

Faculty Initiatives on Teaching and Learning

Initiative 1.

Faculty: Prof. Sanesh P. Varghese.

Nature of Initiative. Pedagogy

Problem Statement. Challenge of grasping the nuances of principles of management by students without work experience.

Overview. When a student joins MBA, after the undergraduate program, it is difficult for the person to understand the nuances of management process. Yet it fundamental to understanding about management in a business context. Having taught the course for several years and struggle with the challenge of making a student understand how planning, organizing, staffing etc. operate on ground, a this new initiative was tried out.

Brief of the Initiative Attempted. Taking advantage of long Onam holidays mandated by the university, students were asked to conduct a field study in which they interviewed managers on what they do on a typical day and on not so normal day involving some crisis management using a semi-structured questionnaire. The interviews of various student were consolidated in study groups and the students were guided to find out patterns in the work the managers do. The student cohorts were able to clearly understand the functions of management though the function of budgeting did not come out clearly. A structured feedback on the initiative from the students suggested that the initiative was effective. Feedback is filed in the course file.

Review, Impact and Replication. The initiative was peer reviewed along with the feedback and found to be an effective method to not only enhance comprehension of the vital functions of management but also a good tool to introduce them into career tracks and sector choice for their career. The initiative is easily replicable during various holidays that the students have not only in this university but also in other schools in which the students do not have work experience.

Repetition. The initiative which started in 2021 was repeated in subsequent academic years.

Publication. Published in the website of the school for open use.

Initiative No. 2

Faculty. Dr. Joby Jose

Nature of the Initiative. Pedagogy.

Problem Statement. Learner Centered approach or case method is not a strong point of university affiliated schools. The challenge is to complete the syllabus and teach in an exam oriented fashion as also dovetail the benefits of case method.

Overview. The method used was to announce the case a week in advance and ask the students to prepare the case according to a framework. The framework is important for the cohort unlike in an IIM where a framework may not be given.

Brief of the Initiative Attempted. Students were grouped into case learning cohorts. They were then asked to discuss the case and make a structured analysis of the case as per the analysis protocol developed by the faculty. The analysis was then presented in the class with the faculty facilitating the discussion. Lessons were consolidated. Differing views on an issue was encouraged with often led to animated discussion/arguments, which led to generating alternatives. Some of the cases used are:

1. Profile of Enron: The Rise and Fall
2. Corporate Governance Failure at Satyam.
3. ITC Ltd.: Towards a Triple Bottom Line Performance
4. Rajat Gupta Managing Up (A) Grace
5. ICICI Bank: Restoring Faith in Corporate Governance
6. GAIL 'Saksham' programme: Remoulding the future
7. Profile of Enron: The Rise and Fall
8. Corporate Governance Failure at Satyam.
9. ITC Ltd.: Towards a Triple Bottom Line Performance

Review, Impact and Replication. The method by default incorporates some of the insights from the flipped class rooms where the learning is driven by the students and students lead the discussion and learning. Therefore the acceptance of a new concept and generation of alternatives are more effective. The method is replicable. The challenge is to support the students and enable them to be open minded to accept views unlike that of one's own (own group view). Some of the key aspects of group dynamics such as forming, storming, and performing can be built into the exercise. The adjourning is effected by asking the students to make lessons learnt and what can be carried forward to a similar situation. The lessons from punctuated equilibrium model can also be highlighted since the duration of the exercise is short (one week) and the activities are fresh in the memory.

Repetition. The method has been repeated in several batches.

Publication. Published in the website of the school.

Initiative No. 3

Faculty. Prajith PK

Nature of the Initiative. Pedagogy

Problem Statement. Application of quantitative techniques in business remains an enigma for most MBA students. Can cases drive learning on application of quantitative techniques?

Overview. Students of MBA has a challenge of learning quantitative techniques from multiple angles. One is to pass the university examination with good results. Another is to learn its application and importance in the world of analytics today. The method that was adopted intends to bridge the gap in the minds of the students.

Brief of the Initiative Attempted. Cases were selected and given to the students. They were asked to identify the problem statement and how to solve the problem. Initially most students

gave general methods to solve the problem rather than looking at it from a quantitative perspective. On the day of the case discussion, the rationale for their (learning cohort) inferences were asked. This was followed by asking them to verify these with evidence. If a cohort had used quantitative technique, the faculty leveraged it and followed that lead. The problems framed and often reframed in the class was converted into a quantitative problem and solved using pen and paper (from the university exam point of view) and by using Excel (from corporate life point of view). The initial inferences/conclusions made by the learning cohorts were reviewed in the light of quantitative evidence giving new insights for decision making. Some of the cases used are:

1. Caselet 1: Cross-sectoral dependence – An input – Output analysis.
2. Caselet2: Forecasting method for Australian Federal Government.
3. Caselet3: Stock behaviour of a corporate conglomerate.
4. Caselet4: Competence traps in a technology driven industry.
5. Caselet5: Test of representativeness of a sample of Toronto Women.
6. Case Study: Analytics empowering agriculture: Jayalaxmi Agro tech – IIM Bangalore

Review, Impact and Replication. The method is powerful and has good feedback. The challenge is the mindset of a few students who prefer a pure examination passing approach primarily because they are less endowed in quantitative techniques. However, that they can find quantitative-based solutions using Excel encourages these students to adopt the quantitative method with less resistance.

Repetition. The method has been repeated in several batches.

Publication. Published in the website of the school.

Initiative No. 4

Faculty. Dr. Baiju Samuel.

Nature of the Initiative. Content and Pedagogy

Problem Statement. Managing change can be an abstract subject for most MBA student cohort without work experience. Cases therefore tend to be less effective as they have no work experience and they have not seen an organization. How to make a student understand the nuances of change management?

Overview. Story telling is an effective way of learning management. Taking inspiration from this, book review cum story telling method was introduced in the course on organizational transformation and change.

Brief of the Initiative Attempted. The students reviewed a book such as "Who moved my Cheese?". Thereafter they were asked to narrate a story along the same line as the book but with incidents from their life. The story had to end with an analysis of the story using Kotter's 8 steps of change. By creating their own content set to a pattern in the book, the students were able to correlate real life to the book. This formed the base for further case-driven teaching of the course.

Review, Impact and Replication. The method has been replicated in several batches with positive reviews. The feedback suggests that other books such as "My Iceberg is melting" or "Animal Farm"

could be used. An add-on to this method could be a short film competition on their story of change with a summary of the key steps of Kotter used by them.

Repetition. The method has been repeated in several batches.

Publication. Published in the website of the school.