

Research Incentives

All along we were having very interesting policies to encourage research to become institute of higher learning' said " said an amused Dr. VirendraSwaroop of IMX Institute. "In the formative years of the Institute some 20 years ago, summer vacations were compulsory, and no compensatory leave was allowed in lieu of attending office, for such purpose like research and literature development. Leave was allowed only if one was doing academic/ general administration, or was engaged in task assigned like taking classes in MDP etc.", although the institute talked a lot about emphasis to be laid on research" he said.

A faculty member was asked to take classes in an MDP, around May 6-7. Summer vacations were effective from 15th April or so. The faculty member thought of using the time for case writing, sought permission of the Institute for the purpose and went for data collection and returned around 1st May. Another faculty was to take classes around 28-29 April. At the end of the year the first faculty was given leave for 3 ½ days for attending to the Institute's work and second one 7 days, because he attended to the Institute task for 14 days and the other attended to the Institute task for 7 days only. If he had not gone for case writing then he would have got 11 days compensatory leave because then he would have been on Institute's duty from 16th April to 7th May.

Policies continued, even when the Director changed. One day the faculty member was made Chairman PGP as the batch size was to be increased from one to two sections. He was happy that for once he will get full 30 days earned leave. In his work plan he mentioned that besides PGP work (which included giving admission also); he would also complete case writing on an approved project during the period. At the end of the year, he was perplexed at the mistake in records, showing only 15 days earned leave. When he enquired he was informed that there was no mistake. It was because he had proposed to use summer for case writing (also assigned to him), which was not an Institutional task). It may be mentioned here that Case writing was considered as a research and faculty council has resolved that the faculty should be writing cases to conduct the courses.

Some times in early 2002, a senior faculty member prepared an empirical paper on Foreign Collaborations in India, which was accepted for presentation in a renowned International Conference. He was told that he must give an undertaking that he will not attend another international conference for the next 5 years, as he has attended an international conference in 2001. His explanation that last conference he attended was in 1997 and later due to administrative responsibilities at senior level he was not allowed, did not cut ice with the Dean. The fact that he had only paid registration fee and no other expenses as he had gone for arranging exchange programme with European Institutions, did not make any sense to the Dean. The faculty refused to give the undertaking and presented the paper in a conference on Technology Transfer, in which his paper was published. It is another matter that a newly joined Asst. professor was allowed to attend two (although he was not eligible even for one), one perhaps without even a paper (that was a requirement)

In June or July 2002, the Director asked the faculty to represent him in the Annual Convention of Association of Indian Management Schools as he was not able to make it. The faculty politely told "I am not Head of the Institution who can go to grace the occasion. However if I am able to write a research paper and that is accepted for presentation, I will surely

go". Fortunately, he was able to develop a paper, focusing on the Role of Research in guiding and increasing the effectiveness of management education, backed up with sound data. Since he was going to conduct few sessions in an in-house training programme and passing through Delhi, he stayed in the Institute guest house for a day, presented the paper and claimed taxi charges from guest house to the venue and return.

Later in January 2003, he applied for presenting a research paper in a tourism conference in Goa. The paper set the tone for further conferences on the subject by the Institute. However, the faculty was not allowed sponsorship as this was second conference. The faculty could not drop the idea and went ahead to present the paper at his own expense. He was so piqued by the instance that he decided not to seek institute sponsorship so long the same persons were the Director and the Dean of the institute.

However, he continued to do research, write papers and attend conferences. In the next Conference, when he went to present another empirical paper that was later published in Vikalpa, there was an interesting coincidence. A Faculty Associate of IIMA, traveled from Jamshedpur to Ahmedabad by Air, two Faculty from private Institutions were traveling in AC II tier and the senior faculty of the Institute was traveling in AC III tier (perhaps because it was summer with mercury up 43 degree). When asked was he not embarrassed, he quipped "one can do research only to the extent he can afford". Of course none of the others' papers were published.

"If after 50 years of management education, there are such practices prevailing, which may deter even the diehard people to do what Institute aims to achieve, when and how the institute is going to be an institution of higher learning or higher learning will get redefined, wondered"
Dr. Virendra Swaroop.

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