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Impact of Technology on Business Schools: Perceptions of Faculty & Management

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Abstract: The purpose of this study was to investigate the perceptions of faculty and management of Pakistani business schools about the impact of technological advancements on its five dimensions; program offerings, contents of the programs, teaching methodology, geographical expansion and partnership. This study was conducted in business schools of Islamabad and Lahore (Pakistan). The data were collected from 155 faculty members (115 male and 40 female) of business schools. A structured questionnaire consisted of 24 statements was developed to collect the data. All the items were closed ended based on five point Likert Scale (strongly agreed to strongly disagreed). The data were analyzed using mean, SD, t-test and One Way ANOVA. The findings show that there is insignificant impact of technology on business schools to offer executive MBA program, online MBA program and to open overseas campuses while there is positive impact on contents of the programs, teaching methodology, geographical expansion and partnership.

Keywords: educational innovation, communities of practice, teacher education

Introduction

American Association of Collegiate Schools of Business rated technology as the foremost reason for bringing massive change in business education (AACSB, 2000). "Technology might refer to the ability to deliver education over long distances, the resources to gather and store vast amounts of data, computing power and its impact on how business operates or the speed and delivery of electronic communication" (AACSB, 2000). In whatever sense technology is used, it is impacting business education. Technology is not a straightforward matter; the strong general consensus is that it is complex and multifaceted (Fleck, 2008).

The importance of technology could be analyzed by the report "Management Education at Risk" presented by the management education task force to ACCSB. The

report analyzed that: "Employers demand graduates who are prepared to leverage technology in a scalable fashion to advance firms' strategies and operations. To respond to the demand for technologically facile graduates, technology-enriched pedagogy, technology-wired facilities, new curricula, and distance delivery, business schools have had to generate significant new financial and human resources" (AACSB, 2002. p 11).

In the context of technology as a driver of change, many reforms are being taken place worldwide. The institutions are creating web-based instructions, offering online degrees, expanding its geographical markets, and equipping classrooms with technology (multimedia, internet, etc). Internet-based technology is making information more accessible and connecting people electronically in ways that are affecting colleges and universities in their delivery of knowledge. There are three attributes of technological revolution which have deep impact on work and process of business schools (Hitt, 1998). Firstly, technological innovation that leads to mass customization. Secondly, widespread use of information due to computer and internet and thirdly, using knowledge as competitive advantage. Therefore, business school management must recognize and ensure that their schools actively explore the massive potential and the wide implications of the new technologies in the context of increasing globalization. All the management institutions should become technology makers rather than merely technology takers (Fleck, 2008).

The technological revolution coupled with globalization has resulted into changing nature of workplace (Aggarwal, 2009). Enabling this far-flung modern workplace is a whole host of technologies, from e-mail to cell phones to Web conferencing to process management software **(**Schlenker, & Mendelson 2008). To be successful in today business, every executive must learn and be comfortable to use these new technologies. Moreover, the institutions should teach students to use workplace technologies most effectively for preparing them to work, communicate, and interact in the 21st-century high tech workplace. **(**Schlenker & Mendelson 2008)

Many schools have added technology components to their programs. But these computer-aided programs are valuable only when they link content and software directly to real-world business **(**Schlenker & Mendelson 2008). The use of Internet in business education has resulted in application of ICT and e- learning. The ICT revolution is a window of opportunity to better understand and integrate technology into the processes,

curricula and mode of delivery of business schools attracting a large number of student body internationally (Hawawini, 2005). The ICT usage in business schools has changed the classroom based teaching and learning towards online teaching and introduction of programs with a blended format face-to-face and online method (De Onzono & Carmona, 2007)

Thomas, (2007) reported Financial Time (2006) issue about e- learning concluding that through the convergence of digital technologies and the growth of internet, e-learning has acted as catalyst for the development of electronic markets for management education. He added that this has led to the creation of digital libraries, just in time on the job training, lifelong learning and virtual click universities. Thomas (2007) summarized the implication of technology for management education as follows:

- Growth of real- time, internet based interactive education
- A significant rise in self-study programs
- Impacts on information-gathering and research- growth of digital libraries and databases
- Changing role of faculty as video-professors
- Changes in distribution channels- distributed delivery and

Value-chain thinking makes obsolete conventional economic concepts such as scale economies, vertical integration.

Therefore, the management institutes should provide the rich learning experiences to graduates by incorporating technology in teaching learning process.

Pakistani Business schools are also experiencing the technological change in response to changes in international business world. But the pace of bringing changes in business school is slow as in business world. Therefore, it is the need of hour that Pakistani business schools should analyze the technological environment and adjusts their strategies to compete locally as well as internationally. For that reason, this research study focuses on collecting the perception of faculty and management of Pakistani business schools' faculty members to about the impact of technological advancements on business schools. This study is an important addition in literature in this regard as there are limited research studies available in Pakistani context on this topic.

Objectives of the Study

The purpose of this study is to investigate the perceptions of the faculty and management of business schools about the impact of technological advancements on business schools. The objectives of the study were:

1. To explore the perceptions of faculty and management of selected Pakistani business schools about the impact of Technological advancements on five dimensions of business schools; *program offerings*, *contents of the programs*, *teaching methodology*, *geographical Expansion and Partnership*.
2. To find difference, if any, among the perceived influence of Technological advancements on the five dimensions of Pakistani business schools in the light of demographic variables.

Research Questions

Following research questions were formulated to achieve the research objectives:

1. What is the perception of faculty and management of selected Pakistani business schools about the impact of Technological advancements on Program Offerings of Business Schools?
2. What is the perception of faculty and management of selected Pakistani business schools about the impact of Technological advancements on the contents of programs of Business Schools?
3. What is the perception of faculty and management of selected Pakistani business schools about the impact of Technological advancements on teaching methodology of Business Schools?
4. What is the perception of faculty and management of selected Pakistani business schools about the impact of Technological advancements on geographical expansion of Business Schools?
5. What is the perception of faculty and management of selected Pakistani business schools about the impact of Technological advancements on partnership of Business Schools?

6. What is the perceived influence of Technological advancements on the five dimensions of business schools; *program offerings*, *contents of the programs*, *teaching methodology*, *geographical Expansion and Partnership*?

Design of the Study

This research study involves the collection of opinions from faculty and management. A number of researches (Kemelgor, et. al. 2000; Zhao, et. al. 2003; Zhao, et. al. 2009) considered the questionnaire survey appropriate for data collection about opinions. Therefore, for this research study, a cross-sectional self-report survey was used to gain insight of the factors that are perceived important by faculty and management for bringing change in the business schools. This survey was a pen and paper questionnaire with 24 statements.

Participants

Sampling is a key feature of a survey approach due to the factors of time, expense and accessibility. For a survey research it is recommended to collect information from a group in such a way that the knowledge gained may be representative of the population under study (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison 2007). To achieve the objectives of this research study the sampling was done by multiphase sampling technique as at different levels of sampling the selection criteria of sample was different (Cohen, et. al., 2007). The focus of this study was on only two geographical clusters in Pakistan i.e. Punjab and Islamabad (ICT). At the initial phase the total population was geographically divided into two clusters i.e. Punjab and Islamabad (ICT). There are twenty-seven business schools in Punjab Cluster and 13 in Islamabad (ICT) making a total of 40. At the second phase the two clusters are further divided into four clusters based on their type i.e. Public business schools and Private business schools. In Punjab there are ten public business institutes and seventeen private business schools and in Islamabad (ICT) there are ten public institutes and three are private. The researcher selected 50% business schools from each sub clusters. At the third phase the faculty and management of business schools were selected by using the criteria by Cohen. Cohen et. al. (2007) p.104 described that if the size of the population is 500 then the minimum sample would be 217 at 95% confidence level. The total faculty members in sample were 500. Therefore, 50%

of the faculty members were selected as sample for the administration of questionnaire.

Sample Constitution

Sample constitution was as follows:

Table 4.1.1

Distribution of Respondents by Gender

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	115	74
Female	40	26
Total	155	100

Table 4.1.1 describes the distribution of sample with respect to their gender. Out of one fifty five respondents 115 were male and 40 were female. It shows that majority of the respondents from the total sample were male

Table 4.1.2

Distribution of Respondents by University Type

University Type	Frequency	Percentage
Public	62	40
Private	93	60
Total	155	100

Table 4.1.2 presents division of sample with respect to their university type. Out of one fifty five total respondents 62 were from public business schools while 93 were from private business schools. It indicates that more participants are from private business institutes.

Table 4.1.3

Distribution of Respondents by Responsibility

Responsibility	Frequency	Percentage
Faculty Member	97	63
Management	58	37
Total	155	100

Table 4.1.3 describes the distribution of respondents according to the responsibility in their institutes. Out of one fifty five total respondents 97 were faculty members and 45 were serving as management in business schools. It indicates that most of the participants were faculty members.

Table 4.1.4

Distribution of Respondents by Experience

Years of Experience	Frequency	Percent
1 – 5	64	41.3
6 – 10	53	34.2
11 – 15	16	10.3
Above 15 Years	22	14.2
Total	155	100.0

Table 4.1.4 describes the distribution of faculty members according to their teaching experience as 1-5 years (41%), 6-10 years (34%), 11-15 years (10%) and above 15 (14%). Majority of the faculty members have 1-10 years of experience.

Table 4.1.5

Distribution of Respondents by Designation

Designation	Frequency	Percent
Lecturer	70	45.2
Assistant Professor	45	29.0
Associate Professor	20	12.9
Professor	20	12.9
Total	155	100.0

Table 4.1.5 shows the distribution of respondents with respect to their designation as Lecturers (45.2 %), Assistant Professors (29 %), Associate Professors (12.9%), and Professors (12.9 %). Majority of the respondents were lecturers and assistant professors respectively.

Instrument

A structured questionnaire was developed by the researcher to measure the perception and response of faculty and administration of business schools. The questionnaire was developed in two phases. At the first stage a focus group of 10 persons was conducted to get an insight from the industry experts both from academia and business about the independent and dependent variables obtained from the review of relevant literature. On the basis of the focus group discussion technology was as selected independent variable while Program offerings, contents, methodology, geographical expansion and partnership of business schools were considered as dependent variables. At the second step a structured questionnaire was designed for this study by using a five point Likert Scale ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree. The questionnaire consisted of five demographic variables (gender, university type, experience, designation and responsibility), and 24 closed ended questions.

3) Reliability and validity

The pilot study of the questionnaire was done in Lahore by administering the questionnaire to 30 faculty members with the same characteristics of the target sample but not included in real sample. The collected data was analysed with the help of SPSS Ver. 16 for Windows and it was tested for reliability. The coefficient of internal consistency was 0.78

Data Collection

The instrument was administered to the total sample of 250 faculty members and after repeated visits a total response of 155 samples was achieved.

Data Analysis

This study explore the perceptions of faculty and management about influence of technology on business schools in terms of program offerings, content of the programs, delivery methods, geographical expansion and partnership

One sample t-test was used to measure the impact of technology on business schools. The findings were:

Table 6.1

Impact of Technology on B-Schools one sample t-test

Impact of Technology on B-Schools for	N	Mean	SD	t	Df	Sig.
Offering Executive MBA	155	3.11	1.149	1.189	154	.236
Offering International (Multicultural) MBA	155	3.27	1.186	2.844	154	.005
Offering Split-Degree Program	155	2.77	1.110	-2.606	154	.010
Offering Customized MBA (Specific To The Need)	155	3.23	1.143	2.460	154	.015
Offering Online MBA	155	2.85	1.280	-1.506	154	.134
Introducing International Material In Course Outline	155	3.88	1.025	10.732	154	.000
Adding Computer Related Contents In Programs	155	4.25	.824	18.802	154	.000
Incorporating E-Subjects In Programs	155	3.83	1.152	8.926	154	.000
Including Inter-Cultural Communication Contents In The Program	155	3.41	1.079	4.688	154	.000
Emphasizing Ethical Issues In Contents Of The Programs	155	3.20	1.153	2.159	154	.032
Offering Contents To Improve Interpersonal Skills	155	3.66	1.165	7.035	154	.000
Lecture Method of Teaching	155	4.03	.993	12.859	154	.000
Case-Study method of Teaching	155	3.61	1.147	6.650	154	.000
Online Method of Teaching	155	3.17	1.086	1.923	154	.056
Discussion Method of Teaching	155	3.28	1.098	3.220	154	.002
Project-based Method of Teaching	155	3.57	1.122	6.371	154	.000
Usage of Electronic Communication by the Faculty	155	3.90	1.018	11.048	154	.000
Using Technology by the Faculty	155	4.28	.874	18.298	154	.000
Opening Overseas Campuses	155	2.90	1.027	-1.252	154	.213
Opening Local Campuses	155	3.16	.984	2.042	154	.043
Developing Joint Ventures	155	3.30	1.020	3.621	154	.000
Developing Partnership with Corporate Sector	155	3.20	1.197	2.079	154	.039
Developing Partnership with Local Institutes	155	2.95	1.077	-.522	154	.602
Developing Partnership with Foreign Institutes	155	3.55	1.123	6.150	154	.000

It was found that technology has significant impact on business schools with respect to offering international MBA, split-degree and customized MBA programs. While with respect to contents of the program faculty and management perceived high impact of technology on business schools in all asked categories. In case of teaching methodologies only online delivery method shows insignificant results. When we talk about geographical expansion technology is influencing business schools to open local campuses and operation joint ventures while it has no influence on business schools to develop partnership with local institutes as compared to developing partnership with corporate sector and foreign business institutes.

Total Average Influence of Technology on Business Schools

Table 6.2

Total average influence of Technology one sample t test

One-Sample Statistics Test Value = 3 Statement	M	MD	SD	t	Sig.
Average Influence of Technology on Programs Offering	3.0	0.0	0.76	0.63	0.529
Average Influence of Technology on Content	3.8	0.8	0.70	14.29	0.000*
Average Influence of Technology on Methodology	3.7	0.7	0.65	12.62	0.000*
Average Influence of Technology on geographical Expansion	3.1	0.1	0.81	1.79	0.075*
Average Influence of Technology on Partnership	3.3	0.3	0.95	3.30	0.001*
Total Average Influence of Technology	3.4	0.4	0.51	9.05	0.000*

*p< 0.05

Table 6.2 was computed to measure the average influence of technology on business schools. After calculating the separate statements' means the average mean of all the statement was calculated. The average mean of all the statements was 3.4 and the t-value (value of test statistics) was 9.05 standard errors. The mean is numerically greater than the criterion value (3) but P-value (sig) of 0.000 was less than 0.05, therefore, the mean difference is statistically significant at 95% confidence level. Hence, for this item, null hypothesis is rejected. It inferred that according to respondents' perceptions there is impact of technology on B-Schools in terms of program offerings, content, methodology, geographical expansion and partnership.

Variance for Demographics

Independent sample t-test was used to find out the variance with respect to gender, responsibility and sector. But interestingly no significant difference was found in all demographics. For analyzing variance with respect to experience and designation One Way ANOVA was calculated.

Table 6.4.1

One-way ANOVA Analysis of Variance for Impact of External Factors in Sub-scales by Experience

External Factors	Variances	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Technology	Between Groups	.816	3	.939	3.762	.012*
	Within Groups	37.671	151	.249		

**P<0.05*

Table 6.4.1 indicates significant difference of opinion among faculty members with 1-5 years, 6-10 years, 11-15 years and above 15 years categories of university teaching experience regarding globalization and technology. While, there is no significant difference between the opinions about demographical shifts and corporate sector.

Table 6.4.1.1

Tukey HSD for Multiple Comparisons of Impact of External Factors in Sub-Scales by Experience

Scale	(I)	Mean Difference (I-J) (J)Designation		
		6-10 Years	11-15 years	Above 15
Technology	1-5 years	-0.05	-0.316	0.236
	6-10 years		-0.310	0.241
	11-15 years			-0.55*

**p< 0.05*

Table 6.4.1.1 indicates that the respondents having experience of 6-10 years and 11-15 years pointed out significant impact of technology and globalization on business schools while lecturers, associate professors and professors did not show concern about impact of selected variables.

Table 6.4.2

One-way ANOVA Analysis of Variance for Impact of External Factors in Sub-scales by Designation

External Factors	Variance	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Technology	Between Groups	3.092	3	1.031	4.162	.007
	Within Groups	37.394	151	.248		

*p<0.05

Table 6.4.2 indicates that there is significant difference of opinion among Lecturers, Assistant Professors, Associate Professors and Professors regarding Globalization and Technology.

Sub-Scales	(I)	Mean Difference (I-J) (J)Designation		
		Associate Professor	Assistant Professor	Professor
Technology	Lecturer	0.224	-0.177	0.184
	Associate Professor		-0.401*	-0.040
	Assistant Professor			0.361*

*p<0.05

Table 6.4.1 indicates that Assistant Professors pointed out significant impact of Globalization and Technology on business schools while lecturers, associate professors and professors did not show the concern about impact of globalization and technology.

Conclusion

In program offerings five options (executive MBA, International MBA, Split-degree programs, Customised MBA and Online MBA) were given to the respondent to measure the impact of technology on business schools in the perception of faculty and management. The findings show that respondents recognized significant impact of technology on international, split-degree, and customised MBA. These findings are in line with the findings of literature. Friga et.al. (2003), Lorange (2005), Thomas, 2007, Webb, Mayer, Piochi & Allen, 1994, & Cort, et. al. 2003. In context of Pakistan, most of the business schools are offering traditional MBA programs and in response of the corporate sector demands, executive MBA is also offered. There is no research data on this topic but according to the researchers' personal experience and findings of the focus group interview conducted in this research study, there is no institute which is offering international MBA and customised MBA. In case of online MBA only two universities among all the business institutes are offering this type of program at local level and with respect to split-degree program only one university is offering this program in collaboration with foreign universities. The findings show that faculty and management perceive the insignificant impact of external variables on the program offerings but there is little effort by the management of business schools to satisfy the demands of its various stakeholders by providing need oriented and modern programs. In Pakistan there is already mushrooming of business schools resulting into high competition in public as well as private sectors. Therefore there is dire need in the industry to offer innovative programs to cater the needs of the customers to survive in the market.

In this section six statements (adding international material in course outlines, adding computer contents, including E-subjects, adding intercultural communication contents, emphasizing ethical issues and adding contents to improve interpersonal skills) are given to the respondents to measure the perceived influence of technology on contents of the programs. The findings show that faculty and management perceived high influence of technology on contents of the programs. The mean score of all the statements is above than the criterion value (3.0) which shows that technology is driving business schools to change the curriculum. The findings of this research study are in concurrence to the research study conducted by AACSB (2002) that shows that faculty

and management rate these skills highly important in business world but these skills are the least effective component of business school curricula. Business schools are facing the continuous criticism of irrelevancy and lacking in imparting the demanded skill by the stakeholders. Researches show that the weakest part of the curriculum is its inability to impart the required skills and knowledge according to the demands of stakeholders such as employers, students and community. Higher education commission of Pakistan (HEC) has designed a program outline for MBA and BBA degrees according to international standards but the need of the hour is that there should be minimum standard settled for the contents of these programs in the light of criteria of relevancy and demand.

To measure the impact of technological factors on teaching methodology, seven statements (lecture method, case study method, online method discussion method, Project method, usage of electronic communication by the faculty and usage of multimedia by the faculty) are given to respondents. Faculty and management recognize the high impact in this regard according to the findings of the study. In Pakistan, lecture method and discussion methods are being used predominantly for teaching. There is only one institute which is pioneer in using case-study method for business teaching. Other institutions in private sector are following this trend due to competition among the business schools. Most of the business schools in private as well as public sector are now providing facilities of multimedia and projector to enhance teaching learning process. There are rare institutes using Project based teaching in its true sense. Projects are designed without keeping in mind its quality, relevance and industrial usability. While with respect to online teaching methodology only two institutes are adopting this delivery mode for distance learning. Further, faculty is not using electronic communication with graduates in an organized form which is highly recommended in literature. The situation concludes that Pakistani business schools are moving towards the innovative teaching methodology but the pace is very slow. The apparent barrier in adopting new technologies are the high costs associated with developing needed infra structure.

In case of geographical expansion three statements (opening of overseas campuses, local campuses and joint ventures) are given to measure the perception of faculty and management . The findings show that faculty perceived high impact of technology on opening of local campuses and developing joint ventures which is in concurrence with literature findings. However, faculty and management did not perceive

any impact of external variables on opening of overseas campuses that contradicts with literature. In Pakistan business schools are opening local campuses in urban areas but no example of joint ventures and overseas campuses is observed till now. While a number of American business schools have open their local campuses in Pakistan to capitalize on a growing market of business education in developing countries such as Pakistan. In this case Higher Education Commission of Pakistan is keen to facilitate the process of opening foreign campuses in Pakistan with a rationale to make sure the accessibility of higher education to maximum level. For keeping the standards high it has given guidelines for collaboration of foreign universities to open local campuses in pakistan.

To measure the perception of faculty and management about technology on partnership of business schools three statements (partnership with corporate sector, partnership with local and foreign business institutes) are given to respondents. The finding show a high impact of technology on developing partnership with corporate sector and foreign business institutes but no significant impact is reported about developing partnership with local business institutes.

Pakistan is a developing country having less resources in terms of trained manpower, finance, technology, R&D and infra structure. Both industry and academia are deficient in characteristics to build partnership between them. Ahmad & Junaid (2008) reported that developing countries like Pakistan may overcome the problems of unemployment, economic recession and social unrest by moving forward on the road of rapid industrialization and restructuring the institutions of higher education through industry academia partnership.

The good step is taken by Higher Education Commission of Pakistan is the formation of industrial liaison secretarial to develop effective cooperation between academia and industry to capitalize on the ever increasing international demands (HEC, 2010). The need is that universities should come forward and offer its valuable human resources for providing research needed in the industry and industry should give its input in designing the programs and contents to make it more relevant and useful. In case of partnership development with foreign business institutes many universities have taken affiliation from American and European institutes. In most of the cases the affiliations are to attract the local student body but no significant role is being observed for

improving standards. HEC also has given guidelines to maintain standards for collaboration of foreign universities.

There is no concept for developing partnership with local business institutes in Pakistan. But it could play positive role in raising standards by mutual partnership to overcome the shortages of resource. Business schools may take benefit by sharing resources; they may pool their resources to develop joint ventures which solely may be impossible. They could compete internationally by joint efforts for opening local as well as overseas campuses, student exchange, and faculty exchange programs.

For demographic analyses, all the statements are merged into one variables (impact of technology) to measure the impact according to demographic variables (gender, university type, responsibility, experience and designation). The demographics analysis reveals that only the mid career faculty members with experience of 6-15 years and having responsibility of assistant professors recognize significant impact of technology on business schools while lecturers, associate professors and professors did not perceive any impact in this regard. The apparent reason may be that the entry level faculty members have less vision and the professors have enjoyed their service and are at the peak of their service. The assistant professors are at challenging career stage. They have to struggle to move up the ladder in tough competition and new rules imposed by higher education commission of Pakistan.

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