Will aptitude test eliminate the need for JEE coaching?

Gauri Kohli

The human resource development (HRD) ministry’s plans to set up a national-level testing service which will devise a test to screen candidates before the Joint Entrance Examination (JEE) has evoked a mixed response from experts. While the test has been proposed to minimise the need for coaching, experts say it could have a reverse effect and push more people to seek help to prepare for the exam.

Those aspiring to join the Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs), National Institutes of Technology (NITs), Centrally-funded Technical Institutions and other engineering colleges across the country will have to take an aptitude test before they take the JEE.

According to Professor PV Balaji, former chairperson, JEE, “Replacing JEE (Main) by an aptitude test leads to additional coaching for such aptitude tests. So far, taking coaching for physics, chemistry and mathematics was enough for all entrance examinations. Now, there will be an additional requirement. The coaching industry will flourish further and parents and children will be under more stress. Even now, candidates appear for JEE (Main) and JEE (Advanced) more than once in the hope of improving their performance. If an aptitude test is conducted more than once, most students would want to take the test, and that too a number of times. Changing from physics, chemistry and mathematics to aptitude and conducting the exam more than once collectively results in extra coaching and increases stress.”

Reacting to the recommendations by various expert committees on reducing the burden of coaching on students for JEE, Aakash Chaudhry, director, Aakash Educational Services Pvt Ltd, says, “The new test will give students multiple opportunities to test their aptitude.

Students will know before the Board exams if they are fit for the JEE and would be able to focus accordingly and prepare for a different exam, college or career. The new aptitude test also takes care of a student who is very good at a particular subject/area. You are testing them on specific subjects as well as on aspects such as aptitude and logical ability. The flip side, however, is that there would be an additional pressure and some students will seek coaching. The government should take steps to help students rather than kill the idea of seeking coaching. I think the new test is an outcome of incidents like Kota which should be controlled.”

Ramesh Bhatish, head, FIITJEE Noida, agrees, “The aptitude test will further burden students. It will increase the need for coaching rather than eliminating it.”
Expert panels in favour of no coaching for IITs

Various expert committees on IITs have, in the past, recommended that there should be set mechanisms that can help minimise the need for coaching. The Achariya Committee formed by the HRD ministry in March 2010 presented in its interim report an alternative to the then examination system for admission into engineering colleges, including IITs. As per this report, factors – other than the Class 12 marks and all-India Rank (AIR) based on physics, chemistry and math (PCM) testing – such as raw intelligence, logical reasoning, aptitude, comprehension and general knowledge need to be considered. The need to factor in school performance more significantly into the selection process was stressed.

The Ramasami Committee, formed by the HRD ministry in November 2010, also suggested that there should be a national screening test scheme with two sections, one each on aptitude and advanced concepts. This report was discussed in the 4th meeting of the NIT Council in July 2012. It was felt that a combination of school and national-level test performance would help develop an alternative admission system wherein multiplicity of tests and dependency on coaching would get reduced.

– Gauri Kohli

Read the full story on www.hindustan-times.com/education
भिलाई के कुटेलाभाटा में आईआईटी खोले जाने पर केन्द्र ने लगाई मुहर

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प्रदेश में प्रस्तावित भारतीय प्रौद्योगिकी संस्थान (आईआईटी) भिलाई के कुटेलाभाटा में खोले जाने के फैसले पर मंगलवार को मुहर लग गई।

दिल्ली में केंद्रीय मानव संसाधन मंत्री स्मृति ईरानी ने यह फैसला लिया। संस्थान में 2016-17 सत्र से आईआईटी में प्रवेश शुरू हो जाएगा।

संस्थान का लेखक दिल्ली में हुई बैठक में मुख्य सचिव विवेक ढाँड, तकनीकी सचिव रणजित सिंह और कलकार अरुंधती भी मौजूद थे।

अधिकारियों ने मानव संसाधन विकास मंत्री के सामने भिलाई में आईआईटी को लेकर प्रज्ञेताश दिया। मुख्य सचिव ढाँड ने शासन की ओर से बिन्दुवार तमाम बिन्दुओं पर अपनी योजना को बढ़ावा दिया, जिनमें मंत्रालय की हाईपॉवर कमेटी ने जमीन बन पानी की उपलब्धता, रोड ब एवं केरेंटिकक्टिविटी व विध्वंस के जिन कारणों का हवाला देकर कुटेलाभाटा के प्रसार को खारिज किया था। प्रज्ञेताश देखने के बाद अंततः मानव संसाधन विकास मंत्री ईरानी ने भिलाई में आईआईटी की स्थापना पर अपनी सहमति दी। जिला प्रशासन ने लगभग 648 एकड़ जमीन की व्यवस्था की है।

गवर्मेंट इंजीनियरिंग कॉलेज में चलने अस्थायी कक्षाएँ: कुटेलाभाटा में आईआईटी कैम्पस निर्माण में कम से कम तीन साल लगने की संभावना है। तब तक गवर्मेंट इंजीनियरिंग कॉलेज में चलने अस्थायी कक्षाएँ रहेंगी।

सेजबहर रायपुर क्षेत्र में स्थित गवर्मेंट इंजीनियरिंग कॉलेज में आईआईटी की अस्थायी कक्षाएं संचालित की जाएंगी। सीट का निर्धारण आईआईटी का बोर्ड तय करेगी। अनुमान लगाया जा रहा है कि सत्र 2016-17 से 160 सीट पर प्रवेश दिया जाएगा। (ब्यूरो)
Summit for start-ups at IIT-B

HT Mumbai

Keeping with its theme ‘global mélange’, this year’s IIT-Bombay Entrepreneurship Summit will see speakers from start-up ecosystems across Israel, Singapore, Belgium, Australia, the US and UK.

Held over two days, the summit will involve interactive sessions with experts, workshops, competitions, panel discussions, networking events and the opportunity to pitch your start-up idea to a panel of investors.

The summit, supported by UNESCO and the government’s Make in India campaign, is open to all students, subject to online registration.

For instance, 20-year-old Kumar Samyal, an engineering student from the DJ Sanghvi College of Engineering in Vile Parle, plans to participate with his education start-up idea in the event called ‘The 10minute Million’, where he can try to get funded.

“I have tried visiting several investors, and it is really difficult to secure funds,” he says. “At this event, I will present my business plan to a panel of investors, and stand the chance to get up to Rs 15 lakh in funding, in 10 minutes. This is a one-of-a-kind opportunity for amateurs like me.”

All start-ups looking for funding are eligible to apply, as long as their goal is within Rs 15 lakh.

Speakers at the event include serial entrepreneur and professor Jim Beach from the US, who runs a business radio show called School for Startups Radio; Juliana Chua, who heads business innovation for a biotechnology start-up, Zensorium in Singapore; and business transformation advisor Ciprian Mogar from Romania.
From closer home, the speakers list includes Monica Tata, former managing director of HBO India; Raheel Kursheed, head of news, political and government at Twitter India; Neetan Chopra, senior vice-president of Emirates group; and the ‘bad boy of Indian start-ups’, Rahul Yadav, co-founder of Housing.com.

“The summit will showcase global entrepreneurship trends, especially in terms of innovation, services and healthcare, and focus on how India is keeping pace with them, through stories of success and failure,” says Riddhi Jain, a manager of the event and third-year chemical engineering student at IIT-B.

Students can hone their entrepreneurship skills via various contests, and compete to make a pitch for crowd-funding, bid for an IPL cricket team and answer business quiz questions.

The finale of Eureka, touted to be Asia’s largest business model competition, will also be hosted at the summit. Eureka has received over 7,400 entries of business models from across the country. “Prizes worth Rs 50 lakh are up for grabs,” says Shreya Gupta, third-year engineering student at IIT-B and communications head for the summit.

An internship and job fair will connect students to companies from desired fields. “Students can register for internships online or on-the-spot,” says the event’s manager Rishabh Aggarwal, third-year mechanical engineering student at IIT-B. “Shortlisted students will be called for interviews during the summit.”

**IIT, IIM grads may audit state schemes**

**HT Mumbai**

**CREDIBLE ANALYSIS Government looks to improve public spending by roping in independent institutions to evaluate policies**

Several schemes are announced every year but the government rarely gets an independent review done for these. This year, we are looking at schemes related to health, education, drought mitigation and farm relief to see how they have fared SENIOR OFFICAL, planning department

MUMBAI: For the first time, the state government is hoping to rope in independent institutions like Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Indian Institute of Management (IIM) to help it audit and evaluate government schemes and policies.

The move by planning department will help the government to improve its public spending in the longer run by presenting a real picture of how policies have been faring at ground zero.

“For the first time, we want to rope in credible, big institutes and organisations to evaluate our schemes. Normally, this exercise is carried out internally. With big institutes in the fray, we are hoping to get a more credible, professional analysis. Also, we are hoping to evaluate more policies this year,” said Sunil Porwal, additional chief secretary of the Planning department.

So, instead of auditing of four policies, this year, eight policies will be scanned and reviewed for efficacy.

The directorate of economics and statistics has called for expression of interest documents from such big institutes to carry out evaluation surveys of how policies have been implemented on ground and whether these schemes have met desired objectives.
The department hopes for response from institutes like IIT, IIM, Indian Statistical Institute, National Council of Applied Economic Research (NCAER), Indira Gandhi Institute of Development Research and has mentioned them in the tender document.

By the end of the year, the selected institute will be asked to present a report on the findings of the evaluation study of each of the policies.

Depending on the findings of these reports, decision will be taken to make changes to the policies or to drop them. So far, the department has not zeroed in on any policy. To give an example, last year, the department had evaluated the scheme to construct farm ponds under the Rashtriya Krushi Vikas Yojana and distribution of land to landless below poverty line tribals.

“Several schemes are announced every year but government rarely gets an independent review done for these. This year we are looking at schemes related to health, education, drought mitigation and farm relief to see how they have fared and whether they have made any impact,” said a senior official.

The finance minister, who also heads Planning, Sudhir Mungantiwar is keen on carrying out such exercises to make relevant cuts and changes to the budget.

The state government’s development budget—spending on only development schemes— for 2015-16 stood at Rs54,999 crore.

**Reliance 4G towers are safe, green: IIT-B**


**Nagpur:** The high mast towers installed by the Reliance Jio Infocomm Limited for the launch of 4G cellular services in the city are not just safe but also environment friendly. These are the findings of a study conducted by Indian Institute of Technology Bombay, Powai.

To launch 4G services, Reliance Jio has come up with high mast towers that look like the civic bodies' high mast street light towers. These towers are being erected at almost all main squares in the city. Reliance Jio had secured sanction from the Nagpur Municipal Corporation (NMC) to install 220 towers each with 25-meter height. Earlier, cellular companies used to install four-legged huge towers on the ground or somewhat smaller ones on terrace of high rise buildings.

To ally fears in the minds of people about the possible electromagnetic radiation and structural safety of these towers, Reliance Jio had, though not mandatory, approached the IIT-B for civil, structural design and stability testing.

After conducting the testing, professor of department of electrical engineering Abhay Karandikar had issued a technical opinion on these towers on April 15, 2013. After securing the test results, Reliance Jio started to erect towers in Mumbai followed by Nagpur.

In reply to TOI's query about structural stability of towers, Reliance Jio has provided a copy of the technical opinion by the IIT-B.

Karandikar in the report said, "Reliance Jio has developed a very innovative in-house design for ground-based mast (towers). The company does not propose to deploy any air conditioning as is the current requirement of traditional cell-site installation. Thus, it results in huge savings on account of power consumption. Towers are
designed to typically consume just 600-700W of power. Secondly, Reliance Jio proposes to use effective battery backup and electricity thereby eliminating the need of permanent diesel generators resulting in zero diesel consumption and emission. It is, therefore, a truly green solution."

He added IIT Bombay's civil engineering department verified tower design calculations and drawings with respect to structural safety. "These towers were found to be structurally safe against natural calamities like earthquake and storms," he observed.

"The tower design was examined from the point of view of electromagnetic field (EMF) exposure with respect to levels well below the most stringent safety standards stipulated by the department of telecommunications (DoT). Verification found that these towers are 100% compliant with the DoT and international standards," the report stated.

"These towers have only one spectral radiation happening from each tower thereby making it simple to manage and guarantee that the exposure from each tower site can be maintained well within the stipulated limit. Also, these towers are adequately away from residential/commercial buildings so as to provide further safety from the EMF exposure risks. Antennae for these towers are far away from the ground considering the proposed height of 25 meters and surface reflections are minimal," report said.

However, one doubt remains about the electricity supply boxes installed at the ground level. These boxes have been left unguarded with only a caution message.

"Presently, 4G services have been provided to employees of Reliance and group companies from December 27. Further testing of towers is going on. Commercial launch of 4G services is likely soon," a Reliance Jio official told TOI.

IIT-B findings

* Towers require only 4 sq.mt area on ground as against 100-150 sq.mt for traditional cell-site infrastructure

* No extra space for shelter required as mast designed to house electronic equipment and necessary accessories within itself

* Suitable for installation of CCTV and video surveillance services

* Also can be used for street lighting, info-screens for public messaging and advertisement services

* Weather, air quality, traffic, real time monitoring systems can be installed on these towers
IIT-M students set for motor race with indigenous redesigned car


U Tejonmayam | TNN | Jan 12, 2016, 05.00 PM IST

Raftar Formula Racing, IIT-M's auto club, will be competing at the Formula Student India later this month at the Buddh International Circuit, Greater Noida and its German edition in August at the Hockenheim Formula One circuit.

A team of 30 students has worked for over a year to tweak its design and have engineered to detail to enhance performance and maximize efficiency. Designed to integrate every component to the chassis, every part is made of aircraft grade aluminum, which helps in reducing the weight.

With its outer shell made of lightweight carbon fibre composite, the car now weighs 180kg, more than 10kg less than the previous version and more than half the weight of their first car in 2012. At 190kgs, the machine won an award for the country's lightest student racing car in a competition, last year.

"We spent three months on the CAD design and every part in the car is pre-planned and integrated to the chassis. Instead of welding them, the parts are bolted to the chassis. This has helped us in bringing down the weight," explained Mohit Patil, leader of Team Raftar.

Fitted with a single-cylinder Honda CBR 250CC engine, majority of the parts in the single seater, open-cockpit and open-wheel 8X5 feet formula car is designed and manufactured at the IIT-M campus.

Latest Comment
Congrats!A Siva

But parts like dampers and brake calipers were sourced from abroad, as quality parts were not available here. Except for the dampers, steering racks and brake calipers, every other part has been designed and manufactured at the IIT-M campus.

"The change of the gear shifter from manual to electronic is one of the few changes we have made in the car," Patil said.

The car has already undergone virtual simulation tests for more than 1,000km and has lapped about 250km on the campus without a single problem.
PROFESSOR PP DATE,
Chairman, JEE (Advanced) 2016, IIT Bombay

‘Every examination is an opportunity’

Gauri Kohli

What are the changes expected in the JEE in the next two years?
This year is a status quo (same as last year) except that the number of candidates appearing for JEE advanced will be 2 lakh in place of 1.5 lakh.

Please elaborate on the new aptitude test before JEE.
The new system is still under discussion, and it will be too early to say what kind of an exam an aptitude test will be. But then at this time it is sufficient to note that the objectives of the test seek to make the process more candidate-friendly, less stressful, and more effective in identifying talent suited to pursue science and engineering.

The new aptitude testing system aims to focus on understanding of the subject, clarity, and innovative thinking. It is expected that those who qualify through this test would have a natural aptitude towards higher studies in science and engineering.

What are the objectives behind introducing these changes and how will they impact aspirants?
The objectives are as spelt out earlier – students should not neglect Board exams, and vacant seats in NITs and IITs should come down. The latter has a positive impact on the JEE aspirants. Only time will tell if paying attention to Board exams has benefited the aspirants or not. This is because the purpose of Board exams and JEE are different. A Board exam is a public exam that opens up several avenues to education at various levels depending on the capability of the candidate. That is why the scores of the two exams cannot/should not be combined into a single merit list.

Exams like JEE probe the potential in a candidate for higher learning. So while clearing a Board exam is a must (without which one is denied most opportunities), clearing other exams (JEE being one of these) is desirable. It is from this standpoint that Board exams should get the due attention from students. In particular, if one does not do well enough in the JEE, a good performance in Board exams enables a candidate to get into many career opportunities.

Should there be a common exam for admission to all engineering programmes? Why or why not?
No. This is because every exam means another opportunity. If one does not do well in one, one still has a chance in the other. Hence, one has many opportunities/openings. One is not gauged from one’s performance in a single exam. A single exam cannot in any way comprehensively judge one’s capabilities, one’s aptitude. So a single entrance exam will only create a bottleneck. As long as there are entrance exams, coaching classes are there to stay. Stronger the bottleneck (only one entrance exam), stronger will be the coaching industry and lower will be the effectiveness of such an exam.

Moreover, by having a common exam, the number of exams for engineering programmes is reduced by just one. Given the numerous entrance exams, including those conducted by private institutions, reduction in number of exams by one does not really take away much of exam stress. It may generate more stress as one exam can be seen to make or break one’s career.

Read the full interview on www.hindustantimes.com/education
Tandoors, burning of solid waste adding to dirty Delhi air: IIT study

APURVA
NEW DELHI, JANUARY 12

AS THE odd and even vehicle number experiment, one of the measures taken to reduce pollution levels in Delhi, draws to a close Friday, a study by IIT Kanpur has identified coal-fired tandoors in restaurants and hotels of the Capital as one of the contributors of particulate matter.

The study was commissioned by the Delhi government in 2012 and a draft report, which has been submitted to the government, recommends that such restaurants shift to electric or gas-based appliances.

The 'Comprehensive Study on Air Pollution and Green House Gases (GHGs) in Delhi' analysed several sources that contribute to Delhi's hazardous air, including vehicles, power plants, industries, traffic, local power generation, hotels and open burning of municipal solid waste (MSW).

The report says burning of MSW in Delhi is rampant and contributes to Delhi's air. "This emission is expected to be large in the regions of economically lower strata of the society which do not have proper infrastructure for collection and disposal of MSW."

"There are approximately 9,000 hotels/restaurants in the city of Delhi, which use coal (mostly in tandoors). The PM emission in the form of flyash from this source is large and contributes to air pollution. It is proposed that all restaurants of sitting capacity more than 10 should not use coal and shift to electric or gas-based appliances," the draft report states.

"The details of the hotels and restaurants were obtained from the DPCC (Delhi Pollution Control Committee) and related websites. During the field survey, it was observed that hotels, restaurants, etc use coal as fuel in tandoors. The average consumption of coal in tandoors based on survey was 30 kg/day."

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

'Tandoors adding to dirty Delhi air'

The total number of hotel and restaurant enterprise was 36,099 (Delhi Statistical Hand Book, 2014). We assume that 25% of these enterprises use tandoor for food preparation," states the report.

According to the report, coal and flyash are the largest contributors to PM 10 (particulate matter less than 10 micron in diameter) and PM 2.5 (particulate matter less than 2.5 micron in diameter) in the summers. Of the 37,171 kg/day and 18,369 kg/day of PM 10 and PM 2.5, the report shows 3,493 kg/day and 1,758 kg/day of the same particulate matter is from hotel and restaurant emissions.

"A careful examination shows that about 67 per cent reduction of PM10 (2,142 kg/day) and PM2.5 (1,083 kg/day) emission from this source can be achieved by stopping use of coal. It may be seen that coal and flyash are the largest contributing sources in summer and this action is expected to reduce ambient air concentration by 2.7 µg/m3 and 2.9 µg/m3 in PM 10 and PM 2.5 respectively," the report states.

It also lays heavy emphasis on the burning of MSW in Delhi. "It is a myth that MSW is not burned in Delhi. The MSW burning is widespread in Delhi and NCR, more frequently in winter. A recent study by Nagpure et al.,(2015) in Delhi has estimated 190 to 246 tons/day of MSW burning (that's about 2-3 per cent of the 8,390 tons/day of MSW generated)," the report states.

"The estimated emissions are: 2,000 kg/d of PM10 and about 1,800 kg of PM2.5. MSW burning contributes to nearly 10 per cent of PM10 and PM2.5 in ambient air in winters. Any form of garbage burning should be strictly stopped and monitored for its compliance. It will require development of infrastructure (including access to remote and congested areas) for effective collection of MSW and disposal at landfill site," the report states.

According to the report, a complete ban on MSW burning can almost bring emissions from this source to zero and possibly see an improvement of 5-10 per cent in air quality.
Mutual recognition of foreign educational degrees on table

HRD panel proposes reciprocal deal with countries

AMITAV RANJAN
NEW DELHI, JANUARY 12

The government is mulling allowing overseas students to pursue higher education or apply for public jobs in India without an evaluation of their foreign educational certificates, provided the issuing country has a reciprocal recognition agreement with India.

An HRD ministry-appointed committee has recommended that certificates from non-professional colleges abroad be recognised on “principle of academic sovereignty”, whereby India will recognise all qualifications offered by a country provided it too recognises credentials by Indian institutions “without any ifs and buts for higher education”.

This principle of reciprocity on equating foreign learning systems suggests that India enter into agreement with countries that have “a rigorous, robust and credible” system.

“Under the agreement, both countries shall unconditionally recognise all qualifications awarded by recognised/accredited higher educational institutions in the respective countries and shall treat all such qualifications as equivalent to their qualifications level by level,” the committee said.

Where two countries are unable to sign the agreement because of education being a provincial subject or due to autonomous status of the institutions, the agreement may be signed between the Association of Indian Universities (AIU) and a similar body of the foreign nation. In that case, only those certificates awarded by the association member institute would be recognised as an equivalent.

The committee, headed by University Grants Commission chairman Ved Prakash, had ministry’s Joint Secretary (International Co-Operation Cell) as member secretary. It was appointed last May to relook a plan to fulfill India’s promise two years ago to bring UK degrees on a par with domestic ones.

It has also proposed the reciprocity principle for school leaving certificates awarded by boards/systems of both countries “irrespective of the duration”. In cases where the 12-year duration matches, it suggests removal of “additional eligibility conditions prescribed by AIU for certain minimum credit or grade requirements or the requirement of studying English up to certain levels of schooling”.

However, on professional qualification which entitles a student to practise engineering, architecture, law, medicine, nursing and pharmacy etc, the committee is clear that the present process of seeking approval from respective professional councils for recognition and equivalence of degree/diploma should continue.

It has also excluded foreign qualifications awarded through correspondence/distance/open/online/virtual learning from the reciprocal agreement route. While deferring their recognition “for the time being”, it said that a “well-considered decision” would be taken once Distance/Open Education Council comes into being.

The committee felt that possibilities needed to be explored to equate foreign qualifications that are considered of quality and repute “even if they do not exactly meet the condition of eligibility requirements and programme duration” due to the increased emphasis on mobility of students.

Mostly, Indian students going to the UK, Australia, Russia and western European nations are at the receiving end when they return home and are denied equivalence by AIU because duration of their study is found to be less than the minimum prescribed in India for similar qualification.

AIU norms require courses to be done in full-time regular mode with durations matching those in Indian institutions. That means that high school should be for 12 years, graduate programmes of three years and master’s courses of two years, as in India, with duration measured in months.

In contrast, some foreign universities permit master’s degree of 20 to 22 months, allowing students to study during vacations or take extra courses in a semester. These, however, are not recognised by AIU.
The MBA degree has lost its lustre

Management education has become an ossified classroom experience. This cannot go on.

FIRDOS VANDEREVALA

The management education sector is in limbo, as the economy refuses to perk up. The excitement about MBA is gone and the crowds of students and hirers at B-schools are much thinner. The number of applicants taking CAT has fallen by one-third since its peak popularity in 2008 when nearly three lakh applicants appeared for CAT. Hundreds of the 4,000 odd B-schools have been mothballed or down-scaled during the past few years. Employers are no longer queuing up before them with fat cheque books. They no longer want to pay top rupees for mere management graduates. Now they want rainmakers who can improve company fortunes immediately after signing up.

Clearly, the management education sector in India is in a crisis.

Dealing with the disconnect

A task force appointed by the All India Management Association (AIMA) and consisting of B-school heads, CEOs and consultants has analysed the state of management education in the country, flagged the areas of concern, and recommended action for all stakeholders in management education. The task force’s report has been presented to the Secretary, department of higher education, ministry of human resource development for shaping the government’s policy towards management education.

From industry’s point of view, the report addresses many key issues that have been sources of concern, especially the disconnect between management education and the real need of business in India. Despite the much acknowledged need for a synchronised and closer relationship between industry and education, neither B-schools nor companies have stepped out of their comfort zone. Both want the other to make all the effort and investment. B-schools are comfortable being mass-production factories with repetitive curriculum and teaching tools whereas companies want graduates with trendy knowledge and skills. The regulator’s one-size-fits-all approach fixes the standards at the lowest common denominator. Eventually, everybody loses.

The employer is the ultimate arbiter of education and, therefore, the onus is on industry to force change in management education. Industry has to not only set the benchmarks for instruction, testing and certification, it has to take the responsibility of providing the latest knowledge and skills. Students must learn more of what is current and not just what has gone before. More importantly, they have to learn about developing trends in industry and management.

Experience shows that occasional visits of industry executives do help B-schools develop meaningful learning programmes. The telephonic interviews of the onus to the Secretary, higher education, ministry of human resource development for shaping the government’s policy towards management education.

In fact, industry’s frustration with the generic management education is making many business houses set up their own schools or sponsor courses tailored to their unique requirements. This is happening increasingly in high-growth sectors such as IT, banking, finance, pharma, healthcare and realty. Customised courses allow for greater attention to important but ignored management areas such as agriculture, rural manufacturing and small businesses.

Globalising management education is of great interest to the industry. The task force found that the majority of MBA programmes across the world are too local and do not prepare management graduates to work in multi-location corporations. Given the economics of most B-schools and policy constraints, the quicker way to bring a global perspective to management education is to collaborate with foreign B-schools. The task force points out that such collaboration is more forthcoming from new and smaller institutes. It cites IIB as a model for globalising India’s management education, as it has faculty support from some big brand B-schools of the world.

Not just a vocation

In a radical recommendation, the AIMA task force wants management to be regarded as a profession and not merely a vocation. It asks the government to revive the All India Board of Management Studies as the regulatory body or create a new Management Education Council of India with representation from all stakeholders. That, it believes, will guarantee a high quality of management education. However, it is difficult to see an MBA getting a law-backed get to practice management as the case with the qualifications in engineering, law or accounting. An amendment is considered mor an open air than a precise science or a legal authority.

Indian industry desperately needs better management education in the country and it is not putting its money where its mouth is. It can help itself only by helping B-schools produce not just qualified managers but capable managers and leaders.

The writer is the president of AIMA and executive vice-chairman of Essar Steel
Deemed varsity programmes before 2010 valid: Delhi HC

DEGREE VALIDITY  All new courses started by deemed universities after May 21, 2010, must have UGC approvals to be considered valid.

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Students holding degrees granted before May 21, 2010, from deemed universities heaved a sigh of relief after a recent Delhi High Court (HC) order that any new course department started by deemed universities without taking the consent of the University Grants Commission (UGC) before May 21, 2010, was valid.

Many deemed universities had started courses at different points of time without taking requisite UGC permissions.

However, Delhi HC order also states that UGC approvals are mandatory for new programmes departments launched after May 21, 2010.

UGC had argued before Delhi HC that deemed universities should have started degree courses in accordance with its (UGC’s) 2000 and 2004 guidelines, which mandated all deemed universities to first seek its approval.

However, Delhi HC, prioritising regulations instead of guidelines, ruled that guidelines could not be laid down without framing regulations, “which UGC did only by inclusion of Regulation 12 in the Regulations of the year 2010 which came into force on 21st May, 2010.”

The guidelines of year 2000 or of 2004 or the instructions issued by UGC requiring deemed universities to obtain its prior approval before starting a new course “are of no avail and UGC could not have insisted so without framing the Regulation,” HC said.

For UGC, the news has its positives as well as negatives. While the Division Bench of the Delhi HC upheld the UGC (institutions deemed to be universities) Regulations 2010, a Single Bench of the Madras HC and Andhra Pradesh HC had earlier struck down the Regulations saying that deemed universities didn’t need UGC approval to start any new course. UGC has challenged both the judgments in the Division Benches of both the HC.

“Now when the Division Bench of the Delhi HC has upheld the validity of Regulation 12, it will make our case quite strong in the Andhra Pradesh HC and Madras HC. However, Delhi HC’s ruling that UGC can’t regulate such a matter by issuing guidelines instead of regulations is a big setback for us. It puts a question mark on several important guidelines which UGC has issued from time to time. We may challenge it in the Supreme Court,” a UGC source says.

The matter came to Delhi HC when the Sam Higginbottom University of Agriculture, Technology and Science, (formerly Allahabad Agricultural Institute) filed a writ petition and said that UGC by a letter dated December 3, 2014, had informed the university that it had not taken approvals to start the departments of: i) public health, ii) chemical sciences, iii) MTL, iv) medical laboratory technology (MLT), and, iv) nursing. The letter said that as per the UGC norms already circulated to the deemed university it can start only those courses which are allied to courses already approved by the UGC. Prior UGC approval is required for programmes which are not allied to the courses already approved.

The university was also informed by UGC that the courses being offered by its departments of: i) public health, ii) pharmaceutical sciences, iii) MTL, iv) radio imaging technology, and v) physiotherapy, were not allied to the courses approved by the UGC and hence “cannot be termed as valid.” The UGC also instructed the university not to admit students to the said courses.

The university challenged the validity of UGC’s letter and also questioned the validity of its previous guidelines of 2000 and 2004 and Regulation 2010, arguing that there was no provision in the University Grants Commission Act, 1966, which required a deemed university to seek UGC approval for starting a course.

Giving partial relief to both the university and UGC, the Division Bench said, “...even though UGC Act does not make any distinction between a university and a deemed university but the two cannot possibly fall in one class and UGC would be entitled to make such a provision for deemed universities only.”
PU gets Rs 150-cr breather from UGC


Bringing a relief to Panjab University (PU), the University Grants Commission (UGC) finally ordered the release of Rs 150 crore grant to the university on Monday.

After facing financial crisis for a year and witnessing several protests from students and teachers’ associations against inordinate delay in the release of grant, the PU issued a statement saying that the sanction order for the current financial year had been received. The statement read that the university had decided to release arrears of dearness allowance (DA) of the employees and pensioners.

Panjab University Teachers’ Association president Prof Akshaya Kumar said: “Receiving the grant after such a long wait does not call for any celebration. It’s good that the Union ministry of human resource development sensed our struggle that we undertook to get the funds released.”

“The PU was waiting for the grant for the past eight months and the authorities had to shuffle the funds to pay salaries to all the employees, that too without arrears and DA. Now the university needs to make sure that the process of release of the grants is regularised from now onwards as salary payment is the primary concern. An instalment of Rs 50 crore is also pending with the ministry,” said Kumar.

PU vice-chancellor (V-C) Prof Arun Kumar Grover said the amount would be spent on disbursement of salaries and pension.

Due to the lack of funds, the university couldn’t pay the DA since January last year. As per officials, grants from the Centre were required to meet the budget deficit of the university. The salary bills of around 3,000 employees working on the campus are around Rs 25 crore per month. Officials say salary constitutes 87% of the non-planned budget expenditure of the university.

The issue had started after Akhil Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishad (ABVP) had alleged ‘misappropriation’ of funds on the campus and had written to the MHRD regarding the same, resulting in the delay.
Why PhDs want to be peons

http://www.livemint.com/Politics/FL93KP1b9OtQmNnDOJeNxI/Why-PhDs-want-to-be-peons.html

Last year, 2.3 million people, including postgraduates and PhDs, applied for 368 peon posts advertised in Uttar Pradesh. Outrage followed. Why were highly educated people applying for a job which required only primary school education and knowing how to ride a bicycle, people asked.

To answer, one needs to find out the jobs people who have been through a university end up in.

According to National Sample Survey Organization (NSSO) data, there were around 62 million graduates and postgraduates (we will simply call them graduates and more) in India in 2011-12. Officially, unemployment levels are around 5% for both graduates and postgraduates. However, these numbers need to be taken with a pinch of salt. A PhD holder working as a cultivator—or, for that matter, a peon—is considered to be employed.

NSSO has 10 broad categories of employment in India. Among these, the share of workers who are graduates or more is highest in the professionals category. Broadly speaking, professionals include physical, mathematical, engineering, medical sciences, teaching and other professionals.

Although there is no data on earnings by employment categories, an examination of average monthly per capita consumption expenditure and relative share in consumption (share in total consumption divided by share in population) shows professionals as the most well-off among all categories of workers.

**WHAT DO INDIANS DO?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupation group</th>
<th>% share in total workers</th>
<th>% of regular waged/salary workers</th>
<th>% of workers who are graduate or above</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Legislators, senior officials and managers</td>
<td>6.8</td>
<td>11.7</td>
<td>22.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professionals</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>59.2</td>
<td>62.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technicians and associate professionals</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>76.5</td>
<td>49.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clerks</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>95.5</td>
<td>48.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service workers and shop and market sale workers</td>
<td>7.4</td>
<td>38.4</td>
<td>11.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skilled agricultural and fishery workers</td>
<td>31.8</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>3.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Craft and related trade workers</td>
<td>13.0</td>
<td>19.7</td>
<td>2.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plant and machine operators and assemblers</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>58.3</td>
<td>4.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elementary occupations</td>
<td>27.8</td>
<td>9.2</td>
<td>0.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Workers not classified by occupation</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>17.9</td>
<td>1.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>17.9</strong></td>
<td><strong>8.8</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
As the analysis above shows, it is safe to assume that professionals have it the best among workers in India. Among these, 9.32 million are graduates or more.
Not all with university education enter the labour market. A significant proportion opts out of the labour force, which means they stop looking for a job. The share of such people is as high as 38% and 26% among graduates and postgraduates, respectively. Reasons for doing so vary and include the pursuit of higher studies, engagement in domestic work, disability, being rentiers, pensioners, remittance recipients, or engaging in free collection of goods.

Gender seems to be playing an important role in determining whether one opts out of the labour force. The share of educated women opting out of the labour force is much higher than men. Seventy-one per cent of graduate and 56.5% of postgraduate women were not in the labour force, while the share of men not in the labour force in these categories was 17.8% and 10.7%, respectively.

As is to be expected, more women opt out of the labour force for tending to domestic duties. However, what is intriguing is more women report doing so to pursue higher education as well.
Jayan Jose Thomas, assistant professor of economics at IIT Delhi, explains this as a characteristic feature of India’s labour economy. Women from poor households join the workforce to make ends meet, but as economic conditions improve, they opt out due to dearth of quality employment, says Thomas.

These findings raise questions over the effectiveness of the recent increase in enrolment of girl students, reported by Mint last year, in improving their economic condition.

India’s universities and labour markets are also characterized by inequalities on account of both religious and caste groups. We have measured this by taking relative shares of each religious and social group among those who are graduates and more, and professionals. These shares have been calculated by dividing the percentage share of each group in the graduate-and-more/professional population by their respective share in population.

A relative share of less than one would mean that a given group’s share among graduates-or-more/professionals is less than its share in population and vice versa. Muslims, Scheduled Tribes, Scheduled Castes and Other Backward Classes have a relative share of less than one in both the graduate-and-more and professional categories, which reflects their deprivation in education and quality employment. Simply put, the number of Muslim, Scheduled Tribe, Scheduled Caste and Other Backward Class people that are graduates and more or professionals is not commensurate with their share of the total population.
Overall, employment prospects aren’t exactly brilliant for a majority of those who manage to get into a university. Matters are worse for those who come from disadvantaged backgrounds. If India has to exploit its demographic advantage, efforts must be taken to create more quality jobs as well as improve the quality of education in an egalitarian manner.

*Roshan Kishore and Dipti Jain are data journalists at Mint. Ishan Anand is a PhD student at Jawaharlal Nehru University.*