

# Management education needs to be revamped

## Rahul Dasgupta

Management education in India is lopsided with too much emphasis on theory and inadequate means of application, says

**Rahul Dasgupta**, Joint Managing Director, Globsyn Group. In an interview with *Education Insider*, he talks about the ways to improve the quality of management education in the country

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**What are the changes Globsyn Business School (GBS) has brought about in management education in India?**

GBS has always believed that innovation, technology and research should be the operative words in business school curricula and all our initiatives stem from this basic theme. GBS

is uniquely positioned as a business school which has programmes designed with a learner-centric approach. We focus on making the learning experience viable in the work life context. That is why we have developed the Knowledge Finishing School framework which is a unique pedagogical model used in management study where the student is taken a few steps

beyond acquisition of knowledge itself. The pedagogy stresses on the application of knowledge, its continuous management and ultimately performance. We refer to this as the 'Knowledge Diamond'.

GBS also prioritises the need to update the theoretical knowledge delivered in the class room. We have a Knowledge Cell in place where the content

and research team collaborates with the faculty to customise the content according to current academic or industry trends by at least 15% every year.

Every B-school has a Placement Cell. We too assist the students in getting jobs but our interface with the industry is a continuous process which does not begin or end with placements. Instead of a Placement Cell, we

have a Corporate Relationship Programme where our CRP team through our Corporate Connect programmes involves the corporate entities in the design and delivery of certain modules in the coursework. It is not the same as guest lectures by industry executives. At Globsyn, we identify an individual from the industry who has an alignment with the module to be delivered in the class and invite the person to take a definite number of sessions, and then our own faculty

teaches the same module again. This means that our students get a practical overview of a subject and are able to relate it to the theoretical aspects in the class.

At GBS, we also believe that theoretical knowledge alone cannot make good managers. So through programmes like PGPM-HR under the Management Apprenticeship Programme (MAP), we actually enable our students to acquire on-the-job training with renowned

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companies like Manpower Group so as to develop their skills.

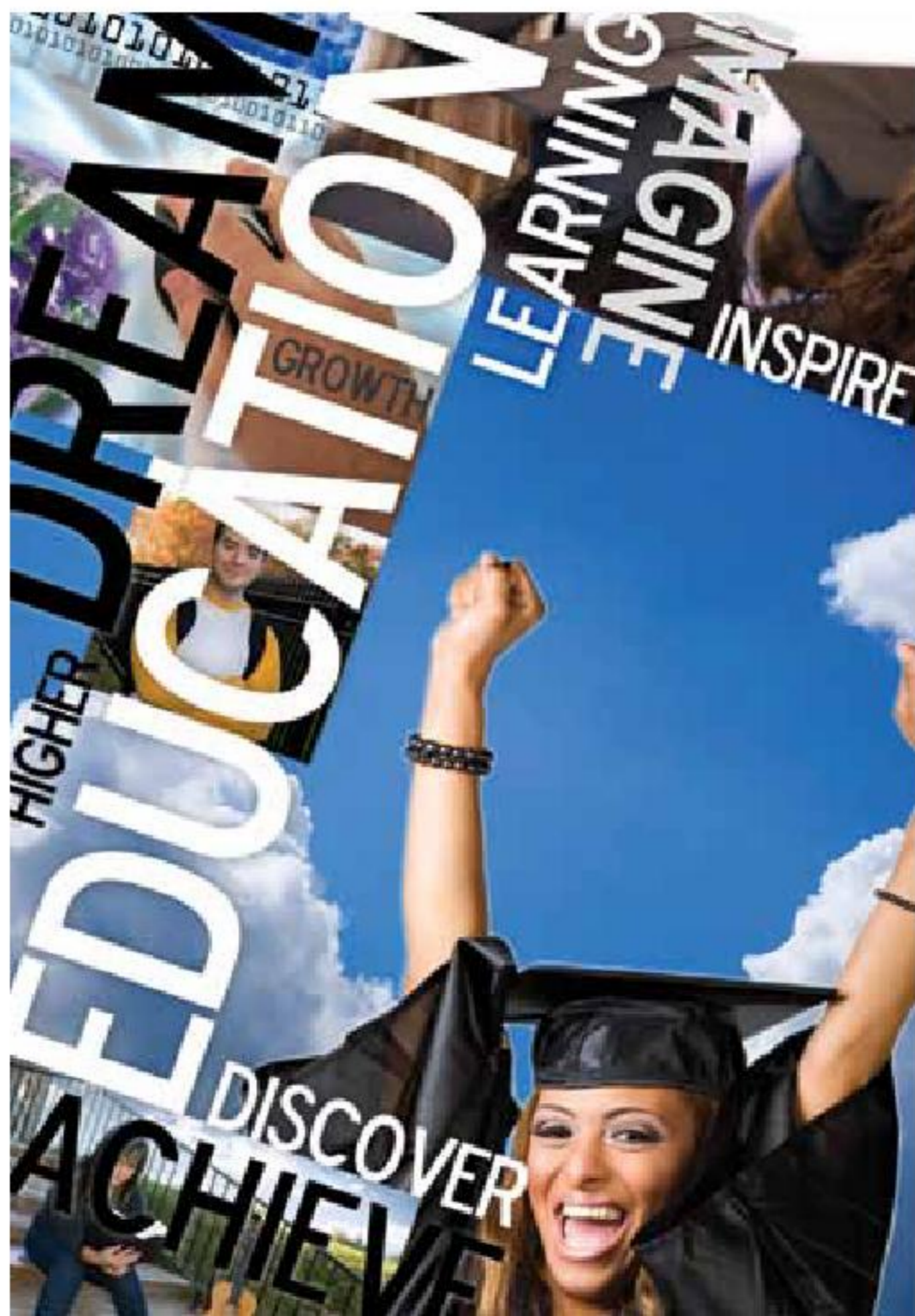
We constantly emphasise on the need for a holistic personality development and therefore encourage our students to participate in events like serendipity or actively engage in the Care for Society programme under the aegis of Kalyani-a Bikram Dasgupta Foundation which provides the students a platform to reach out to the underprivileged sections of society.

**According to World Talent Report prepared last November by the Switzerland-based IMD, a top-notch global business school, India slipped to the 48th position out of 60 countries from the 29th place it held in 2005. What could be the basic reason for this?**

It is difficult to answer this question without knowing what methodology was

used for the survey or what parameters were considered to determine the quality of the ‘Talent’. But it is a fact that many educational institutions do not make the right investment to build the edifice required for learning to take place. Qualified faculty, infrastructure, research etc. are non-negotiable components of any standard educational environment. And, these are being compromised for short-term gains.

Social perceptions about the outcome of learning have also changed. The nature of parental involvement and the expectations from institutes tend to revolve around employment or placement rather than the actual learning process which leads to the degradation of the quality of education. Besides, certain endemic issues like the perceived hegemony of academic learning over vocational skills lead to a large percentage of youth pursuing degrees for which they neither have an aptitude nor



any real interest. This results in the squandering away of a significant amount of resources— material as well as human – which could otherwise be more productively deployed through vocational training frameworks like NSQF.

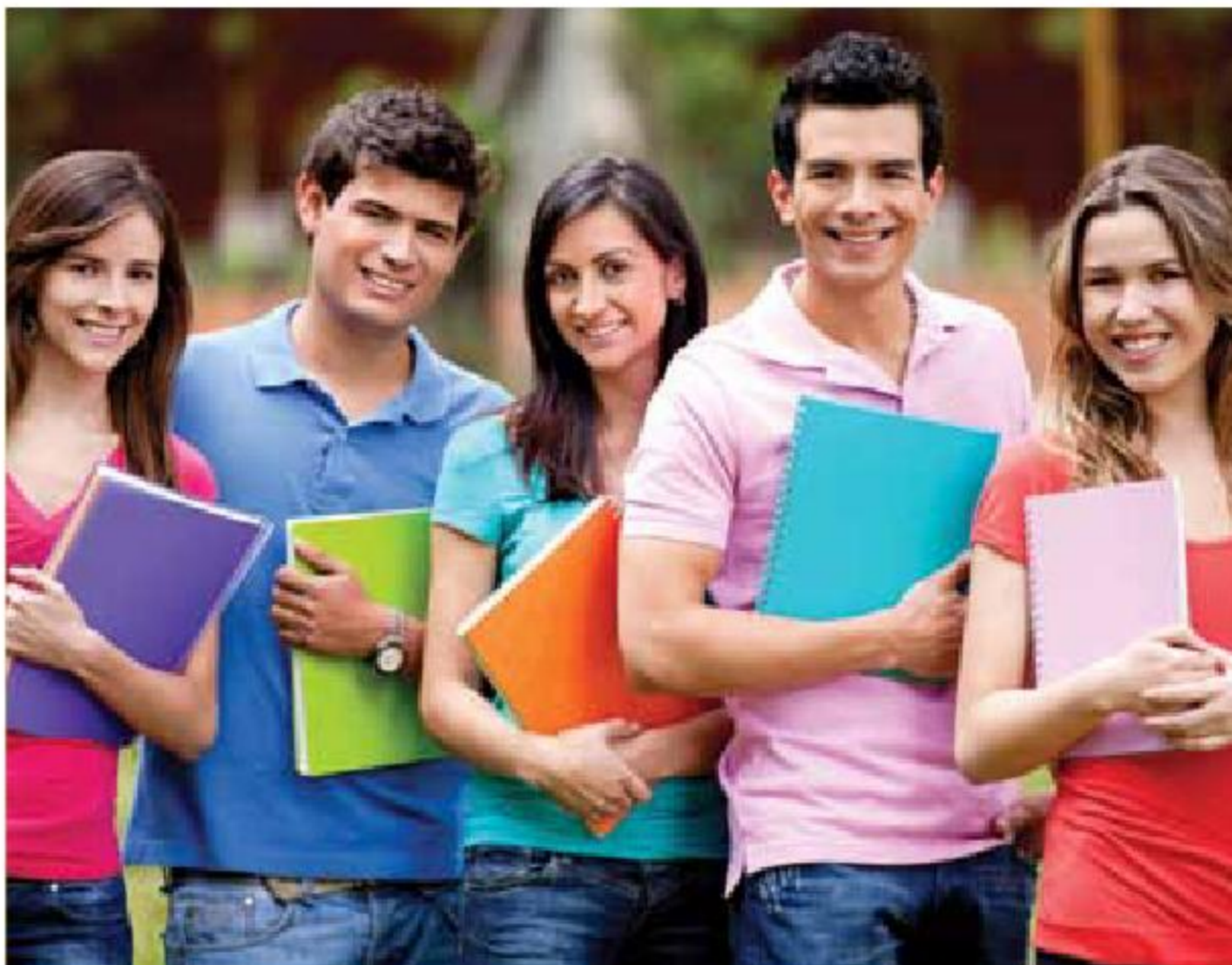
### ***What are the drawbacks of management education in India? What is the quality of B-schools in the country?***

Management education in India is lopsided with too much emphasis on theory and inadequate means of application. And ironically enough, despite the heavy reliance on classroom sessions, the delivery model for theoretical learning has not been standardised. Hence, the quality of teaching is not uniform across schools. The course structures in most B-schools are rigid too and not much is done to keep pace with changing industry needs and there is a degree of dissonance between what the industry expects of a management graduate and what the academia is able to provide. Only a few B-schools in India are really top-notch and so many Indian students are opting for B-schools in Singapore, Australia, US or UK.

### ***What are the new programmes and techniques which can be included in management education to bring out skilled and qualified students?***

Under ideal conditions, industry and academia should work as collaborators in evolving frameworks that integrate knowledge with application. Education that teaches one to be what one wants to be and skills that sharpen one's ability to become enmeshed in the idea of Knowing, Being and Doing are the foundation of what we refer to as EduSkills at Globsyn.

GBS has always tried to bridge the schism that exists between academics and industry which is one of the reasons why we try to constantly build learning structures that bring theory and practice



closer. Through our 'Learn n Intern' programme, we equip students with both knowledge and skills to make them industry-ready. The 'Vodafone Pathshala' has been designed for postgraduate students who will be trained on telecom technologies and the training will be provided by a panel of trainers from Vodafone's HR and technical teams, before being absorbed for internship positions. The PGPM (HR)- Manpower Group is an industry-academia collaboration where students will receive academic education in the first year from GBS, after which they will get an opportunity to work with Manpower as budding HR professionals in the second year. The programme enables the students to become skilled HR personnel who are ready to join the workforce.

### ***What can be done to enhance the competitiveness of Indian B-schools?***

The only way B-schools can remain relevant is by aligning themselves as far as possible to the industry. Management curriculum has to cater to industry needs and the lacuna between academic learning and workplace

application should be addressed. At GBS, we realised the urgency of conceptualising a model where knowing is coupled with doing. We have management apprenticeship programmes or 'Learn n Intern' initiatives where our students acquire skills by putting their knowledge into practice in real work situations so that by the time they are out of the school, they have an experiential understanding of work life and are industry-ready.

The quality of teaching is an issue which needs to be addressed and a system needs to be developed where the quality of sessions delivered can be evaluated through quantifiable factors, which makes faculty accountable and encourages self-improvement. At GBS, we understand the gravity of the issue. We have an active Knowledge Cell in place to constantly upgrade and customise the learning content. In fact, it is a concern that B-schools pay scant attention to the content architecture which must be a dynamic process, constantly shaped and reshaped by economic trends, business processes and local industry demands. Only then can Indian B-schools become truly competitive. ●