TRANSFORMATION FOR EXCELLENCE: ROLE OF ACADEMIC LEADERSHIP IN BUILDING UNIVERSITY THROUGH BEST-IN-PRACTICES

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Abstract- In this paper, it is argued that the university is the pace-setter for the present and future generations. University is like corporate, Vice Chancellor CEO, campus the shop floor solving present and would be future issues faced by the community. VC being the peak of intellectuals is expected to work as a light house for the society. The call for the 21st Century is presented and the VC's role is enunciated specifying certain competencies, traits and skills so that the goals set for the 21st Century education can be met leading to quality life for people, their well-fare and well-being with sustainability for education and national economic development.. It is believed that the article will be of interest to all concerned.

Key words- University, skills, BNM model, SQM, IE approach, Best-in-practices.

1. INTRODUCTION

Man has been struggling in every century for excellence so as to achieve his total evolution, well-being and well-fare of the present and future generations. Like other creatures of the Nature, education and training from the time immemorial is considered a key tool for transforming (human) kids for such excellence enriching their knowledge and wisdom. Universities/institutes are expected setting the pace for such excellence/development. University is a power house generating ideas that can provide quality life to the people. Thus, university is the light house for society. The most pertinent component of university helps emitting this knowledge-light is the teacher who is solely responsible for building university's academic environment. Vinoba Bhave, therefore, says that every teacher is a roaming university and s/he is a path finder (Gatu Vit), a finder of new concepts, pace and what not. The Vice-Chancellor (VC), the CEO of the university, is the academic leader. Nevertheless, academic leadership is more complex than the leadership of any MNC for VC deals with Human and Social capital, the prime source that generates any other resources. Treat, therefore, university as a corporate, VC as CEO, academic excellence as business outcome, adapt overlapping navigation of physical, organizational and information network as the business model, campus as the shop floor solving current and future problems of community and market, looking ahead at least for 10 years for setting direction and pace for development and more importantly setting best-in-practices to achieve all this. Naturally, establishment of best-in-practices is one of the most significant tasks of VC. Obviously, VC, the peak of intellectuals, is expected to lead the university in line with the objectives set for the 21st Century.

The national study sponsored by the Association for Higher Education Effectiveness provides a profile of vice presidential leaders in the emerging functions of institutional effectiveness within colleges and universities in US. This study is an excellent research in the matter [1].Victor deals with some traits for VCs like money management know-how, political sensibility, boundless compassion, entrepreneurial spirit, analytics expertise, communication

chops, tech smarts, trend watcher , class monitor, student champ, etc. [2].Brian Taylor advises VCs and Provost from his own experiences like Provosts must take responsibility for making hard decisions and communicating them to others, learn to live with the fact, keep your bags packed, always tell the truth, as administrators, we cannot control the behavior of others, etc. [3]. Kelly Field in her book identifies 5 skills for successful President of tomorrow, namely, analyzing the business, innovating, building relationships, careful communicating and managing a crisis [4].

2. THE 21ST CENTURY AND THE UNIVERSITY EDUCATION

The 21st Century is for knowledge society having the following five dimensions [5]:

1. Economic sector: switching from goods producing economy to service economy.
2. Occupational distribution: emergence of professional and technical class.
3. Axial principle: innovation is knowledge based.
4. Future orientation: the control of technology and technological assessment.
5. Decision making: creation of a new "intellectual technology", computer and ITC being its prime tools.

Further, the World Conference on Higher Education held on 9th October 1998, adapted the World Declaration: vision and action that calls for such matters as equity of access, principle of solidarity, worldwide true partnership amongst institutions of higher education, encourage an understanding of global issues, the role of democratic governance and skilled human resources, the need for living together with different cultures and values, etc. [6].

2.1 Student's skills for the 21st Century [7]

This entails the following skills for the 21st Century students identified by the business leaders, educational leaders and policy makers:

a) Core subjects: English, world languages, arts, mathematics, economics, science, geography, history and government and civics.
b) 21st Century theme: global awareness, financial, economic, business and entrepreneurial, civic and health literacy.
c) Learning and innovative skills: creativity, innovation, critical thinking, problem solving, communication and collaboration.
d) Information, media and technology skills: information, media and ICT literacy.
e) Life and career skills: flexibility, adaptability, initiative, self direction, social and cross cultural, productivity, accountability, leadership and responsibility.

Obviously, in view of the World's direction for the 21st Century, that none of our universities appear within the first 200 world top universities; and the national issues like obtaining quality education at affordable cost, existing divides in many respects, access to education, low GER, unemployment, etc, the task of extending excellent academic leadership for transforming our next generation into excellence is an up-hill task for VCs.

UNO advocates sustainable education [8]. The US General Assembly on 11th September 2012 also passed a resolution in this regard making several provisions like RTE, excellent education beyond primary level to younger generations, the custodian of future, greater

international cooperation, adapting good practices in sustainability management on campuses; in their communities, etc.

3. THE VC AND BEST-IN-PRACTICES

Best-in-practices in place in universities are essential for transforming for excellence. Such practices will help VCs to excel in four functional areas: people leading, influencing, communicating and guiding. Barnett Berry on having pointed out some considerations for teaching for the future, like, Googled learners, diverse student-body, global jobs, etc., has identified four emergent realities like a transformed learning environment, digital tools allowing students to learn 24/7, developing in-demand skills, expert teachers creating seamless connections between learning in cyberspace and in brick-and-mortar schools, differentiated professional pathways allowing teachers with different skills and career trajectories to maximize their respective strengths, and to develop 600,000 "teacherpreneurs". Further, Berry has proposed six interlocking levers for transformation, i.e., **i**nvest in public engagement, **r**ethink school finance systems, redefine teacher preparation and licensing, cultivate improved working conditions that make high-need schools easier to staff, **r**eframe accountability to promote 21st-century student learning **and** transform teachers' unions into professional guilds [9,10]. Tharuma Rajah has prescribed some traits for Indian CEOs like single-minded focus on growth, working to make India great, adapting ideas and technology to Indian conditions, entrepreneurship, etc. The proposed Best-in-practices based on CEO's competency model can be summarized as [11]:

1. **Socially responsible business excellence**
   Have Value, Vision, Mission, Objectives, Priority and Quality Policy statement. To improve productivity through such philosophies as Lean, TQM, disruptive innovating colleges, and JIT making use of tools like 5S, Kaizen, Zero defects, etc. [12-14] Strategic planning for growth, expansion, development, cost/wastage reduction, best-in-practices for Strategic Quality Management (SQM) and internal quality assurance cell [15], financial management, Human Capital Management, Talent Management, MRP, ERP, e-governance, process and performance management, academic audit, vibrant and agile university Act/Statutes/ academic programmes/Code of Conduct, Safety and Security, landscaping, etc. Adapt overlapping navigating physical, organizational and information network as business model (see Exhibit "A").

2. **Inner strength cluster**
   Promote self-managing leadership [16], employee's achievement focused mind-set up, design and development of unambiguous roles, rules, routines, responsibilities and cordial relationships (5Rs) for employees so as to achieve effective, efficient and economical functioning of university affairs, independent, interdependent and life-long learning skills, maturity, doing right things the first time, fund generation, strong base for R & D, aligning personal goals with university goals.

3. **Energizing the team cluster**
   Go for team building, cohesiveness, empowerment, joint decision making, funding, personal growth/development and reward system.

4. **Managing the environment cluster**
   To have close networking with national/international institutes, national policy makers, State, local/global market and community.

4. SCOPE FOR FUTURE WORK

In view of the poor performance of the Indian universities on the international plane; and the scenario of tertiary education in the country, lot need to be done to realize the dream of the nation to be the world super power. This can only be achieved through improving functioning of our universities. All areas of university functions are naturally prone to intense research to bring the train on track.

5. CONCLUSION

Universities help achieve or realize the aspirations of a country for the present and future generations as well. VC is the CEO and university campus is the shop floor that helps resolve community/national present and future problems and challenges and sets direction and pace for sustainable development of community contributing to the quality of life of people, their well-being and well-fare. The 21st Century talks about knowledge society, and businessmen, leaders, educationists and stalwarts have identified the students/work force skills for this Century. UNO and all advanced countries are already speedily marching on the path. The VCs of Indian universities are therefore called upon to shoulder such an up-hill task. For the role of VCs; four core competency areas, namely, socially responsible business excellence, inner strength cluster, energizing the team cluster and managing the environment cluster are identified; and for transforming students into excellence some best-in-practices like SQM, Kaizen, Zero Defects, application of Lean tools, 5S, MRP, reward system, process and performance management, etc., have been proposed. It is believed the article is of interest to all concerned.

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Exhibit "A"

Some Tools and practices
BNM Model

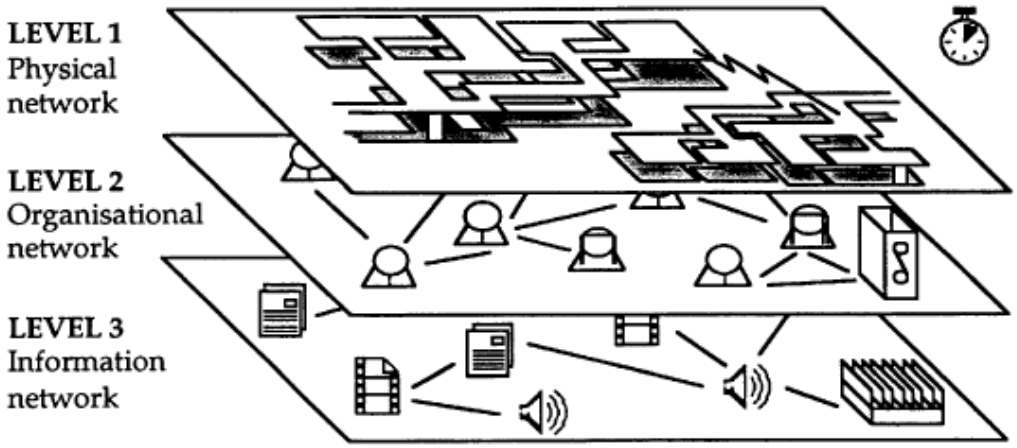

Fig. 1: Interactive pedagogical implications of Business Navigator Model [12].

Strategic Quality Management (SQM) Model

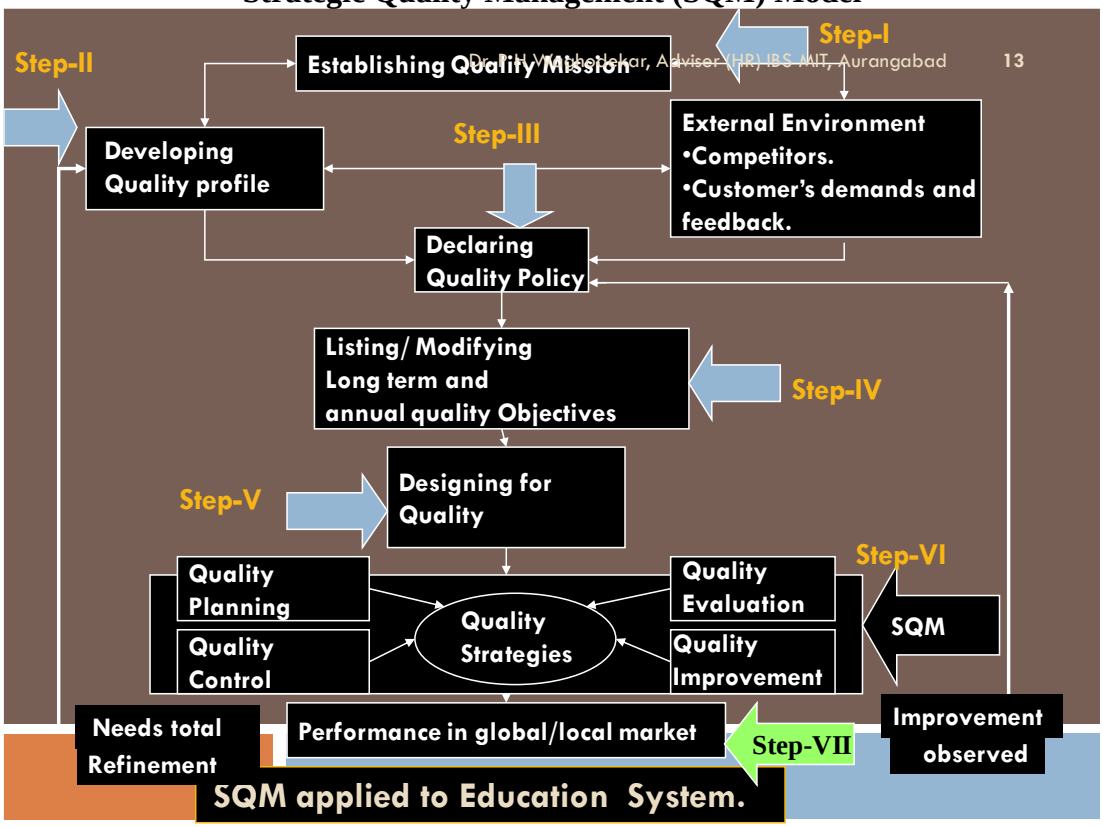

Fig. 2: SQM model [15].

Process and Performance Management model

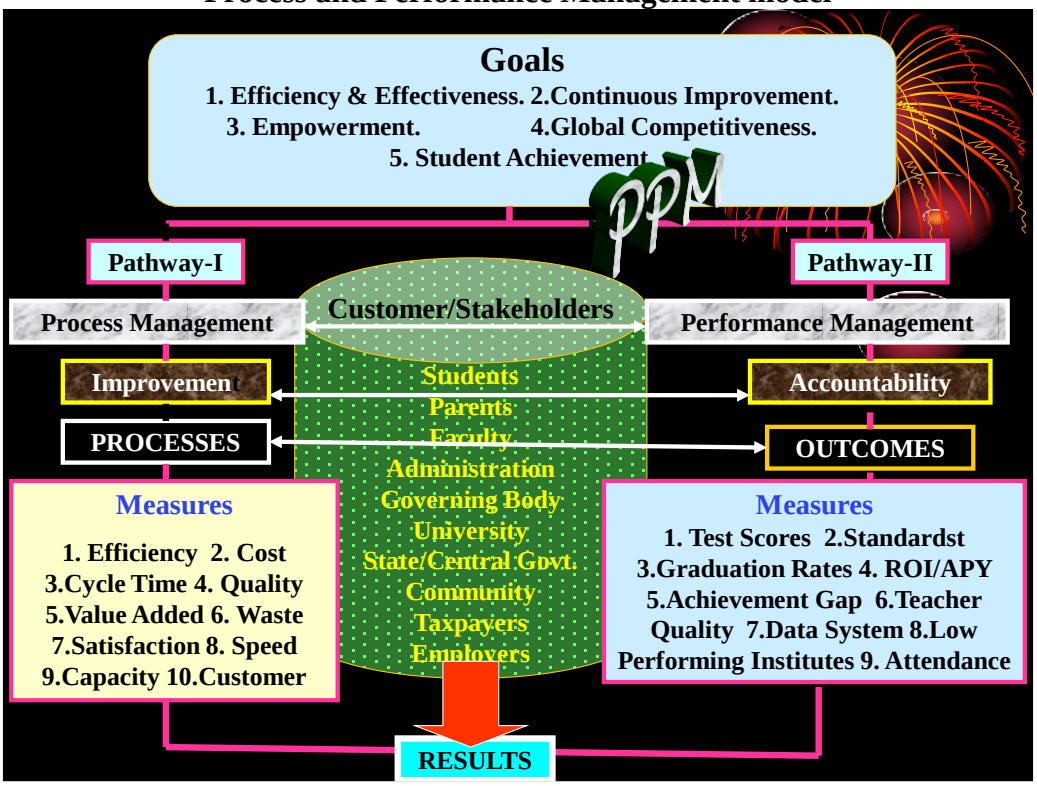

Fig. 3: Process and Performance Management model [8, 14].

Improving productivity through Industrial Engineering (IE) tools

Sr. No.	IE Approach	Potential Areas	Potential Benefits
1	PDCA cycle	Classroom teaching, administration, Lab work	10-15% time saving, material cost saving 5%
2	Work simplification	Library books issue, assignments evaluation, experimentation, office procedures, unit test, industrial visits, intra-inter communication.	10-20 % time saving, lead time reduction, ease of supervision, effective communication.
3	Standardization	Lab-books design, seminar/project template, lecture notes, MRP. Department. Load, number of faculty/staff, and talent management and acquisition.	Effective database, MRP, cost reduction 10-20 %.
4	Kaizen teams (Quality Circles)	All areas of functioning	Continuous improvement. (or value addition)
5	Cause-effect diagram	Results monitoring, Hostel Management, ragging/addiction/ drug prevention.	Identification of a process factors and sub-factors.
6	5S	Workshop, Labs, library, sanitation	Neatness, easy retrieval, orderly approach.

7	3M (Muda, Mura, Muri)	Classroom/lab teaching, workshop/ office procedure,	Lead time reduction 20-30%, waste elimination.
8	Lean Thinking (philosophy)	Stores, records, gym, sports, events	Material saving 10-30%, lead time reduction, 10-20%
9	Zero defects	Administration, service books and other records, lab/theory conduct	Quality services, moral boost up
10	Jidoka	Vital processes	Individual empowerment.
11	Poka-Yoke	Trivial and other main functions	Mistake-proofing, Right First Time
12	Andon	Principal and HOD	Real time quality control.
13	SMED	Switching over to new batches/tasks	Time and money saving,
14	KANBAN	Inventory: stocks and materials	Cost saving 10-20%.
15	Gembutsu	Principal, HOD, Librarian, W/S	Quantitative database.
16	TQM	Institute wide scope involving peon to principal.	TQM culture, self-leadership.

Table 1: A few potential areas of education sector where IE approaches can prove rewarding [8, 14]

Ishikawa Diagram

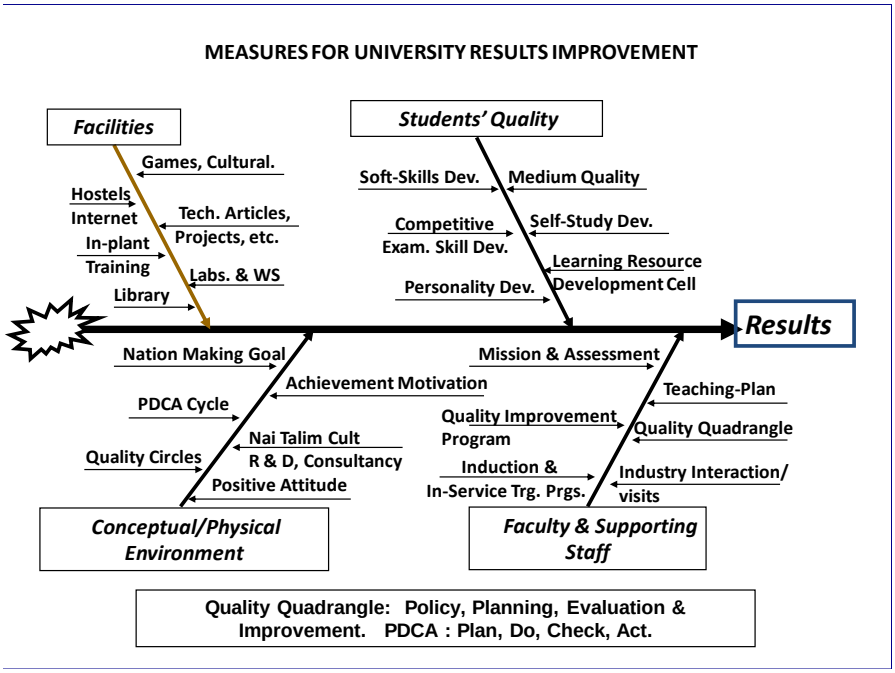

Fig. 4: Ishikawa diagram [12].

Zero Defects (Please first read the **story)**

Apple iPhone – Made in Japan Posted: 11 Mar 2012 09:30 PM PDT

Apparently the Apple Company decided to have some of its iPhone parts manufactured in Japan as a trial project. In the specifications, they set out that they will accept only 5 defective parts per 20,000. When the delivery came in there was an accompanying letter.

'We, Japanese people, had a tough time understanding American Business practices. But the five defective parts per 20,000 have been separately manufactured and have been included in the consignment in a separate packaging clearly mentioned

'Defective pieces as per requirement, not for use'. Hope the products are to your satisfaction.'

How to use Zero Defects (ZD) in educational institute (Teaching-Learning Process (TLP))?

1. To plan meticulously TLP and see to it that performance maintains Zero Deviation from the planned.
2. To distribute a leaflet well in advance to all students regarding full Semester activities-schedule.
3. First day of Semester opening: distribute a leaflet containing a list of reference books and published papers; discuss overall planning with emphasis on Outcome Based Education. Closing day of Semester: Concluding interaction.
4. To maintain 100 % achievement in theory, tutorial and practical hours conducted.
5. To cover 100 % syllabus.
6. To organize one industrial visit per course and 2 expert-talks.
7. To conduct two class-tests.
8. To discuss two articles from International Journals.
9. To have continuous and comprehensive assessment of Term Work, Assignments, etc. No accumulation at the fag end of Semester.
10. To engage periods/practical during holidays to maintain 100% achievement.
11. To promote more interaction in the class and outside, encourage students to ask questions.
12. To get monthly feedback from students and act upon it.
13. To use Gantt chart to monitor one's performance-progress: Planned vs. Performed.
14. To use in TLP extensively IT tools for lecture notes, presentation, lab-journal, international articles, lesson planning, question bank, on-line test, virtual-lab, etc.
15. To encourage students' participation/involvement in teaching-learning process.
16. To solve three years' question papers.
17. To make the students aware of latest development in the area (out of syllabus), relevance and connectivity of the subject with industry world and other subjects.

If one follows ZD, quality is naturally and automatically assured!

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