PERFORMANCE OF MANAGEMENT EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS: AN INDIAN SAMPLER*

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ABSTRACT

In the 1950s and 1960s, several institutions were created in India to cater to the needs of management education and to assist in the process of national development. To date, there has been very little systematic comparative analysis of the experience of creating these institutions and examining their performance. The present paper reports the results of an attempt to assess the performance of six management education institutions in India which were established in the 1950s and 1960s and equally divided between post-graduate and post-experience education. Being an exploratory study, the emphasis has been on developing a methodology for assessment of performance and applying this to the area of management education. Basically, performance on both system survival and system effectiveness dimensions has been incorporated into the performance measurement attempt. System survival has been operationalized through a series of indicators on capability development; the system effectiveness dimension has been operationalized through a series of indicators on innovative thrust and penetration for these six institutions. An attempt has also been made to relate various process mechanisms of institution building to the different aspects of performance. Thus, the paper also explores the relationship of institution building processes with performance.

Introduction

In the 1950s, after independence, a combination of events, people and government policies came together in a unique way to professionalize management education in India. As a result of this unique interaction several institutions of management came into being in the 1950s and 1960s (Chowdhry, 1977). There was a growing awareness of the need for manage-
ment education, a burgeoning of activities to meet this need, and along with this a sense of optimism and efforts made with enthusiasm. However, by the early 1970s, although a number of management education institutions were operating in the country, the scene presented a picture of introspection, some disenchantment and a search for new ways of bridging the gaps. The growing gaps were not only in respect of demand and supply in quantitative terms but also in terms of quality of education. Seven categories of management education institutions were noted, which included not only institutions offering degree or diploma programmes in business administration and management, but also institutions offering degree and diploma programmes in industrial engineering, production management and computer management. These also included institutions catering to the training and development needs of practising managers, not to mention those which catered to particular sectors like banking and government. In addition, several private organizations and consultants were also active in the field of management education. Most of the leading private and public sector enterprises also conducted in-company training programmes for their personnel (Singh, 1972).

Three important sources represent the sum total of published contributions in examining the experiences of creating management education institutions in India. The first is a book by Hill et al. (1973). The second is a thesis by Baxter (1972). The third source is a series of papers published or presented by key actors in the institution building efforts in India. Two of these papers are by Matthai (1976, 1977) on his experience with the building of the Indian Institute of Management, Ahmedabad (IIMA); Dayal (1974, 1977) describes his experience as Director of the Indian Institute of Public Administration (IIPA); Chowdhry (1977) takes an overview of the Indian experience in institution building, particularly with reference to management education.

Hill and colleagues have documented their experience in institution building with respect to the Indian Institutes of Management at Calcutta and Ahmedabad (IIMC and IIMA). Their concern was to establish criteria by which relative successes of particular institution building projects of a given class could be gauged, and also to discover what the important determinants of success were. Their focus is on the strategic planning aspect of the two institutes, the explanations of the inter-personal and inter-group dynamics within the two institutions in their early years, and the examination of the distribution of influence in the relationship between the foreign collaborators and host institutions. They state that it is important to undertake a comparative study of the problems encountered in building the several management studies programmes within the existing university structures and to contrast this with the institution building efforts outside the universities.

Baxter's thesis is confined to the study of the growth and development of