased pro -social behaviour and decreased negative, self-destructive behaviour; increased the ability to plan ahead and choose effective solutions to problems; improved self-image, self-awareness, social and emotional adjustment; increased acquisition of knowledge; improved classroom behaviour; gains in self control and handling of interpersonal problems and coping with anxiety; and improved constructive conflict resolution with peers, impulse control and popularity. Where life skills education is well developed and practiced, it enhances the well being of a society and promote positive outlook and healthy behavior. In particular, it enables the individual to:

- ✓ Translate knowledge, attitude, skills and values into action;
- ✓ Behave responsibly and this leads to healthy living;
- ✓ Develop positive attitude towards themselves and others;
- ✓ Develop full potential;
- ✓ Promote the state of mental well being as this motivates them and others;
- ✓ Promote risk free behavior;
- ✓ Communicate effectively;
- ✓ Develop negotiation skills;
- ✓ Improve self perception by:
 - ✓ Building self confidence
 - ✓ Building self esteem
 - ✓ Building self worth

Life Skills Education has long term benefits to the society.

Conclusion:

Life skills education is designed to facilitate the practice and reinforcement of psychological skills in a culturally and developmentally appropriate way. It contributed to the promotion of personal and social development, the prevention of health and social problem and protection of human rights. A deliberate attempt needs to be made to bring in these life skills in curriculum. Often, it is equalized with value education. Life skills education is a very important and integral part of a B school education system. Life skills dealing to train to cope up loss and stress and at the same time develop critical thinking are required among youths. This is feasible when they have practical exposures and case study teaching methodology. Most of the B schools have inculcated case studies, but barring few the others is merely doing lip service. This would lead to building future individuals who will believe in themselves and be a change maker by understanding their and others potentials and achieve the desired goals and vision of country.

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