

Are Indian B Schools preparing leaders for algorithm driven workplaces?

DAVIENDERNARANG

The need for a dynamic leader has always been a matter of utmost importance. Workplaces are changing; so are the skill requirements of a leader. Today's workplaces realise that to survive in a VUCA environment, leadership abilities need a huge transformation. There is a growing consensus that leadership requirements in today's automated workplace have evolved more than ever. While addressing this requirement, Indian B Schools are on their toes in bringing transformational change in

curricula, in the faculty pool, in learning infrastructures, and the list goes on.

Richard Branson once said: "If someone offers you an amazing opportunity and you're not sure you can do it, say yes – then learn how to do it later". This is the approach Indian B schools are adopting while training, upskilling, and advanced skilling the management graduates. The obvious fact is that the future does not need leaders with one rigid expertise, traditional mentoring method; it needs leaders who can flawlessly combine what they know with what they can figure out, in a

faster way, and always purpose driven. And, Indian B schools are far more inclined towards this while bringing transformative changes in their curricula, in their learning environment, and among their faculty pool.

Management graduates today need to be relevant, data-driven, and employable in a digitally disruptive workplace. A radical transformation has set in the B-school education in response to the algorithm driven workplace culture. An algorithm driven workplace is a work environment where algorithms play a significant role in managing and organising

work. It points towards an automated decision-making system powered by software as opposed to the decisions traditionally made by humans. Leaders in today's workplaces are far more data-driven, catering to the quickest possible need of the hour. The century is witnessing a rapid transformation driven by fast-changing advances in artificial intelligence (AI), machine learning (ML), big data, and automation. As algorithms increasingly influence decision making in business, the role of a leader has evolved than ever. Today's managers and leaders are required to

work proactively and strategically while decoding digital work culture. Apart from understanding the core business principles for running their organisation, they also need to navigate, interpret, and deploy digital tools.

In this direction, India's B schools are taking commendable strides towards integrating digital transformation and AI readiness into their curricula. B schools are focusing on producing MBAs who have skills for the technology transition and execution. There is an introduction of AI related courses into the MBA curriculum, with an assurance to create management professionals who are future job-ready in a data driven workplace.

In the dynamic world of business, where data has become a vital asset, the traditional MBA, once centred around finance, marketing, and leadership, is now converging with artificial intelligence (AI) and data science to produce a new breed of future leaders who are tech-savvy, data literate, and have a creative mindset. Today's B schools are no longer confined to training management graduates merely to lead teams, making strategic decisions; rather, they are becoming far more evolved while educating the future managers how to utilize massive data sets in their stride. Traditional MBA programs no longer adequately prepare executives for the challenges they face today and those they will face tomorrow. B schools are focusing on preparing leaders who are expected to

interpret data, draw meaningful insights, and collaborate with technocrats to transform raw information into actionable strategies. In response to the industry demand, the B schools are taking utmost care to encourage their students to apply algorithm creativity in decision making and problem solving. They are keen on devising their curriculum industry-aligned with hands-on learning that caters to a global perspective.

However, significant gaps still exist, particularly in terms of faculty capabilities, infrastructure, pedagogical innovation, and curriculum standardisation across the vast landscape. The B schools need to urgently address these standing issues, which might prevent a scarcity of data driven leadership force. Of course, Indian B schools are already on a mission towards preparing the students for an algorithm driven workplace; however, they need to navigate more to build a cutting-edge curriculum that can provide hands-on experience and thereby prepare the future managers to approach the challenges ahead in a tech-savvy way.

In brief, with the ever-evolving workplace, there are opportunities as well as challenges ahead, which the B schools need to identify and educate their graduates accordingly. This will ensure a promising avenue and robust future for leadership.

THE WRITER IS THE DIRECTOR, JAIPURIA INSTITUTE OF MANAGEMENT, GHAZIABAD.

