

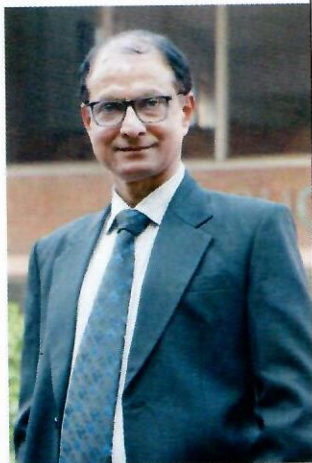
# Future of Management Education

**T**HE SYNERGIES POWERING the machinery of the modern world are shifting across all spheres. As social media and the internet continue to bring people even closer in a closely-knit super-structure some major issues that warrant urgent addressing have surfaced. These include the aggravating state of the climate crisis, escalating geopolitical conflicts and insular economic trade wars, among other things. Against such a backdrop, education, more than anything, is the key to unlocking solutions to incumbent as well as emerging challenges.

Management education steps in here as a definitive force that bears the potential to herald large-scale positive transformations not just in India but the world over. To achieve this objective, the focus of management education needs to shift from creating only corporate-minded professionals to enabling holistic development of students and nurturing them to become thought leaders of tomorrow. The aim should be to enable and empower individuals with the finest management skills and values so they may generate immense value not just for industries, but society as a whole.

There is no hesitation in saying that managing business through managing profit, revenue and cost has remained the central focus of management schools. There is a feeling of pride in pronouncing 'management school' as 'business-school'. Here, two alternatives are available. Either we need to broaden our education from the domain of business management to the wider domain of management, or we need to broaden the meaning of the word 'business', interpreting whatever activity we are engaged in as business!

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premise and precinct of a structured organisation. It has to take into its fold, steps needed to help people, the planet and ecology and to have the last laugh by expanding it to a boundary-less domain.

The onus then falls upon educators and academicians to re-evaluate the way they are contributing to both the business ecosystem and society. There is a dire need for pedagogy to shift its focus from only helping to analyse and decide on a business situation to sensitising students to issues that make human society a de-humanised ugly place to live in. On the research front, we need to seriously debate whether we need to reframe our goal from one that purely pushes towards conducting and enabling research for publishing, to action-oriented research through which society would derive direct benefits.

While it is a truism that change is the only constant, one must not forget that it is not autonomous. Change needs to be led. And thanks to the concerted efforts of academic savants and the government, the entire Indian education landscape — not just management education — is primed for disruption. The proposals for overhauling the research landscape in India as presented in the Draft National Education Policy (NEP) 2019, promise a positive direction.

Experts have been suggesting that liberalisation of the management education model, with a focus on expanding the curriculum dimension with humanities and the social sciences, would enable students and faculty to converse in the great traditions of thought and expression before instruction in specific management training. This will enable us to set, and subsequently achieve, what should be our chief goal — the creation of a better, kinder world modelled on the precepts of sustainable development and progressive ethical values. **BW**