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Disruptive Innovations in Higher Education: A Case Study of XYZ group of Institutions

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Abstract

The global economy is undergoing drastic and structural transformation: many reports have expressed the need for a workforce of 3.3 billion by 2020, increasingly in the services and capital intensive-manufacturing sectors. These events are also expected to play out in India – by 2020, 90% of India's GDP and 75% of employment is expected to be contributed by the services and manufacturing sectors. This paradigm shift in employment will increase demand for technologically sophisticated skilled workers, innovators, and thinkers who can thrive in a globally-connected and dynamic economy. Though India, with its large workforce and increasing pool of higher education graduates, is strategically positioned to reap the benefits of this shift, the 'demographic dividend' will be squandered unless it is able to create a "globally relevant and competitive" higher education system that serves the requirements of both the domestic as well as global economy. While the Indian higher education system has made considerable progress in terms of capacity creation and enrolment especially in the last decade, it lags significantly in terms of "global relevance and competitiveness". The authors believe that Low/ poor employability of graduates, less focus on research, limited focus on entrepreneurship and Complex regulatory requirements are some of the major key gaps that need to be filled.

"I see I forget: I hear I remember; I do I learn" -These lines by the great Chinese scholar Confucius can be termed as the golden words in education and learning. And at present times, when we are aiming to build India as the new XYZ group of superpower by the year 2020, ground breaking changes are required in the way we deliver education, more so at the higher level. As an academician working with XYZ group of institutions, the author thought it would be appropriate to present through this research paper the current disruptive innovations being worked out at XYZ group of institutions to make students learn by doing. The following case study has been undertaken to highlight the measures introduced at the management school, XYZ group of institutions - Department of Management Studies to make higher education more skill and practiced based rather than theoretical. The research has been based on the primary data as the author being part of the process team. This paper aims to study the changes being introduced to build career and research focused workforce.

Key words: learning by doing, experiential learning, disruptive education

Introduction:

Higher education in India is undergoing considerable change. With over 600 million people in India under 25 years old, the system is under tremendous pressure and XYZ group of institution have realized that to expand it needs to bring about some disruptive changes in pedagogy of higher education.

India's young population has a huge appetite for education and, as the growth in the size of the middle classes escalates, millions are increasingly able to pay for it. By 2020, India will have the largest tertiary-age population in the world[2] and will have the second largest graduate talent pipeline globally, following China and ahead of the USA. Government plans are in place to transform the sector over the next five years. Every aspect of higher education is being reorganized and remodeled: funding, leadership and management, at XYZ group of institutions. If these reforms succeed, the breadth and depth of the change will be transformational. The transformation of education in India in the next ten years is being driven by three main factors: economic growth, demographics and politics. Wider, global factors are also influencing change, including the rapid internationalization of education, global competition for talent and research funding and the commoditization of education. Another significant driver for educational change is population growth and the demographic profile. More than 50% of India's population is under the age of 25. By 2020, India will have one of the youngest populations in the world, with an average age of 29 years. India will outpace China in the next ten years as the country with the largest tertiary-age population and its relative success in boosting primary enrolment, access to secondary education and improved retention rates should see it have the largest growth in tertiary enrolment in the world in 2020[12]. The OECD predicts that in 2020, 200 million of the world's 25-34 year olds will be university graduates and 40% of these will be from China and India[13], representing a huge proportion of the global talent pool. Together, these factors present three interrelated key challenges for education in India: expansion of the system, equity of educational opportunities and enhancement of the quality of teaching and research in Indian institutions.

These are reflected in the three central pillars for the Government of India's 12th Five Year Plan for education, the three central pillars of India's 12th Five Year Plan are

- Improving quality for better learning outcomes and employability
- Providing educational opportunities to all citizens, regardless of social position, economic ability and geography
- Creating the capacity to meet the rising demand

Another important factor affecting educational change is political. Education in India is highly politicized and complex. Throughout the political system to the highest levels, the education sector is powerfully represented; reforms in education are controlled by political processes and interests at both central and state levels. Many education reforms, plans and ambitions are highly contested. There is a complex interplay beneath the formal structures affecting the distribution of power and resources in education in India; underlying pressures, interests, incentives and institutions can influence or frustrate future educational change. This is particularly complex in the higher education sector.

There is a great deal of centralization in decision-making in education, driven primarily through the five year plan system, which sets out priorities and central budget allocations to states. However, there has been increasing frustration from the states that central government is too slow and 'interfering'14, and has held back progress in education. Education bills can languish for years in parliament without being put to the vote. In reality, central government does not have a strong mandate to control education at the state level, and the mechanisms to ensure that states are following central decisions are not completely effective. There is now central government approval to devolve more decision-making power to the states, and this has widespread XYZ group of support. States are taking education reform into their own hands, albeit within the confines of central legislation. However, there are considerable variations in the ability and the political will of states to achieve this. In the more immediate future, India is due to hold national elections this year in 2014. This will almost certainly have an impact on the progress of bills through parliament, particularly through non-cooperation in legislative voting. There are likely to be significant changes in key posts in education under the new government, which will further disrupt decision-making on pending issues

But what is actually happening on the ground in the universities and colleges across India? How do they view these national plans and how are they responding to the enormous social

changes happening around them? What do they think the future will look like for their institutions? The authors, through its presence in the University and wide network of relationships with higher education leaders, set out to examine the policy environment from the position of stakeholders, to explore the dynamics between policies and their interpretation in order to implement and to form a clearer understanding of the challenges and roadblocks.

XYZ group of Institutions

XYZ group of institutions, approved by UGC, with multi-discipline campus in the NCR is spread over 63 acres and is equipped with world class facilities. It has an acknowledged reputation for excellence in research and teaching, focuses on holistic learning and imbibing competitive abilities in students. With its outstanding faculty, world class teaching standards, and innovative academic programmes, it intends to set a new benchmark in the Indian education system. Currently, there are about 210000 students. The university offers about 180 courses. There are following schools in the university. All of these are running Doctoral, Post graduate and Undergraduate programmes in numerous subjects. The institutions boast of the following schools

- School of Engineering and Technology
- School of Business Studies
- School of Architecture & Planning
- School of Design and Media Studies School of
- School of Law
- School of Language and Culture
- School of Dental Sciences
- School of Nursing Sciences and Research
- School of Allied Health Sciences
- School of Medical Sciences & Research
- School of Basic Sciences and Research
- School of Education
- School of Pharmacy

The focus of the case study is on School of Business Studies, hence it discusses various pedagogies that are being followed in School of Business Studies

Department of Management Studies

Amongst the leading Business Schools of North India, Department of Management Studies, provides management education with innovative applied research, and practice to educate business leaders of tomorrow. Graduates at the Department of Management Studies, make a difference by creating real value for society. The school emphasizes on a focus on a holistic multi-disciplinary, and multi cultural approach to learning.

Professional Excellence Programmes and preparing for Industry/Innovative Pedagogy

The university as well as DEPARTMENT OF MANAGEMENT STUDIES understands that, along with 'Good Academic Achievement' it needs to go beyond and develop other competencies also so as to be an effective performer and achiever. This is done by :

Corporate engagement is one of the key features that set DEPARTMENT OF MANAGEMENT STUDIES apart from most other Business Schools. Interaction with business leaders and entrepreneurs, industrial visits and workshops, prepares the students to be leaders who can address the most urgent and challenging problems that the world is facing today.

Making **corporate activities** such as presentations, group discussions, simulated interviews a part of your ongoing curriculum.

Enhancing students' **understanding of real life business situations by**- case studies, ,Industrial visits, talk shows and events where students could display their talents ,making short films and get feedback from Industry .

 'Personality Development Program' to increase chances of employability manifolds.

 'Placement Department' which comprises of professionals from Industry, Faculty members and students

At XYZ group of institutions, the administration understands the nuances of the professional space and has designed its curriculum to combat these factors. To strengthen its students it follows various pedagogies:

- **Management Games** : Give students the edge over the challenges of a typical working environment .The instant feedback and risk-free environment invite exploration and experimentation, stimulating curiosity, discovery learning and perseverance. Competitive simulation games encourage self-learning.

- **Group Discussions: GDS** are regular part of management students' day. Corporate experts are also roped in to help students mould their GD skills to a level XYZ suitable for corporate discussions and business meets.

- **Simulated Interviews**: Helps the student to do their own competitive analysis and find their strengths and weaknesses. the University provides virtual corporate environment for the interviews, invites industrial professional to be a part of interview panel and judge the students. This complete process is recorded audio-visually and shown to students to judge themselves.

- **Presentation**: Credit based system at XYZ group of institutions has made presentation a part of course curriculum. Thus a student is polished throughout the course duration till he reaches the perfection level.

- **Mentoring**: To provide an easy access to the solution to any challenge faced by student, Sharda follows a unique system of assigning a professor to a certain number of students as their mentor.

Disruptive Innovations in Higher Education:

The theory of disruption can provide researchers, practitioners, and policy makers with a new perspective on increasingly affordable and accessible educational opportunities in our society.

Disruptive innovation is viewed as a dynamic form of industry change that unlocks tremendous gains in economic and social welfare. Disruption is the mechanism that ignites the true power of capitalism in two ways. First, it is the engine behind *creative destruction*, a term coined by Austrian economist Joseph Schumpeter in his classic work *Capitalism, Socialism, and Democracy*. Disruption allows relatively efficient producers to blossom and forces relatively inefficient producers to wither. This destruction and reallocation of resources, allows for the cycle of construction and destruction to begin anew, enhancing productivity, lowering consumer prices, and greatly increasing economic welfare. Our research indicates that the disruption-friendly environment of the United States is one of

the principal drivers of its recent economic prosperity. The second way that disruption drives improved welfare is through *creative construction.* This is its real power. A disruptive company starts by creating a large, new growth opportunity, almost always by allowing a broader group of people to do things that only experts or the wealthy could do in the past. Convenience goes up, prices eventually drop, and consumption increases dramatically as a result of disruption. The new growth opportunities that disruptive companies spawn have historically been a primary source of improved consumer welfare. The authors believe disruption is quietly changing the landscape of the education marketplace across the entire spectrum of undergraduate and graduate programs. Similar to the industries the internet and the university discussed above, innovators are unlocking the gates to accessibility and affordability in education through disruptive innovations. Traditional business management programs churn out thousands of Masters of Business Administration (MBA) graduates each year, but corporate universities can now teach workers the skills they need to solve the problems they face. Career oriented Institutions teach curricula that allow students to become certified providers in many professions such as nursing and information technology, providing an opportunity to bypass a more expensive four-year institution. Online learning is creating an opportunity for thousands of adult learners to obtain a wide range of degrees in their spare time. Setting up of Corporate Universities is another breakthrough in higher education is another Given corporations' increasing commitment to linking training and education to corporate strategy, the ever increasing ease and quality of educational content delivered via the Internet, as well as a captive audience of millions of managers, we believe corporate training poses a potential disruptive threat to traditional MBA programs. These programs excel at training managers in general business theory and exposing them to a diverse network of business leaders, but they are unable to provide learning customized for each company. Moreover, the cost of these programs limits companies to sending only a handful of employees to them. Increasing evidence indicates that companies are encouraging more of their talented young managers to learn on the job rather than to go to high-end advanced degree programs for MBAs and advanced technical degrees. Managers derive more value from these programs, which relate directly to challenges they face in their jobs, than from generic two-year MBA programs. In response, many companies now have their own universities and institutes that

offer a wide range of certificates, degrees, and diplomas. General Electric reportedly spent more than $1 billion on its 52-acre Crotonville campus nestled in New York's Hudson Valley. IBM spent more than $500 million 33 on training modules delivered to managers in "just-in-time" fashion so that they could learn exactly what they wanted, when they wanted.

Research Methodology:

Research Objectives:

This case study presents and analyses how Department of Management Studies-XYZ group of institutions is working to bring about a change in future of higher education in India by collaborating data from those with knowledge and experience of working inside the system. The objectives of the research are to explore in detail:

1. Various measures undertaken by DEPARTMENT OF MANAGEMENT STUDIES - ,XYZ GROUP OF INSTITUTIONS to meet the challenges, and explore the opportunities to build a student centric and employability centric system

2. The process Department of Management would like to engage with the various stakeholders to bring about the disruptive changes in pedagogy to make higher education more skill and employability centric.

3. The propose of this research is to capture a snapshot of the perceived changes being introduced in business/ management education in DEPARTMENT OF MANAGEMENT STUDIES, that hopefully , will be useful to other higher education institutions as they plan and navigate to meet the challenges.

However, this case study does not attempt to assess the effectiveness of the changes introduced at Department of Management Studies , XYZ GROUP OF INSTITUTIONS, nevertheless its findings may be useful for further discussion in future .

Research design: This study is an exploratory and descriptive study.

Data Sources: The authors being the part of the DEPARTMENT OF MANAGEMENT STUDIES, this research is a based on primary data.

Main Findings:

DEPARTMENT OF MANAGEMENT STUDIES is of the belief that transformative and innovative approach would be required across all the levers of higher education: from curricula and pedagogy to the use of technology to partnerships, governance and funding. Making rapid progress over the next two decades would require a committed and concerted effort from all stakeholders involved i.e. Faculty, students, program coordinators, HODs and Training & Placement Cell.

The central guiding principles for planning the content delivery are as under:

- Transform Learning from Push to Pull i.e. from Centralized learning to Learner – Centric Learning."Chalk and Talk has to give way to "Blended Learning"
- Clear definition and identification of employability skills for professional course students
- Build a constructive evaluation plan where it can measures knowledge, skills (employability), and attitudes.
- Introduce realistic and innovative teaching process considering the cost factor. Spending more money does not lead to better results. Sincerity and honesty of execution do so. XYZ group of institutions has hospital, dental college, marketing, admissions and administrative departments are capable of providing hands on training on Plenty of managerial skills.
- Ensure that the topics taught are repeated through different pedagogy. Thus topic covered in lecture should be repeated in tutorial or laboratory, group discussion, presentation, projects and so on.
- Focus on experiential learning by extensive use of laboratory for teaching management skills. These skills include written communication, exploitation of MS Word, Power Point, and Outlook. Most importantly basic and advance Excel needs to be taught to all. Gradually, graduate to SPSS, R and the ERP modules.
- Classroom must be a "Centre of Creativity" by adopting these 5 methodologies viz.,
  - Flipped Learning
  - Independent Learning
  - Interactive learning

- o Social / Collaborative learning
  - o Virtual Learning
- Cut on redundant and repetitive portions form the syllabi- some parts of the curricula can be merged. Say for example in BBA if some part is being taught in one compulsory course there is no need to teach the same in another course. Similarly some OR/QT techniques being used in a spécialisation subject can be taught jointly by two faculty members- one by the faculty teaching QT/OR and the other by the domain spécialisation course faculty.

The Process Implementation:

The above guiding principles are planned to be implemented through the following process that emerged after due deliberations and discussion are listed as follows:

- The process is to cut down the classroom based lecture method of teaching by at least one to two days. DEPARTMENT OF MANAGEMENT STUDIES plans to have three or four days week as against the current five days week. Alternatively the proposal is to have two full days of teaching – say Monday and Tuesday, and three–say Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, of half -days teaching. The remaining balance of the half days is proposed to be spent on field survey, experiential learning, projects (in groups), laboratory etc.
- The core subjects in each program to be reduced to just 40% of the current load. Thus reduce the number of subjects to that extent. Some unnecessary subjects that do not form integral part of program goal need to be cut down.
- Transition to a learner centered paradigm of education: From a "passive player", a student to an active participant in the education process and the role of a professor is that of a facilitator as opposed to an instructor. The instructions need to be designed to engage students in learning experiences that not only enable them to learn content but also to develop greater passion for learning – enabling them to 'learn to lead' and to be lifelong learners. In the learner-centred paradigm of education, students are encouraged to take greater responsibility for their learning outcomes. The professor ceases to be the fount of knowledge filling the empty receptacles of students' minds; instead, students actively participate in the discovery

of knowledge. They are encouraged to be reflexive and thoughtful learners, learning from themselves, their peers and their immediate environment just as much as they would from their professors. Accordingly, the teaching-learning methodology involves less lecturing and rote note-taking and more hands-on activities to allow for experiential and interactive learning.

- The pedagogy in each XYZ subject to be designed in a manner so that:

  o Not more than 20 to 30% is covered through lectures in the classroom.

  o Balance of the course to be covered through other means XYZ such as group assignment, laboratory work, projects, survey.

  o The above- mentioned pedagogy to be very closely monitored by the faculty so that the desired value addition is achieved.

- DEPARTMENT OF MANAGEMENT STUDIES is exploring two options first to send students out (under guidance of the faculty) for direct hands on work in the environment or with the industry. The second option is to set up industry sponsored skills specifics training laboratories in DEPARTMENT OF MANAGEMENT STUDIES which take care of the hands on training to keep pace with the changing needs of their work environments. Over the years, with evolution of the 'knowledge economy', learning and work have become inseparable, making constant on-the-job learning and up-gradation indispensable. Trained to be active and adaptive lifelong learners, the Indian workforce is known to be dynamic and agile even in the face of 'disruptive' progress. For example for the Finance specialization subjects we conduct some training in the classrooms and major part with the NIIT, or some bank sponsored training set ups. Same goes for the other subjects like the marketing, Economics, IB , SCM and so on.

- Make extensive use of laboratory and technology for teaching management skills. These skills include written communication, exploitation of MS Word, Power Point,Outlook. Most importantly basic and advance Excel needs to be taught to all, then gradually graduate to SPSS, R and the ERP modules. Online platforms and ICT tools have helped take higher education to millions of deserving students in far-flung areas who would otherwise have no access to university education. Online education has become the first port of call for many students who were earlier left

out of the higher education system, or had to settle for lower quality alternatives. The MOOCs model made it possible for the country to provide a quality education to the masses despite poor faculty-student ratios. Students today increasingly learn from leading faculty at elite institutions beyond the four walls of their classrooms as top-tier institutions have donned the mantle of being content generators. Professors collaborate across universities to collectively create and distribute for-credit curriculum for an online semester. Technology has not only been instrumental in addressing the demand-supply gap for quality education, but has fundamentally changed the nature of several educational processes. Gone are the days when students had to gather in a large hall only to hear a lecture. Today, classroom lectures and pre-recorded and uploaded to be accessed by students at their comfort. Class time is instead used for creating more in-depth learning experiences through group activities, problem solving and interactive learning. Online analytics provide faculty with data on how and at what pace each student is learning, enabling them to provide personalized support to aid student learning outcomes. The model also acts as a great democratize, allowing students to learn at their own pace – for instance, slow learners can go over certain content and exercises multiple times with special tools to aid their learning. Finally, the hybrid model (where part of the program is taught online and part in person) has become particularly popular among adult and working professionals looking to gain additional credentials. The model provides them with the flexibility to access course material as their schedule permits. In short, technology has been nothing short of disruptive for Indian higher education, solving for three of India's pressing problems – access, equity and quality - at once.

A Specimen of the course delivery plan being proposed is as under in Table 1:

Program

Name of the Course

Credit

Total Time Allotted

Broad Distribution of Mode of Transfer (Lecture, Tutorial, Practical, Workshop etc.)

Topic	Time allotted	Mode of Transfer	Employability skills being transferred	Mode of evaluation

Conclusion:

Disruption is a tool for change often overlooked by policymakers and industry bodies. Disruption is how industries achieve the seemingly incompatible goals of increased access, higher quality, and lower prices. If we are worried about the declining state of education and decreasing state and federal budgets, disruptive innovation could be a powerful new framework for the debate over how best to improve the higher education. If the debate is around how we can provide the best quality instruction at the lowest possible price to the greatest number of people, stakeholders should find a way to encourage the creation of disruptive business models. XYZ group of successful disruptive business models will fling open the doors of quality education to previously underserved and non-consuming populations.

Department of Management Studies, XYZ group of institutions has endeavored to create a "student and employability centric approach" for Higher Education in India. The project is aspirational and futuristic, looking at the current globally dominant economy, there is a dire need for high quality higher education sector that leads and fulfills the needs of society. the school attempts to get away from current constraints and challenges looking anew at the process, focusing on the

We strongly believe that a stratified structure will enable seamless vertical and horizontal mobility of students and would be able to create the desired intellectual, economic and social value. The implementation framework suggests the student at the center stage to foster innovation and choice, and a system that will increase access, equity and quality, and a transparent evaluation framework that will enable autonomy and self –regulation.

DEPARTMENT OF MANAGEMENT STUDIES has tried to keep the road-map to achieve the vision, aligned with the excellent policy foundation laid out in higher education where ever possible. It is time for us to learn from history and let disruption teach.

Recommendations:

Based on the findings of the study the authors have made the following recommendations

- Identify the (diverse) needs and circumstances of the learners;
- Ensure learner access to relevant technologies and possession of necessary skills to gain maximum benefits from them
- Recognize that the successful introduction of learning analytics will be dependent not only on the choice of technology but on making the institutional changes necessary so that teachers, IT staff and administrators work effectively together to XYZ group support students.
- Provide appropriate processes, tools and XYZ group of support activities so that Faculty are able to fully utilize the rich data generated through analytics to enable them to respond to individual student needs and to further develop their teaching
- Clarify the roles of the different actors (within and beyond the institution) involved in meeting these needs
- Ensure a collective understanding of the different roles/responsibilities and the relationships between them
- Ensure clear lines of management responsibility and information requirements to assess performance
- Build XYZ group of supportive relationships and trust between the relevant actors (students ,academic staff, support staff, IT staff, managers and, where applicable, employers)

Policy-makers should consider the need to:

- Clarify the funding implications, intended outcomes and timescales for the innovation
- Collect and analyze feedback information (from learners, institutions, employers
- etc) on performance and impact, and inform all relevant actors
- Identify any unintended consequences of the innovation (e.g. for other functions, for widening participation or labour market linkages)
- Provide support for inward and outward mobility of students

Policy recommendations related to globalization and internationalization Strategies

DEPARTMENT OF MANAGEMENT STUDIES, XYZ GROUP OF INSTITUTIONS should consider the need to:

- Balance commercial, educational and reputational considerations in formulating overall international strategy

- Address a range of interconnected factors such as student mobility (inward and outward), student placements, qualification recognition, funding implications, curriculum and pedagogic implications, and labour market linkages

- Consider the needs of different actors including home and international students, Academic and of support staff of XYZ group, quality assurance agencies, employers and sponsoring bodies

- Engage 'home' staff and to build relationships between staff located at the different campuses

- Establish how much to 'export' from the home institution and how much to build to reflect local contextual factors at different campuses

- Establish how much to 'import' from the international activities to reshape the home institution

- Satisfy different national regulatory and quality assurance regimes

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