

## The Two Worlds

The Board of Governor of IMX Institute was very keen for faculty development programmes and case/course material development. The Board had approved a perspective plan way back in 1992-93 but not much progress was seen. In the year 2000, the institute started Ph.D. programme, but it could not scale up and in 15 years up to 2015, only about 3 dozen doctoral students graduated. Nothing, however, could happen for sustained, lifelong exercise for faculty development at different levels in a concerted manner. For developed of inhouse faculty allowance for attending conference in country and abroad were introduced but it was availed by few young faculty member, that too for participating only in international conferences. Independent research by senior faculty member was at very low key and most were quite satisfied by adding their name to research papers prepared by doctoral student, mandated for publication. On the course material front, hardly anything happened despite a good number of faculty members having been sent abroad for case development workshops and programme. Writing books was rare and did not get encouragement.

While the new director who joined in 1999 encouraged organization of national and international seminars and conferences, his successor, Dr. Vikas, who joined in 2003 and reigned for over 10 years detested it and felt it was a waste of time and money and that the faculty used the money to go for excursion in the name of attending conferences. For grooming the faculty of other management schools, though Board was very keen and wished to create a faculty development centre, successive efforts of putting proposals to MHRD (Ministry of Human Resource Development) failed as proposals typically sought, huge grants for non-recurring and recurring of expenses, (which had a huge component of honorarium to faculty in line with rate for sponsored training programmes (which was treated as consultancy). The Institute's open MDP were limping with not so impressive turnout, but sponsored training was a good revenue and surplus generator. The Board appreciated it and was happy with the ever increasing size of corpus fund though sponsored training and increase in MBA fees (which had gone up 4 fold in 7 years).

One of the reasons for failure of open faculty development programme was costing. The Director and successive MDP (Management Development Programmes) Chairmen were aiming at rates as high as those for sponsored MDPs which was 5-10 times of what the open FDP's participants could bear, although the rates that open FDP participants could bear could cover all the out of pocket costs and a good part of facilities were lying idle (full expenses were being incurred for maintenance and up keep. The building expenditure was already paid by MHRD and thus no charge for that was needed. The Institute could support 8-10 FDP's at low cost which was within the reach of FDP participants.

The other major problem was faculty reluctance. After meeting the minimum workload requirement, many were keen write either a research paper to present in an international conference or earn sumptuous honorarium by taking classes in sponsored training programmes.

Remaining were content with gossiping, politicking and bickering after meeting the minimum work load requirement, especially full professors, who had nothing to look forward to gain (like further promotion) or lose. The academic administration position was not respected as they were perceived to be doled out to those whom director liked.

Some diehard optimists who tried to engage in other things even then, had to face various hurdles. Organising conferences & seminars, open faculty development programme, which

were more demanding tasks, did not find place even in the workload norms of faculty, leave alone any incentive earning or appreciation from the director. If one came forward to conduct two programmes, the director would not allow more than one. He never inaugurated or met the participants of open FDP's. Encourage by such attitude of director, the staff of MDP office also threw spanners by asking to get repeated approvals from MDP Chairman/Director, even after all-inclusive approvals were given by the director. One assistant went to the extent of telling a senior professor that institute had stopped providing course material and the coordinator (the professor) should seek special permission for Xeroxing the course material/case material (which the professor had prepared with extensive efforts) as the material was about 200 pages. The professor retorted that he would not seek any such approval, but if the material was not prepared for participants, he will abstain from the programme as he could not conduct any class without the course material (case material) which was going to be a basis for class discussion. The coordinator occasionally had to pay taxi fares for guests he invited for few classes or requested them to bear it themselves the programme assistant would create hassles in settling payments. Once a Board member of IMX came for a lecture and gave claim for taxi fare of Rs. 600/- on a piece of paper. The assistant later asked the coordinator to get the guest's signature on the claim, which meant the coordinator had to pay as much amount from his pocket to send a person by taxi to get the signature costing Rs. 600/-. He paid the bill himself to settle the issue.

Things did not change much even after the director Dr. Vikas relinquished office. The Acting Director (AC), Dr. Nagendra, when requested by Professor Abhimanyu in October 2014 (who was the only faculty member who was conducting one open FDP every year even after retirement for last three years, free of any charge), the AC suggested that since he was now retired, a faculty member who is in regular service of the institute should conduct the programme. From where to get such faculty was a moot point. If the any one or more of the 7 regular faculty members were keen to do that, Prof. Abhimanyu did not have to do after retirement. Prof. Abhimanyu somehow convinced a young assistant professor Dr. Virendra to formally coordinate the programme.

Dr. Virendra accepted the request and the proposal was put up to the AC for approval. The Director then said he did not wish to use his discretion and would like to work through system and referred the proposal to MDP Chairman (another assistant professor) who decided to discuss the matter with MDP committee and formulate a policy for FDP before deciding the issue.

After 3 months, the MDP Chairman informed that Rs. 15000/- be charged as registration fee for FDP. This was above Rs. 10000/- which the programme was allowed to be charged by the Governing Board of a professional body under whose aegis the programme was to be done. In the past the director had been abiding by the uniform, low fee suggested by the professional body. Other partner institutions, who were conducting the FDP also agreed to charge uniform fee. They were sister institutions, all promoted by MHRD and charged low fee as a national cause, because the programme was in a discipline where there was acute shortage for faculty. IMX was registered office of the professional body and Board had accorded permission to have registered office of the body in its campus. Two members of Governing board of the IMX were also members of the governing board of the professional body.

Months passed. In the meantime the AC asked Dr. Virendra that since the programme was to be conducted at the second campus, the approval of MDP chairman of the other campus should also be taken. The other MDP chairman said that he would like to go with MDP Chairman of

the main campus. He, however, proposed if the participants could be kept in students' hostel, he may plead for lower rates. The idea was shelved however, when the coordinator pointed out that many participant faculty members from various management institute may be holding higher rank and positions in their institutions and universities than them. It was then decided to try the proposal when the new regular director joins.

Professor Abhimanyu was wondering as to why things go wrong in conducting FDP in IMX despite keenness and unequivocal support of the Board of Governors. When he was deputed to a sister institutions, which was 12 years younger, he faced all infrastructure problems (no classrooms, executive hostel, dining room etc.) still the institute was able to do 6-8 FDP's every year. Now it was doing over a dozen programmes every year. In ten years from 2004, it had done over 100 week long programmes, of over 650 days, which over 2200 faculty had member attended, while IMX could not conduct even 10 FDPs during the period.

The only thing he did was create improvised infrastructure, made a faculty member (who was sold to the idea of FDP) as Chairman FDP (separating FDP task from Chairman MDP) and allowed 0.5 credit for FDP in the Annual Workload of a faculty, which was minimum six credit. He also did not miss inaugurating an FDP or delivering valedictory address, if he was in town. He had highlighted the importance of FDP (in the perspective plan that he presented to faculty, staff and Board members on his joining, as indirect contribution to management education, as 40 teachers trained in a programme can benefit 2000-4000 students, year after year. No such emphasis and clarify existed in IMX, he felt. Despite his best efforts he could not give impetus to the activity for over twenty years he secured IMX as a senior professor and having been even Dean more than once.

“Perhaps the very mould in which the two institutions are cast now are different”, he thought. “Perhaps IMX engaged in commercial activities more, not development activities like FDP”. “How to break it continues to puzzles him, the 7<sup>th</sup> director and the Board members”.