How Innovations and Best Practices can Transform Higher Education Institutions : A Case Study of SIMS

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February 2015

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ABSTRACT

Education has become competitive and so too the educational institutions. In order to survive the competition, institutions have to improve the quality of their services. Changes in culture, aspiration and levels of skills required in securing employment for students, force higher education institutions today to rework on their educational models and add value to each and every aspect of their service. Innovations and best practices serve to enhance quality and add value. Srinivas Institute of Management Studies (SIMS), which combines technology, management and social service education has identified and implemented innovations and best practices to differentiate itself among the competitors and to add value in its educational services. In this paper, we have discussed innovations, small and big, develped indigineously and implemented during last four years. They are broadly classified under six key aspects namely "curriculat aspects, teaching-learning and evaluation, research, consultancy and extension, infrastructure and learning resources, student support and progression, and governance, leadership, and management". The paper also contains some of the intitutional and individual faculty best practices having visible impact on the quality of higher education imparted by the institution. The best practices concern admission, fees, attendance, teaching, performance, skill building, emploability, student involvement, collectively learning, value addition, ensuring tranperency, information desipitation etc. Finally two institutional best practices are elaborated with its aim of practice, underlying principles and concepts, particular contextual features or challenging issues that have had to be addressed in designing and implementing the practice, and its implementation, including its uniqueness in Indian higher education, evidence of success, identifing the problems encountered and resources required to implement the practice.

Keywords : Innovations in Higher education, Best practices in higher education.

I. INTRODUCTION

Science and technology are growing alarmingly and consequently the knowledge base of all diciplines are fast expanding. The educational system is invested with the responsibility of

absorbing, assimilating and delivering the new knowledge to its incumbants. Higher education therefore has become competitive. It not only matters how much in terms of quantity but how good in terms of quality that it delivers the knowledge. Student centric focus is gradually shifting to student friendly approaches, and innovations and best practices are adopted to add value and get more mileage in the knowledge delivery. Changes in culture, aspiration and levels of skills required in securing employment for students and cost of providing the service, force higher education institutions today to rework on their educational models and add value at each and every aspects in their service [1-3]. This has become a high priority for institutions either struggling for existance or striving for excellence.

Higher education is a change-resistant enterprise. Academic culture, faculty governance and an unusual bureaucracy all work together to slow down evolution. In part, this has contributed to the enormous survival success of old branded higher education institutions. In order to improve the quality of higher education, institutions have to think beyond presently adopted credit based systems [4-5]. By adding competancy to the students and the system, through innovations and best practices, the institutions can add value to the education system to address large social and economic challenges that began about a decade ago and are in full swing now. These include rapidly rising costs of tuition, a growing need for more and repeated education for employment, global market competition challenges etc. Competency-based education provides the flexibility students need, focuses on assessing learning mastery needed to be a well-functioning, and is affordable because it is scalable in ways that create efficiencies [6-7].

II. SIMS - AN OVERVIEW

Srinivas Institute of Management Studies (SIMS) is established with the vision of imparting quality education and expanding opportunities to all the aspirants and across all realms of knowledge. It envisages to become a centre of excellence to serve as change agent in the society by generating a pool of human resources trained in science and technology, management and social service. The college offers bachelor and master degree programmes in Business Management and Computer Science and Bachelor degree in Commerce and Masters Degree in Social Work. The vision and mission of the institute are well publicized though its website, calendar, prospectus etc. The curriculum provided for these courses are effectively improved by resorting to action planning through developing academic calendar, teaching plan, teachers diary and study material. In addition to the specialization required to be taught, the institute offers dual specialization facility of its own, and equip students to wider opportunities for employment and research. A large number of certificate programmes of short duration, customized to suit the students of all courses, are offered to promote skill development to enhance employability. Entrepreneurial talents are cultivated among the students by EDP cell. The institute offers orientation programmes, guest lectures, study tours, video lectures, field practicums, NGO internship, industrial exposures, student exchange programmes and international educational visits also as supplements to the curriculum. It supports research based learning, exposure based learning, experiential learning, event management learning, field work based learning and laboratory based learning. Value addition is incorporated in teaching through adding extra sessions over and above the prescribed syllabus for insight development. Weak students and slow learners are supported through tutorials, counselling and mentoring.

In order to encourage research culture, a number of research centres have been constituted in the areas of expertise available with faculty in-charge of these centres. Opportunity is provided in the curriculum delivery to promote scientific thinking, spirit of questioning, expression of creative ideas, experimentation and learning by doing. Appraisal of faculty performance is done through comprehensive performance management systems and the feedback is communicated to all concerned. It is found that through this there is an increase of about 20 percent performance each year. Students appraise the faculty through a structured format on a variety of parameters. Transparency is maintained in internal assessment of students through taking into account internal examination, assignment presentations and attendance in awarding internal marks. Students with attendance shortage for genuine reasons are encouraged to attend additional classes through its innovative '*Save a year*' programme. Absence from class is substantiated through declaration signed by parents. Both internal examination marks and attendance are communicated to the parents regularly by short message service (sms).

Faculty development programmes are periodically conducted. Consultancy and research are encouraged. Institution takes efforts in attracting eminent persons to visit the campus and interact with teachers and students. Most of the faculty have either secured Ph.D. or pursuing research leading to Ph.D. The institution strives to address cross cutting issues such as environment, gender etc. through conducting programmes related to the theme. Industry – institution – community interactions are maintained through village adoption, organizing job fairs, and short duration NGO internship which involve all students. Grievance committee, sexual harassment committees and anti-ragging committee have been constituted to ensure that students and staff have a hassle free life. A lot of welfare measures have been introduced for the staff of the institute. Alumni are invited as distinguished guests to chair programmes. An Alumni association has been constituted for networking, relating to placement assistance, admissions etc. Student council gives opportunity for students to elect their student representatives and participate in forum activities, annual seminars, conferences through fund raising, and sponsorship from public. College magazine, news letter and e-magazines bring out creative talent among students. The administration of the institute is decentralized.

The institute maintains high academic result at the level of 100% in P.G. Courses and reaching near to that in U.G. courses. Placement cell provides career guidance to prepare the students for placements. All alumni are well settled in jobs or successful entrepreneurs managing their enterprise. Introduction of events of innovations and best practices have resulted in substantial increase in the standard of the institute to the merit requirement of an accreditation agency. During these 14 years of its efforts of preparing young men and women for challenges in life, Srinivas Institute of Management Studies sincerely tried to impart comprehensive knowledge or **Samagra Jnana** and actual experience of the perfection or **Vijnana** to its students.

III. INNOVATIONS AT SIMS

The college has introduced several innovations which have helped to create a positive impact on the functioning of the college. Table 1 contains the Innovations introduced in the college during last 4 years.

Table 1 : Innovations introduced at Srinivas Institute of Management Studies

S. No.	Curricular Aspects	Teaching-Learning &	Research, Consultancy &	Infrastructure & Learning	Student support & Progression	Governance, Leadership &

		Evaluation	Extension	Resources		Management
1	Website as information resource	Use Video Lectures of NPTEL	Weblinks to online journals	Inspirational quotations on wall display	Wi-Fi Internet facility	Biometric attendance system
2	Dual specialization offered by college	Open book examination	Increased reference facility for Research & Projects	Student activity photos on display	Celebration of graduation day with Gown & scroll	CCD cameras in all classrooms
3	Separate departmental libraries	Compulsory chapter wise assignment	Social service programmes under own NGO	LCD fitted classrooms	Zero balance account for the students & ATM facility inside the campus	Attempt for solar based green energy campus
4	Value added chapters in all subjects	Weightage for attendance in internal assessment	Student group projects	Use of amplifiers in class	Counselling services	Student participation in organising events
5	Information on additional online courses like eDX.	Virtual investment training on share market	Establishment of Research centres to promote faculty research	CRT monitors replaced by LCD monitors	Photos of academic achievers on display	E-placement brochure and e-magazine
6	Book exhibitions in the college	Submission of assignment through E-mail	Computer literacy classes for poor children	Locker facility on rent	Job fairs to attract employers to campus	Honouring alumni as distinguished guests
7	Subject wise library books in college website	Regular faculty development programmes	Student programs in special schools for physically challenged children.	Access to high speed internet for students	Paid internship in NGOs	Medical insurance facility for students and staff
8	Provision for downloading old question papers from website	CCTV surveillance of University exams	Old cloth collection for supporting local NGOs.	Laptop computer charging facility in classroom	Photos of academic achievers on website	EDP cell to develop young entrepreneurs
9	Competitive exam books in library collection	Foreign professors in the college campus	Blood donation camp by social service cell	Barcode based identification of library books	SMS information to parents	Open door policy to meet Principal
10	Classes begin with silent prayer to recall the goal	Declaration in case of absence in class	Institutional Consultancy priority areas provided in website	Well furnished classrooms	Youth empowerment efforts through Vivekananda study circle.	Principal collecting feedback through regular class visit
11	Book bank facility	Additional alert mechanism for attendance shortage	Student developed software usage for library	Ramp facility for disabled students	Traditional day celebration by students	Verification of ongoing classes & documentation
12	Additional time faculty availability for consultation	Student exchange programme	Student developed software for Office automation	-	MOU with nationalized banks for student education loan	-

IV. BEST PRACTICES AT SIMS

Time tested innovations are implemented in the form of best practices when they are worked out into a system which is durable and endurable [8-11]. Some of the best practices adopted and implemented in SIMS are listed in Table 2:

Table 2 : Best Practices at SIMS
1. Admission
The first come first serve model of the institution provides equal opportunity for students irrespective of their caste, religion, nationality, gender and poor academic performance.
2. Fees
Admission to backward students on subsidized fee lower than University approved fee in selected courses helps the students from backward community to access their education.
3. Attendance
The Save a Year programme of the institute enables students with marginal attendance shortage to make up for the requirement by attending additional classes to avoid losing a year.
4. Earnings
The Earn while you Learn programme of the college encourages and provides opportunity to students to support themselves by taking part-time jobs along with studies.
5. Teaching
Entry test and summarization of the class is used as a teaching technique
6. Performance
The college conducts mentorship programmes to support students, faculty serve as mentors
7. Employability
A variety of certification programmes customized to suit the needs and requirements of students bridge the gap in curriculum based learning.
8. Skill building
Skill development programmes have been introduced to build job-specific skills.
9. Improving proficiency
Group/team projects for the students particularly in computer science increases their proficiency in developing various application software.
10. Motivation
Best project of the year is awarded with prize annually, to encourage the quality of research projects by the students.
11. Student Involvement
Student developed software is used for computerization of college library and related information system.
12. Collective Learning
Subscription of business newspapers and regular weekly news review in groups encourages collective learning
13. **Developing Service Mindedness**

The institution encourages social service programmes involving students through its NGO.
14. Learning
Teaching Plan and study materials are prepared according to the syllabus with chapter end assignments in all courses and subjects.
15. Value addition
Apart from imparting learning through University curriculum, workshops, conferences, seminars, symposia etc. are conducted to provide value addition.
16. Extended facility
Library and computer facility are kept open for extended hours till late evenings and holidays.
17. Feedback
Student feedback is treated as a valuable output and is collected through a variety of ways such as feedback form, suggestion box, open door policy etc.
18. Monitoring
Comprehensive performance management system for self evaluation and rating of faculty by students.
19. Ensuring Transparency
Faculty members are involved in admission process**.** Internal assessment of students is based on explicit criteria.
20. Recognition
Graduation day is conducted in the traditional dress code.
21. Coaching
In addition to regular internal examinations, a preparatory examination is conducted including entire portions in the syllabus with duration and question pattern exactly similar to the University examinations to give simulation experience.
22. Welfare
Locker facility is provided to the students to make the classrooms mobile free and safe keeping of personal belongings.
23. Concern
Ramp and lift facility are shared with physically handicapped students.
24. Information dissemination
The college has a best practice of providing comprehensive information on each of the courses through a hand book.

V. INDIDUAL BEST PRACTICES

Apart from above each faculty follows one best practice in his teaching. A gist of the individual faculty best practice is provided below :

1. Entry Test - Summarization Teaching Model

This model developed by Prof. Aithal combines both positive and negative motivation and integrated into a best practice. According to this model each class of one hour duration starts with **silent prayer** for one minute to recall the career objective or goal of individual students. As an **entry test** a set of questions on the topic discussed in the previous class will be displayed on the board. In the mean time students will get time to think the right answer, while the attendance

is being taken. Students will be randomly picked to answer the entry test questions. The appreciation works as a positive motivation. After the teaching session, 2 to 3 students randomly picked are asked to **summarize** the class. The summarization opportunity for the students alerts the students throughout the class writing down the gist of the session and concentrate in the topic discussed in the class. The readiness in right answer can avoid possible shame thereby act as a negative motivation during s**ummarization**.

[Faculty 1]

2. ***Contextualization***

Making meaning by connecting curriculum to teaching and students experiences and skills is contextualization. The concept of contextualization involves applying various theories and concepts to everyday context in the student's life. The student is motivated to explore and think of examples where the particular context figure in their day to day life. They are channelized to go through a process of discovering the latent applications and meaning. The process of understanding comes by means of connecting new learning to previous knowledge. Assisting students make these connections strengthens newly acquired knowledge and increases student engagement with learning activities.

[Faculty 2]

3. Modified Brainstorming :

Brain storming is an effective technique for ensuring participation in the learning process. But almost everybody is afraid to use it because of the difficulty in managing complex and diverse ideas which come in the process. Unless careful, either the ideas generated become totally useless because it is not utilized for the required purpose and brain storming becomes just for the sake of it. Yet another danger is that it is counter-productive and the teacher get lost what is intended to convey. This could be overcome by the process of linking the ideas with the main theme of the class is summarized in stages on black board.

[Faculty 3]

4. Oral story telling (OST)

We have a profound need to tell and hear stories. It is how we share experience, understand each other, and create continuity. Every conversation is full of personal anecdote; every effort to explain shared customs and values need a tale; every bit of wisdom is best expressed by a story. The very way our minds think is in essence a story. Picturising ideas in the form of story helps retain it in memory.

[Faculty 4]

5. Milly (Most Important Lesson Learnt Yesterday)

This practice is being followed to achieve the goal of keeping the students continuously in touch with the subject. This is practiced by way of discussing with the students what they consider as most important learning in the last class. This gets best result if the participating students are given extra marks in their internal assessment. To ensure that there are no doubts, the discussion that is done in the class towards the end to clear their doubts.

[Faculty 5]

6. Z to A approach

Z to A approach is working backwards. It attempts to explain application first and then the concept. Personalized reflection about an experience and applying learning to arrive at the concept is the core of this best practice.

[Faculty 6]

7. TBX- (Team building exercises- From competition to collaboration)

The goals of this way of learning is to build better motivated students, bringing in creativity in class room, and better problem solving skills. In this process, emphasis on team building through activities, whether they are five-minute games or week-long assignments, to teach essential collaborative skills while helping students develop trust in each other and each other's abilities. Students are able to share their outcomes with others - resulting in pride in their accomplishments and reinforcing that learning is a constructive process rather than merely a process of fact retention.

[Faculty 7]

8. Exploding the Syllabus for topic based assignments

The Lecturer has to explode the syllabus of the subject which he teaches, to smaller topics. Each of these topics can be given to the students as Assignment to cover all the aspects related to the topic, which becomes a knowledge-bank on that subject.

[Faculty 8]

9. Business practice simulation

Virtual trading is a practice used for teaching finance management to students to show how online platforms can be used to replicate the real market scenarios so as to make the students aware of the nuances of Stock Market. Through interactive sessions using online platform and live market on display, students are made to learn the trading and investment in stock market by means of virtual trading. This practice requires continuous attention of students and open discussions in the class room.

[Faculty 9]

10. Corporate Lessons & Concepts (CLC Model)

This is a method by which the faculty familiarizes certain ways of the corporates such as language, style of working and jargons used by them, explained by means of story. The students are then asked to find out the latest concepts in the industry of their choice & share the same in the class.

[Faculty 10]

11. Teach the teacher

Today's students belong to a much smarter generetion - technologically and otherwise. It is indeed a challenge for the teacher to keep them engaged and engrossed in the classroom discussions and ensure that there is continued involvement and assimilation of the concepts taught, ideas shared learning imparted and skill development. By giving the students an opportunity to teach the teacher, conducting a class on their own in their own way they understand the concept better than what the teacher would have taught and to learn in a way it stays in the mind for a longer time.

[Faculty 11]

12. Idea Tracking Enablement Method (ITEM)

It is essential that teachers have to be effective speakers because their job itself is talking. In order to convey the idea best, it is essential that preparation be done before going to the class. This means that a good grasp of the subject is important. No lecture can be effective without properly organizing the thoughts. An application of mind mapping technique could make the lecture delivery effective, illustrative, elaborative, time bound and interesting. This is done in the following way : the topic of the lecture will form the main theme for the class. Start from the main theme, go forward and branch to a subtopic – discuss, elaborate, give examples, raise questions – and get back to the core theme. Move with it further and next branch to a subtopic. Keep doing the same. Foresee the number of branching based on the number of subtopics and

the time limit. Caution not to get lost in any subtopic so that you cannot get back to the main theme. This art of lecturing follows a 'tree branching', as the main theme and subtopics appear like a tree and its branches on sides.

[Faculty 12]

13. UTARA (Unified Technique for Achievement Related Action)

Self motivation is developed in students who are de-spirited by deprivations, through identifying poor performers and engaging them in conversation and counselling employing different techniques such as personal attention, problem clarification, insight stimulation, engagement, mutual encouragement and self -realization.

[Faculty 13]

14. Summarization and clarification

Towards the end of each session ask two or three students to summarize the session which was discussed in the class. This will help the students to recollect the points and clarify or supplement once again if they missed any points. This will also make the students more alert and teacher will get the feedback as well. This will also help the teachers to control the disturbing students in the class.

[Faculty 14]

15. Consistent Picto Learning

This is a technique which simplifies learning through picturization of the concept. Everyday glance at the picture will enable the person to imprint the idea in mind. The practice is aimed to educate the slow learners who cannot remember concepts. Concepts taught in the class are helped to be converted into charts or figures without change in the core meaning from which elaborations can be worked out.

[Faculty 15]

16. Hands-On Investigation and Analysis

Hands-on investigation and analysis of technical questions is done by guiding students in active and extended scientific inquiry and discussion through understanding the technical concepts and use of simulators.

[Faculty 16]

17. Concept to Mind Map

This approach attempts to explain the application part of a particular concept first and explain the effects of such applications through mind mapping. They are much quicker to make and much easier to remember and review, because of their visual quality, and application in solving real world problems.

[Faculty 17]

18. Sync Model

This is an attempt towards making the sessions more productive. During the normal lecture session, students will be addressed a new topic or concept. But students learning factor is improved a lot, if one makes students learn the concept at the abstract level even before the lecture session. This is done before winding up a session by disclosing the topic to be addressed in the next session.

[Faculty 18]

19. Group Study

Main objective of this is to encourage every one as members of a group and groups as teams to gain expertise in a battery of aptitude test. Fixing responsibility for individual students in group

study encourages accountability. It generates new ideas and solutions and encourages healthy competition in teams. Teachers can concentrate on weak students. Each group can concentrate on specific category of aptitude questions and develop expertise which they can share with others in other groups.

[Faculty 19]

20. Virtual Reality

The best practice called Virtual Reality means 'Viewing an unseen'. The major challenge for the teacher who teaches technical papers is that they find the subject difficult for teaching because the concepts are purely theory which cannot be visualised. Animated slide based teaching clearly give the idea about the subjects.

[Faculty 20]

21. Programming Champ

The aim of the practice is to facilitate learning through working in teams aspecially in the lab sessions. The practice is to group the students into a team of five or six members. Make one student the leader of the team. The leader should plan the work together with the members, make sure that he finishes his work and then help all his team members to finish their work within the stipulated time. The students come to know about the errors they encounter in programming and the strategies to resolve the errors. At the end of the semester, the best team leader is awarded. The best team leader is adjudged depending on the teams overall performance with respect to completion of the task and the way the teams understood the concept.

[Faculty 21]

22. Surprise Tests

Surprise tests are tests typically held for a small duration at the end of a class. These are tests typically held for a small duration at the end of a class to ensure that students do not lag behind as the subject is covered. The questions should ideally be attemptable by a regular, attentive student without preparation. A time based schedule can be adopted wherein the test is conducted on a particular week of a month or it can be curriculum based, wherein a test is conducted on the completion of a unit of the syllabus. One can also reduce the element of surprise by announcing a window of a few days during which a surprise test can be conducted on any day.

[Faculty 22]

23. Active Learning

Students do not learn much just sitting in classes listening to teachers, memorizing pre-packaged assignments, and spitting out answers. Active Learning is defined as any strategy that involves students in doing things and thinking about the things they are doing. They must talk about what they are learning, write reflectively about it, relate it to past experiences, and apply it to their daily lives.

[Faculty 23]

24. Open book exams

Open book exams are tests typically held for a small duration at the end of the each chapter. This ensure that students keep pace with the subject as it progress. The questions should ideally enable a regular attentive student to answer without preparation ahead. By allowing to consult the books, students get rid off fear for examinations and develop book reading habit.

[Faculty 24]

25. Exhibit Reality

It is a simulation exercise aimed at showing the practicality of the subject learnt, which enables students in understanding the concepts better. Students are divided into groups and are made to

exhibit various products or services. They would be going to various locations to learn and collect information. They would be exhibiting the products as well as presenting the unique features of the products and the various company policies on pricing, marketing, financing, etc.

[Faculty 25]

26. Learn a Word a Day

The concept is aimed to enrich the vocabulary of students. Vocabulary is one of the bottlenecks coming in the way of the students which freely conversing in English due to lack of confidence. Enrichment of vocabulary is achieved through a practice of one word a day. rigorous reading of news papers, abridged version of fictions and watching English talk shows of any topic. But these measures are easier said than done so long the students have the hiccups in the diction i.e., their inability to arrange words for their talk.

[Faculty 26]

27. Divide and Learn Method

This is a method of dividing an entire concept into smaller topics in order to make the students understand the concepts. Simple problems are given to be worked out until students understand the concepts and then move to difficult problems. Making students to understand practically is easier way of changing the mind set of students regarding the subject of study.

[Faculty 27]

28. Each one Teach One

The present day students are more techno-based rather than study- based. Therefore they are disinterested in listening classes as passive recipients. Through this practice, students interest in studies is enhanced by assigning opportunity to fellow students to learn from each other under the supervision of the teacher.

[Faculty 28]

29. Counselling and Case study analysis

Apart from the university prescribed syllabus, each module is taught through one appropriate case study. Wherever possible, practical insights are integrated through industry visits, videos, role plays etc. During the evaluation of the answer scripts, comments are made on how to improve the answers through incorporating these learnings. This gives better feedback on the intended focus areas in each area. Student counseling activity is undertaken as a follow-up to this on a weekly basis to monitor the progress.

[Faculty 29]

VI. ELOBORATION OF TWO BEST PRACTICES

(a) Comprehensive Performance Management System

1. Title of the Practice

Comprehensive Performance Management System through faculty self-evaluation & rating by head of the institute

2. Goal

In order to maintain the quality of teaching learning process at desired level, it is essential that the performance of the faculty is monitored on a regular basis. Since any assessment to be done alone by a superior has its own drawbacks, it is appropriate that each faculty being assessed should be given an opportunity for self-assessment on the same parameters. Even this is not sufficient because, the recipient or beneficiaries namely students are not getting an opportunity to assess their teachers, With this in view the college has adopted a comprehensive Performance Management System which gives scope for all the three components to be put together under one evaluation.

3. The Context

In the context of higher education, the quality of the faculty is a determinant for the effectiveness of teaching - learning, student development and institution building. It is therefore essential that the faculty maintain high quality capable of imparting the best required to the students. These for example, include improving the teaching style, use of varying teaching techniques, and involving students in the learning process. A true evaluations of the faculty helps in improving their capability through knowledge generation, involvement in research and consultancy, personality development and the contribution to the society. All the more, in the present time, it is important that a good teacher admired by the students who receive his services. In the light of this the faculty should strive to continuously improve while performing on the job in areas like research, consultancy, higher studies, technology adoption, and community service. He should foresee the challenges ahead and prepare himself for long term sustainability in the profession.

4. The Practice

Our model of faculty performance management is built on a overall grade point of 250 points which is subdivided into six areas of evaluation as shown below :

(1) Academic activities : This carries the highest score of 100 points. This include, Course Material Development, Planning & Scheduling classes, academic record keeping, knowledge and command of the subject, assignments and tutorials, administered to the students, presentation and communication skills, better evaluation practices, event management and student development activities, commitment to work ethics, and creativity and innovation in teaching learning process.

(2) Contribution to Institutional Activities : This carries 40 points under various performance criteria such as co-ordination of academic activities, student support systems, institutional support systems, and new initiatives for team involvement.

(3) Research, Publications and Consultancies : This carries a total of 25 grade points which is sub-divided into contributions to research and publications including Guidance to Students Projects, efforts made for obtaining funded projects. participation in sponsored projects, preparations and review of research papers, presentation in conferences and workshop and publications in journals.

(4) Professional activities & Self development Initiatives : This carries a total of 25 points under various performance criteria including initiatives for acquiring higher qualifications, recognition in professional societies, expert lectures delivered, chairing technical sessions, honours received, and such other recognition and achievement.

(5) Participation in student admission : This carries a total of 10 points under various performance criteria like involvement in admission of students, propaganda and publicity for enhancing admission, utilizing opportunity to spread the information of the courses and admissions to the college in various forms and networking through alumni for enhancing admission.

(6) Student assessment : This is a most important part of the assessment since, this has to be done by the students in a spirit of judicious review and confidentiality. The factors considered here are regularity, punctuality, time consciousness, preparation for classes, competency in the subject, syllabus completion in time, presentation skill (voice, clarity & language), methodology adopted in teaching, interaction with the student, and accessibility with the student outside the class. The portion 1-6 mentioned above are self assessment of the faculty which is matched with the assessment by the head of the institute. This gives an advantage for conveying a feedback on

the misgivings in one's own assessment of the self. The part 6 of the assessment is done exclusively by the students and is not affected by self or superior review. In our practice, we found that this rating yields a score of 175 points which is indicative of good performance and leaving evidence to success to suggest that there is scope for further improvement.

5. Evidence of Success

This system is unique in terms of measuring the performance involving them equally in the process. The result of the assessment is discussed with each faculty independently which gives an opportunity to improve their performance against target and developing insights on their weakness. Based on introducing this system, it is noticed that, the faculty involvement in developing study material, academic record keeping, administering assignments and tutorials, conducting internal examinations, fair assessment of the students, preparation for classes, use of various teaching techniques, knowledge and command of the subject, involving in admission process and maintaining interaction with the students. Faculty members also shown enhanced interest in research & publications. After the introduction of this system, there is an average increase of 20% in the performance of individual faculty annually. The college also conducts Faculty development Programme (FDP) in these areas which serve as benchmarks for enhancing performance. Ever since this system was introduced, there is evidence of marked improvement in student results, increased admissions, popularity for the institution, improvement in academic activities of the faculty. The overall learning atmosphere of the institution has improved and both students and faculty keep themselves fully busy on academic, co-curricular activities and extra-curricular activities.

6. Problems Encountered and Resources Required

At the time of introducing this system, the following problems were encountered and necessitated the resources to implement it.

- All faculty were open minded in their assessment of themselves. This created unmatchable inferences between two different faculty and also between self assessment and superior assessment. Faculty development programmes were conducted to orient them in this exercise which could overcome the problem.
- There was apprehension that student assessment may lead to biased inferences. Retaining objectivity and confidentiality could overcome this bias.
- Student assessment data were massive to process. This was overcome through standardization of the score.
- Opportunity has been provided to junior faculty who cannot advance in professional activity by substituting it with involvement in student admission process.

(b) Certification Program for enhancing employability skills.

1. Title of the Practice

Certification Program for enhancing employability skills.

2. Goal

The existing curriculum for all courses suffers limitation particularly in two aspects. One is the knowledge gap which means that the alarming increase in the new knowledge acquisition emerging from multitude of research studies and numerous theoretical writings has not been incorporated in the curriculum from time to time. Small and piece mill measures in the form of

syllabus revision often do not suffices. This obviously result in not being able to cope with newer circumstances, work and context. Added to this is the problem of skill deficiency which hinters employability. Keeping this in view, the institute has evolved a number of skill development certificate programs which could be offered simultaneously while doing the course.

3. The Context

Feedback from employers and alumni revealed that drastic improvement is required for equipping the students to fit to the present day. As a result of extensive consultation and discussions, it was realized that programs for enhancement of skills may be introduces to be offered to the students to equip them. Since the skill requirement vary across all disciplines of study as well as within each discipline vis a vis the nature of job handled by a specific incumbent. This was a major challenge. Identifying experts both internal and external to offer these programmes was yet another challenge. Since, the major part of the duration of the course is spent on teaching and learning subjects in the curriculum, finding the required time available to introduce this parallel to the regular course of study was yet another challenge. The tight schedule of working hours and course requirement often inhibit the students from committing to anything extra. Keeping in mind these challenges, the institution introduced short duration certification programmes for both undergraduate and post graduate courses which are relevant to the job requirements of the course and related to their interest. These certificate programmes were introduced purely optional and the institute provides pass certificates under its name & seal.

4. The Practice

The college has indentified a list of about 36 certificate programs for the P.G. Courses and 18 certificate programs for under graduate programmes. Further this is divided between the different semesters of the course. In every semester, the course co-ordinator will choose the required number of certificate programmes to be offered in that semester. The total duration of each certificate program is 6 - 8 hours extending over 5-7 days. Largely it is offered during the middle of every semester and the working hours are adjusted without affecting the regular courses adversely. In a given semester almost 09 certificate programs will be given in P.G. Courses and 04 programs in undergraduate courses. 100 percent attendance is compulsory to appear for the examination and the proficiency is measured before pass result is granted. The range of certificate programmes are grouped under different areas as shown in table 3.

Table 3 : Range of certificate programmes.

S. No.	Area	Programme
1	Technology related	Mobile Business, Animation and visual effects Investment banking Cloud computing Android operation system & applications Nanotechnology & Quantum Computing
2	Human skills related	Human resource development Counselling Human rights NGO management

		Industrial & labour law Business Communication Spoken English Business correspondence Event management KASH enrichment Corporate Yoga & mind control
3	Basic computer knowledge related	Tally, Excel & Access Spread sheet techniques Hardware and networking E-Business website development Linux and open source software Tally accounting software Oracle certified professional Sun certified Java professional Lindo & Gambit operations research software
4	Future challenges related	Blue ocean strategy and green business, Strategic management in IT sector Cyber law & IT security CA-CPT & IPCC
5	Business application related	R-Statistical computing, SPSS /PSPP Statistical software Online Investment Quantitative analysis using MATLAB/OCTAVE Retail marketing & Brand management Enterprises Resource Planning Nanotechnology commercialization & business opportunities
6	Entrepreneurship & Own business related	Entrepreneurship Development

Indian higher education suffers from its curriculum addiction and intensive programmes which often takes the students to death without being able to expand. The high profile teaching faculty are not to prepared to offer additional services. The institutions lack flexibility in imparting what is actually required for the students. The students most often are not able to recognize, what would benefit them before they come to experience ground realities. Popularizing institution offered courses has its own limitations of not able to motivate the aspirants.

5. Evidence of Success

In a short period of introducing certificate programme, there is a clear evidence of success measured in terms of number of programmes launched during the semester, number of classes conducted on each program, number of students offering the course, attendance level of the students, proficiency gained, feedback from teachers and overall enthusiasm. Over a period of time, the institute expect increased competition in its admission to all courses which can be contributed largely due to the value adds of through certificate courses. Time and again these all courses will be reviewed in terms of their content, duration and relevance.

The review result indicates that there is a considerable improvement in the following :
1. Successful performance in present job
2. Ability to use technology in work place
3. Obtaining additional consideration in securing job, promotion etc.
4. Preference in obtaining internship in leading institutions
5. Decreased dependencies on external training agencies
6. Cost saving for the organization in terms of additional expenses for training.
7. Grater job satisfaction and efficiency in work
8. Low level of attrition.
9. Increased instances of own entrepreneurial ventures
10. Better self management

6. Problems Encountered and Resources Required

Since these certificate programs are offered over and above the curriculum, the students have hesitation to come forward and receive it. Therefore, so much of motivation has become necessary. Secondly, many students are not aware of the merits and advantages these programs would offer in terms of securing jobs and ensuring performance. As an institution which has pioneered such innovations, popular acceptance may take time. Many students find that the work load will be too much by volunteering for such courses. Apart from above, indentifying suitable courses which have futuristic demand is also tuff. Sparing the time and additional preparation of the faculty of the college acts as a burden.

The resources required are the following :
1. Manpower - Tapping expertise as well as upgrading the existing faculty for the conduct of the programmes.
2. Cost - The entire certificate programmes are offered free of cost. The institution bares all the expenses.
3. Time - Additional working hours are fitted into the regular schedules through substitution of filling.
4. Infrastructure - The classrooms, library and laboratory are available with the institute.
5. Transcript - The course plan as well as the pass certificate are provided under the seal of the college.

VII. CONCLUSION

The introduction of innovations and best practices in SIMS has resulted in changed philosophy and approaches to teaching-learning process. The managerial theory namely -Theory X and Theory Y propounded by McGregor [11] as applied to students in an educational institution has given way to new set of assumptions based on theory Y. The following are the modified assumptions based on theory X.

- Most students are basically lazy and do not want to study. They are coming for studies because of their parents who force them.
- They have no interest in attending classes and writing assignments.
- Internal marks are serving as motivators.
- They do not take examinations seriously.

- High marks as a desire is cherished by most of the students, but they are not prepared to toil and get it.
- They have taken the course only for the sake of getting a job.
- Examinations are treated as botheration and unnecessary burdon. They want to pass the course merely spending specified years in the course without any evaluation.
- If any job is offered, they are ready to leave the course.

The following are the assumptions based on theory Y.

- All students are not basically lazy. Their interest in studies could be created by the teacher using improved methods of teaching and closely working with them.
- With constant support and advise, they will attend all classes. Wrong temperament of the teachers, love for more leisure and wrong friends are influencing to keep away from the classes.
- Internal marks are good motivators if utilized appropriately by the teachers. Unrealistic targets, harsh deadlines and wrong distribution of marks make them disillusioned.
- Students take examinations seriously if evaluation is suiting to reward their capability. Wrong methods of evaluation and wrong practice of examinations make it meaningless.
- Desire to get high marks have to be accompanied by preparedness to work more. The fault cannot be attributed to students. It is a fault of the system.
- Job has become important for living. Driven by the pressure of circumstances they ignore to become qualified before taking up a job.
- The low importance for examinations is because the employers no longer look at their performance and grades.
- Job opportunities are few which tempt students to abandon studies. Given sufficient opportunity, they will stick on to studies.

Innovations have no end. They continue to influence the quality of education and therefore higher educational institutions should constantly pursue adopting more and new innovations and convert them into best practices.

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