

VISION AND MISSION OF MANAGEMENT EDUCATION IN NEPAL

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INTRODUCTION

Management education was introduced in Nepal in the year 1954 to cater to the needs of trained manpower to banks, government agencies and industrial and commercial sector in general. In the closed economic policy of the government in the past, the policy makers thought of required educated manpower for the nation and tried to train them accordingly. For Nepal, India remained the ideal place for education. It is because of Nepal's very close socio-cultural and religious relationship with India. Because of geographical nearness and easy access, India has been a model for Nepal to follow. Thus, the vision of Nepal is influenced by India's economic policy and developmental activities. Management education for Nepal was also designed looking at its importance in banks, government agencies and the industry and commerce in India.

PUBLIC PERCEPTION

The Public accepted this type of education at that time as an advanced training for accounting jobs. But accountants were neither taken as intellectuals nor they held top positions in organizations. The most popular subjects during that period were Political Science, History, English Literature and Economics in general education. The Commerce education was regarded as the area of the least priority for students. Students' interest towards any area of education was influenced by their dire needs of personal ambition, or by the interest of the family and the close community circle. The rating of Commerce education by non-commerce students was very poor. In government bureaucracy, an accountant was taken as a job of least priority and the business profession was taken as that of lower community. But, however, achieving higher degree in Commerce education was a kind of step for social transformation.

PROFESSIONAL INTERACTION

Along with the pace of economic development and industrial establishment under public and private sectors, the importance of Commerce graduates was recognized in India; and that encouraged the professors of Commerce to be in close contact with industrial sector and share the knowledge for better solutions of business problems in a form of research based articles and proceedings that approached the business and academic communities. Through research articles, sharing of knowledge among professors was started and got expanded through delegates visiting from Nepal who used to participate in the seminars and conferences in India. Before the Masters programme began in Commerce at Tribhuvan University, students of Nepal went to India for their higher education in commerce. And for a long period of time, universities in

different towns and cities such as Calcutta, Banaras, Patna, Allahbad, and Lucknow in India provided higher education to Nepalese students. Thus, a close relation existed between Nepal and India in higher educational matters and naturally a strong Indian academic influence helped shape the Nepalese education system. However, the Tribhuvan University discontinued the long practiced Indian method of university education since Nepal introduced a national education modelled on American semester system of education with decentralized examinations at campuses situated at different regions of the country in 1974. But the newly adopted practice could not survive for long due to lack of quality faculties in the campuses. The sudden and haphazard introduction of American system of education in Nepal created a kind of confusion in India on the degrees of Tribhuvan University particularly in regards to their equivalence and thus a revised form of semester system was brought into operation with a concept of "Regionalization" in the education standard at least at par with the SAARC countries. Before that no question was raised about the education standard on higher education level. Introduction of American education model in higher education, at least, taught the policy makers to think over and above with broader vision from the existing position. Nepalese policy makers because of very close relation with Indian Universities could not overlook the prevailing educational practices of India. Pakistan and Sri Lanka are far from Nepal and Universities in Bangladesh have many similarities with Indian Universities. Therefore, for Nepal, the SAARC University standard means the standard prevalent at Indian Universities. Before 1990, there was a mixed economic policy adopted by India and Nepal. Due to better development of private sector and more scientific process of recruitment system in government bureaucracy, education standard at better Universities in India was maintained at an upper stratum. Nepalese system, on the other hand, had to face the influence from different power corridors on recruitment process of governmental and non-governmental organizations. And the job opportunity looked towards recommendations over the talented person. Thus, higher education was taken by the students as the certificate-centered education rather than for knowledge. The objective aimed by the policy makers could not match with that achieved by the students. This was a kind of gap derived from the mismanagement in recruitment process. It has become a Nepalese culture at the present moment as no person believes the higher officers for impartial result in recruitment process. As a result, duplicate certificates arrived in the market creating a problem to the government.

ECONOMIC INTEGRATION

The Faculty of Management at Tribhuvan University before 1990 ran Bachelor of Business Administration (a two years programme), and Master of Business Administration (a theory-based two years programme). The government, since the emergence of multiparty democratic system, followed the liberal economic policy and started to divest the public enterprises. The government has, thus, divested many public enterprises and some others are in the process of divestment. The job opportunity in the public enterprise sector is eliminated because of over staffing problems. Some of the enterprises in the private sector are still to grow up and some of them are liquidated at the initial

stage. As a result the unemployment rate is mounting in the country. Nepal will have to face more economic challenges in the days ahead, since it has already been a member of WTO in 2003. A discussion is going on whether to apply WTO rules to the education sector or not. If a positive thinking emerges to include education under WTO and make it effective very soon, the domestic educational institutions will have to be ready for the forthcoming challenges. Besides, Nepal has to produce the educated manpower for the international market. The job opportunity in the domestic market will not be very lucrative in future too, because this is the age of competition and one can initiate its effort to be a thin and slim for higher productivity.

MANAGEMENT EDUCATION

Faculty of management has to some extent foreseen the future challenges and introduced the professional programme at its bachelor level. And previous BBA and MBA programmes are converted into BBS (Bachelor of Business Studies) and MBS (Master of Business Studies). The curricula as such for BBS and MBS are made more or less at par with any good University of the developed countries. Every five years curricula for these programmes are revised and reviewed. Theoretical concentration is more in the BBS programme of the Faculty of Management (FOM), Tribhuvan University running at its 22 constituent campuses and 158 affiliated campuses and MBS programme is running at 19 campuses out of which five are affiliated.

ACADEMIC PROGRAMMES

The faculty of management (FOM) aims to make students of professional pursuits in business, industry and government. Keeping the aim of the FOM in view, the objectives of the MBS, MPA, BBS, BBA, BIM, BHM, and BTTM programmes have been framed. The objective of the Master of Business Studies (MBS) programme is to enable the students to work as competent managers meeting the demand of organizations particularly in the functional area of management. The Master of Public Administration (MPA) programme is designed to produce high-level human resources for professional career to serve in the public affairs management of the government, non-government, public enterprises and private sector. For the BBS programme, the objective is to develop students competent enough for sectoral activities of the organizations. The Bachelor in Business Administration (BBA) programme aims to develop socially responsive, creative, and result oriented management professional to cater the need of middle level managerial positions in the rapidly growing business sector in Nepal and abroad. The objective of Bachelor in Information Management (BIM) differs from the BBA programme. It aims to develop socially responsible result oriented with sufficient analytical strength information technology professionals. The Bachelor of Hotel Management (BHM) and Bachelor of Travel and Tourism Management (BTTM) are mostly service-oriented programmes. The BHM is designed to develop students capable of handling supervisory positions in the area of hospitality industry and the objective of BTTM is to produce the skilled managers in order to handle the travel and tour business effectively and efficiently. Students studying at BBS are 50,000 in all

and 5,000 in MBS and the students studying in BBA, BIM, BHM and BTTM are 400 in total. Management education is most popular nowadays. To continue a small business or to get appointed to any responsible post at the lower level of an organization, management knowledge is a must because it needs an integrated knowledge of different subject areas such as accounting, finance, statistics and many other which are studied for a degree in FOM. Technicians are inclined to management degree. Even to manage a household, one with management degree could perform better than others. As the usefulness of management education in different areas of activities, and the number of students willing to study management has increased in constituent campuses. This has in turn attracted the investors to venture their capital in the education sector. And apart from the constituent and private campuses, there are community type of campuses and public campuses teaching business management programmes. These campuses are spread all over the country right from the Mechi zone in the east to the Mahakali zone in the west. At present, the management programmes are running at 22 constituent campuses and 158 affiliated campuses. As per their popularity, the quality of teaching in the campuses in principle cannot be improved due to defective curriculums, lack of information and communication technology, library/exchange information, teaching equipment, and weak faculties leading to weaker institutions.

The curriculums are the reflection of quality in faculties. Since the faculties are not able to teach the contents prescribed in the curriculum, the curriculums have no use. If all the faculty members feel it very easy to go through the contents of the curriculums, it shows that the curriculums are of low standard and the higher education degree holders cannot cope and interpret the changes going on in the national and international economy. So, after the revision of the curriculum, there is a great need of an interaction between the teachers teaching the course in different campuses all through the country. Arranging an interaction programme or workshop for the concerned teachers is most expensive as compared to the income of the Tribhuvan University. Lack of workshop and interaction in the concerned subject area deviates the teaching from course objectives. In order to improve the quality of teaching, the Faculty of Management just completed the 8 days workshop for the teachers teaching English in Bachelor of Business Administration (BBA) and Bachelor of Information Management (BIM) and in the coming winter vacation, it is going to organize the workshop-cum -training to the teachers teaching core and concentration courses of management in the BBA and BIM levels. It has already completed four seminars in research methodology being organized for teachers supervising students of Master of Business Studies (MBS) for thesis writing as a partial fulfillment of the MBS degree. The latest teaching technologies such as information and communication technology, teaching equipment and the media of exchange of information are not in operation due to budget constraints. The words of mouth and lecture methods are used for teaching and communications. There is no electronic media used so far for teaching in the classroom. Libraries are poorly management due to budget constraints. The big problem for the improvement of academic standard at the undergraduate level of business management, particularly in the BBS level, is the huge member of students with

the limited physical infrastructure, and a small number of quality teachers. And of course, the same problems exist at the MBS level. The Faculty of Management cannot restrict the number of students at the BBS and MBS levels, because of massive unemployment problem for the educated people in Nepal. Higher education for them is not because of its dire needs, it is necessary because they have no other option left except for continuing education. The pressure for enrollment in the Master of Public Administration programme is not so much. It is manageable and this programme is popular among the office holders. The office holder students, particularly bureaucrats, are taking interest to have a degree in MPA not because they want to enrich their existing knowledge but to increase grading marks in career promotion. Certain marks are allotted for an education degree in the career promotion system in government as well as non-government offices. It encourages the students to become certificate oriented rather than enriching their knowledge. Resource constraint problem is already there in MPA too.

Assessing the contemporary demand of the business houses in the private sector, BBA and BIM programmes were offered with the objectives of preparing middle level managers having knowledge of data analysis in computer and the capacity to handle a modern office efficiently. Teaching pedagogy to these students is different from BBS, MBS and MPA programmes. Small business cases, contemporary real example discussion and an internship to each student for a period of few months are some of the methods in knowledge transformation process. The physical infrastructure developed in the campuses for these programmes are over and above the other programmes. Other professional programmes such as Bachelor in Hotel Management (BHM) and Bachelor in Travel and Tour Management (BTTM) are mostly job oriented with knowledge of business management. In this way, the Faculty of Management runs all the above programmes with its 381 teachers, out of whom only 45 teachers have Ph.D. degrees. To improve the quality of non-Ph.D. teachers, the faculty has started M.Phil programme since April 2005.

The FOM is willing to have collaborative actions with foreign universities for faculty development and it has proposed for the same to the universities in the United Kingdom, the USA and Canada and has been trying to contact universities with high esteem in other countries too.

FUTURE PROSPECT

Nepal is a paradise for its climatic diversity and water resources with a perennial source at different hills, mountain and Himalayan regions in the north. Availability of all types of climate at a particular season around the year at different altitudes corresponding to the indigenous people is another uniqueness of this tiny country of 141,181 sq. miles extended from east to west with high mountain in the north and a plain land in the south. This country has comparative advantages in tourism and water resources and this can have the economy of scale in supply side and large scale industry is feasible to them. Whereas for other sectors small scale and cottage industries can be feasible from both employment and income generating point of view. As per the demand of the Nepalese

economic opportunity, it needs to have the human resource with managerial and entrepreneur skills. Both knowledge and skills are to be transferred and generated in the process at Master and Bachelor levels respectively. FOM is searching the universities willing to continue higher education in business management area in Joint Venture in Nepal. From the marketing point of view, this programme could attract the students from northern Bihar and Uttar Pradesh in India because such type of programmes are not introduced by the universities in North Bengal, Bihar and Uttar Pradesh in India.

Introducing new programmes in higher education does not mean discontinuation of existing programmes.