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Management research is still at its nascent stages in B-schools

Industry needs to be a part of the research infrastructure at management institutes to help it grow

Astha Hemant
@timesgroup.com

This year, close to 670 institutes participated in the National Institutional Ranking Framework (NIRF) in the management category, of which 383 (57.16%) had no research publications. This was stated in the latest NIRF report that was published in July 2022. Experts say that thus far, management education has been academically inclined. While research has been initiated across management institutes, it is still in its nascent stages.

Not a complete picture

Bhimraya Metri, director, Indian Institute of Management (IIM), Nagpur, agrees that high quality research across B-schools, including the IIMs is at a rudimentary level. However, the situation is not as bad as it is being inferred. "We tend to focus more on international journal indexes such as SCOPUS rather than our own Indian indexing. For some reason, papers even from our top institutes tend to be ranked average in these international indexes, due to which our overall research quality assessment is affected. India needs to start producing its own high-quality journals rather than depend on western world and Australian classified journals," he says.

To this, Himanshu Joshi, professor (Finance & Accounting) and dean (academic services), FORE School of Management, New Delhi, adds, "The NIRF has not presented a complete picture. The rankings give weightage only to



journals indexed in SCOPUS and Web of Science, whereas, management faculty are expected to publish in journals listed in the international quality list such as ABDC and ABS. Besides, B-schools rely heavily on case teaching and publications, which are not considered by NIRF."

Further, management is a multidisciplinary field with institutes offering expertise in departments including Operations, Marketing, Strategy, Finance, and Psychology, adds Metri. "NIRF considers only select journal articles for the rankings, which affects the overall ranking of B-schools. All papers published across management departments should be considered for rankings as this will lead to better positioning of B-schools in NIRF," he says.

Change in mind-set

Centre for Management Education, says, "Initially, management institutes were established to be teaching institutes where the faculty's main job was to cover the curriculum and help students get placed. Today, management education has progressed, and research has become an integral part of teaching and institute development."

To bring about a change in the mind-set of students,

management institutes need to expand their infrastructure, including hiring research-oriented faculty. "Giving incentives to students in the form of career development by involving industry members is a good first step. More government grants and formation of varied trusts to get adequate funds to make the infrastructure research-friendly is also needed," he adds.

Way forward

Research is a time-consuming process, which does not have as financially viable options as opting for a placement, says Agrawal. "However, research needs to be made synonymous with teaching as this is the only way we can internationalise our quality of management education. While research is being done, the process needs to be accelerated," he says.

Management institutes do have numerous articles published across journals, but these might not be as highly ranked as those considered by NIRF, says Joshi. "Rather than focus on number of publications, our focus should be on conducting meaningful research that will help in nation-building," says Metri.



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