

Assessing Success Factors of Knowledge Management Initiatives of Academic Institutions – a Case of an Indian Business School

Bhaskar Basu and Kalyan Sengupta
ICFAI Business School, Salt Lake, India

kalyansgupta@ibsindia.org

bhaskarb@ibsindia.org

Abstract: Effective knowledge management is considered to play an increasingly important role in creating competitive advantage. Knowledge is becoming a driving force for organisational change and wealth creation. As a result, organisations are at varying stages of planning and implementing knowledge-based strategies in efforts to improve their competitiveness, productivity, organisational effectiveness and customer service. However, KM initiatives are both expensive and risky propositions. Financial resources put a ceiling on what can be expended on knowledge activities. There is a huge demand for skilled managers in the global economy, including India. This necessitates a re-look at knowledge management initiatives in business schools, which can be considered to be knowledge intensive organisations. This paper is a result of an exploratory study that tries to explain the factors influencing the success of knowledge management initiatives in a business school to distinguish itself in the academic market place. A generalised model has been constructed highlighting possible antecedents and consequences of a business school in its quest for becoming a learning organisation. This model is then applied in a reputed business school in India as a test case.

Keywords: Knowledge management, organisation learning, business school, academic capitalism

1. Introduction

In the past decade, a number of experiments have been carried out in relatively prosperous organisations with an objective to yield strategic advantages of Knowledge Management (KM). Researchers have worked on possibilities of effective implementation of KM in organisations (Davenport and Prusak 1998, Davenport et al. 1998). As a whole, KM initiatives are rather expensive and do not always yield the desired result. KM processes involve major investments in a wide spectrum of areas related to knowledge capture, storage, value addition, distribution and finally educating employees about the benefits of knowledge creation and sharing (Davenport 2000). KM process is an interesting synergic mix of human, communication and IT tools (Petrasch 1996). IT plays an important role in efficiently storing, distributing and adding value to knowledge (Ruggles 1997). It is experienced that IT and Communication Technology have developed a rich state of sophistication and are capable of performing knowledge exercises efficiently (Van der Spek and Spijkervet 1997). At the same time, many of the researchers observed that it is rather the human component that failed to create satisfactory effort and support in developing efficient knowledge system in an organisation (Davenport 1997, Hickins 1999, Cross and Baird 2000, Asllani and Luthans 2003).

It is the human nature to feel insecure in sharing knowledge at the work place as knowledge is regarded to be a valuable resource in the profession. There is a natural tendency in every individual to hoard knowledge and consequently there is no motivation to share it with others unless she/he is convinced, rewarded or recognised properly (Chua 2003). There have been instances of motivating the employees towards knowledge sharing. Some researchers advocated for rewards and incentives to motivate employees towards learning, thereby leading to organisational learning (Gardiner and Whiting 1997). Price Waterhouse devised reward mechanisms for knowledge sharing activities among its employees and linked it with their performance evaluation (O' Dell and Grayson 1998). Companies experimented on role-playing and games (based on knowledge usage) to reduce the passiveness of knowledge users, particularly when knowledge to be received was in passive form (Nonaka and Takeuchi 1995). Learning and knowledge are considered to be the two most important emergent characteristics of future world-class organisations (Bennet and Bennet 2002). The purpose of the organisational transformation towards a learning organisation is to enable the organisation to search for new ideas and new opportunities for learning from which competitive advantage can be extracted in an increasingly changing and competitive world. Organisations and their employees must know how to change in such a dynamic environment (Rowley 1998).

Senge (1990) had warned that many organisations were unable to function as knowledge based organisations as they suffered from learning disabilities. The most frequently cited definition of a learning organisation in the European literature is that of Pedlar et al. (1991). They defined a learning organisation as "one which facilitates the learning of all of its members and continuously transforms itself". The learning

organisation emphasises that aspects of the organisation operate to facilitate and encourage individual learning actively (Garavan 1997). There seems to be a consensus among researchers of treating knowledge management as a process that facilitates knowledge exchange/sharing and establish learning as a continuous process within the organisation (Lopez et al. 2004). The factors which many enthusiastic companies have in common seem to be the degree to which they are capable of exploiting the skills and experience of their workforce (Edmonstone and Havergal 1993).

2. Early researches on KM success factor models

Davenport et al. (1998) conducted a study on 31 projects in 24 companies in 1998 to evaluate success factors in KM projects (Davenport et al. 1998). Eighteen projects were determined to be successful; five were considered failures, and eight were too new to be rated. The common factors identified among successful KM projects in this study were - senior management support, clearly communicated KMS purpose/goals, linkages to economic performance, multiple channels for knowledge transfer, motivational incentives for KM users, a knowledge friendly culture, a solid technical and organisational infrastructure and a standard, flexible knowledge structure. Also some abstract factor like ability to identify, capture and transfer critical tacit knowledge was considered to be the key to success of KM as mentioned in some later researches (Koskinen 2001). Technical issues such as knowledge representation, storage, search, retrieval, visualisation, and quality control were identified by Ginsburg and Kambil (1999) as major success factors. Similar findings were arrived at in a number of successive researches. Leadership and top management commitment/support were found to be crucial for success of few KM projects (Holsapple and Joshi 2000). Resource influences such as having sufficient financial support, skill level of employees, and identified knowledge sources were also found to be important in some other studies (Holsapple and Joshi 2001). Malhotra and Galletta (2003) observed that using incentives always did not guarantee a successful KMS.

However, the most significant factor found by the researchers, was organisational and cultural issues associated with user motivation to share and use knowledge (Alavi and Leidner 1999). It was experienced that promoting a culture of knowledge sharing within the organisation, rewarding employees for knowledge sharing, and creating a "best practices" repository influence KM processes (Barna 2003). Recently a structured framework was proposed for assessing success of knowledge management system (Jennex and Olfman 2004). The framework used three criteria - how well the model fitted actual KMS success factors, the degree to which the model had a theoretical foundation and whether the model could be used for two types of approaches (process/task approach and infrastructure/generic approach) in building a KMS.

3. Learning organisations and business schools

Business schools have gained strong recognition over the past few decades all over the world. Although the initial endeavour started in the US, initially we observed a rather rigid, stereotype and curriculum based activities in such schools which are at present showing drastic changes in the form of wide flexibilities, intensive researches, e-learning and collaborative learning activities. (Selen 2001). According to Selen, there is always an attempt to keep realigning itself (Business school) with today's and tomorrow's business needs and to form the basis for continued reengineering of its organisational knowledge structure. Richard Osborne and Scott Cowen had remarked "Business schools must become learning organisations or else we will become increasingly irrelevant to a rapidly changing world that is assaulting our assumptions about society and its principal organisations. Business schools presume to teach other organisations and individuals to learn to manage in cyberspace while managing our own systems as railroads with fixed tracks, schedules and destinations." (Osborne and Cowen 1995). Hence, business schools can be considered to be highly knowledge intensive organisations and candidates for empirical studies on knowledge management. Ever since their inception, universities have been occupied with the fundamental elements of what is now known as "knowledge management". Universities are pivotal in promoting and perpetuating conceptions and practices of organisations through their role in management education, thereby advancing the concept of "learning organisation" in their own organisation practices (Franklin et al. 1998). Patterson (1999) applied the idea of learning organisation to universities, suggesting that as they adapt to increasingly competitive external environments, they were becoming learning organisations. 'Academic capitalism' has been defined as institutional and professional market or market-like efforts to secure external funds for higher education, where return on investment gains precedence over social returns (Slaughter and Leslie 1997). McClellan et al. (2006) argued on academic capitalism, where rise of globalisation has caused severe constraints on funding of higher education by the Government, resulting in the academic institutions to be more business oriented for long-term sustainability rather than their previous characteristics of social organisations. Thus to attain higher ranking in the academic competition, the institutions do not have any other choice, but to increase their knowledge activities to stay in the market. According to some recent researchers (Metcalfe

2004; Petrides and Nguyen 2006), such market-like behaviour of the higher education organisations have been often borrowed from the theory and practices of the business sectors.

4. Research objectives and background

Management education in India was almost fully organised and supported by the education department of the government, both at the central and the state levels. With the beginning of the economic reforms in the early 90s, demand for managers started growing rapidly and private entrepreneurs became active to set up management schools in different urban centres of the country. Mostly these private centres banked on self-sustainable model resulting in business like motivation to be more prominent than social welfare motivation. However, the government has been gradually bringing in regulations to control the mushrooming of private management and technical institutions. In spite of such regulations, growth of business schools in the country became markedly high because of large market demand, which could not be met by the public institutions. At present there are more than 1000 business schools providing MBA or equivalent diplomas (www.aicte.ernet.in). On the other hand, emergence of a large number of competing business schools, converted the system to become truly market driven, i.e. a school has to prosper and continuously improve to stay in the market in future. It is worthwhile to mention that Slaughter and Leslie (1997) focused on the entrepreneurial activities of universities in Australia, UK and US. Later Slaughter and Rhoades (2004) examined the market-like behaviours of university administrators, faculty and staff at US institutions. Keong et al. (2001), while talking about Taylor Business School (TBS), Malaysia, suggested that information support technology, multi-disciplinary staff culture, flat management structure are the main ingredients for a business school to become a learning organisation. They also suggested the importance of appropriate strategic performance management for the business school. Appropriate strategies, however, are quite important in a sense that it interacts with the external changes – whether local or global. In this context, Thomas (2007) listed down three types of business school performance while framing out appropriate strategies- financial performance, operational performance and organisational effectiveness.

Based on the above literature survey, it may however be concluded that a business school or a university has to be transformed into a learning organisation for long term sustainability. The key driver of the transformation is nothing but change in the environment. There have been a number of proposals by past researchers offering ideas as to how such changes can be adapted and an academic organisation becomes a learning organisation. Lorange (1996) proposed a four factor framework, which included individual discipline based faculty learning, discipline based teams of faculty learning, faculty learning around specific academic program and faculty team learning with business schools' customer organisations. His arguments on contribution of individual knowledge into the organisational knowledge are strong and realistic. A good teamwork under the support of the top management appears also to be an important factor of success. Lately, Jennex and Olfman (2004) suggested an elaborate and generalised framework of organisational knowledge management success factors, composed of 12 independent components. However, although these were framed out for business organisations in general, some of the components may be considered to be equally relevant for an educational institution. Moreover, introducing the concept of KM into the educational arena from the business sector is a highly innovative idea but in practice, it appears to be a slow and often under-utilised process. This is partially due to the fact that KM is a multi-layered and systems-oriented process requiring organisations to rethink what they do and how they do it (Brown and Duguid 2000; Senge 1990). On the other hand, one should appreciate that educational institutions are traditionally hierarchical with silo-like functions making cross-functional initiatives difficult to implement (Friedman and Hoffman 2001; Petrides, McClelland and Nodine 2004).

Out of the 12 components advocated by Jennex and Olfman (2004), integrated technical infrastructure that creates networks and repositories of structural knowledge may be an important factor to be considered in case of successful implementation of knowledge process in the academic institutions (already suggested by Keong et al. 2001, Davenport et al. 1998 and Barna 2002). Motivation and commitment of users, including incentives and training may also be considered as another important factor. The fact was proposed earlier by Lorange (1996), arguing that such motivations driven by incentives and training, stimulates the faculty, discipline based or inter-disciplinary, towards individual and organisational learning. Impact of organisational culture that supports learning, sharing and use of knowledge (initially advocated by Alavi and Leidner (1999); Sage and Rouse (1999) and others) cannot be ignored for successful KM initiatives in such organisations. It may be argued that, a KM culture can only be created through positive attitude of the top management towards support for resource allocation, democratic leadership and adequate training facilities (already mentioned by Holsapple and Joshi 2000 and Barna 2002).

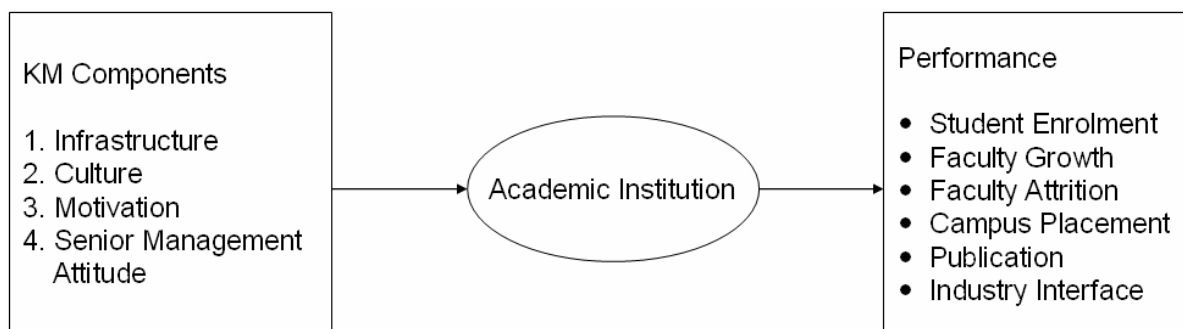


Figure 1: Possible antecedents and consequences of an academic institution to become a learning organisation

Figure 1 demonstrates the possible antecedents and consequences of an academic institution to become a learning organisation. The four inputs such as infrastructure, culture, motivation and attitude of senior management have been argued to be vital for KM initiatives. The success of KM initiatives may be reflected in the output performance of the institution. Various output performances considered may be student growth, faculty growth, faculty attrition, quality of campus placements, publications and industry interface.

5. Research methods

The present research attempts to investigate the relevant factors that are important for success of an educational organisation in terms of KM or organisational learning. The methodology adopted in the study is case study based and concentrates on a reputed business school of India, IBS - Kolkata (IBS-K). The school was chosen because it has matured through the past 12 years and has taken several initiatives for improvement and sustainability. The school has recently achieved a remarkable national ranking and considered to be within the top 50 business schools in India (Cosmode Business World Survey 2005). The factors leading to KM success in academic organisations as discussed in the previous section were examined for the test unit, which is the above business school. The following are the factors under the current study:

- Integrated technical infrastructure including networks, databases, repositories, computers and software.
- An organisational culture that supports learning, sharing and use of knowledge.
- Motivation and commitment of users including incentives and training.
- Senior management support related to resource allocation, leadership and providing training.

It is worthwhile to mention that Benbya and Belbaly (2005) through an analysis of successful case studies of knowledge management systems, identified three categories of mechanisms constituting knowledge management system effectiveness, namely cultural, structural and managerial mechanisms. The four components mentioned above reinforce the ideas of Benbya and Belbaly, as component one maps with structural mechanism, component two with cultural mechanism and the remaining two components with managerial mechanism. The initial part of the study was devoted to understanding of the business school from history and organisational point of view. Published reports and other secondary data were used for the purpose. The second part of the study was predominantly built on the views and perceptions of faculty members, who are the principal knowledge workers, based on a simple questionnaire designed to answer our research questions. This is in alignment with the views expressed by Raub and Wittich (2004), who emphasised on 'key organisational actors' who should be targeted for the success of KM activities.

A variety of question types were used varying from closed-ended questions to Likert type scales. All the 42 full time faculty members of IBS, Kolkata were contacted personally and handed over the questionnaire. 25 of the 42 full time faculty members in the age group 27-56 responded to the questionnaire. The respondents have diverse research interests in the areas of marketing, finance, human resource, information technology, operations and strategy. In the final part of the study, insights on KM initiatives in IBS -K along with output performance of the school were obtained from informal interviews with the management of the business school under study. Also internal records were gathered, examined and analyzed with respect to output performance achieved by the institute through the KM initiatives adopted by the school during the past few years.

6. Analysis and findings at the IBS-K

IBS-K was established in the city of Kolkata in 1995 as a private business school to promote quality education, research, training and consultancy in management. At present it is considered to be one of India's leading business schools (Outlook-C Fore survey 2006 and Cosmode - Business World survey 2005). IBS-K has established a satisfactory record of student placements since its inception in 1995. Every year, IBS-K achieves 100% placements for its MBA students in marketing, finance, insurance, HR and IT functions. The alumni of IBS-K, numbering around 1000 are moving with over 300 blue chip companies in India and abroad. The exploratory study has been conducted at IBS-K, which has at present 800 students in its full time Post Graduate Management program and 42 full time faculty members.

6.1 KM infrastructure at IBS-K

IBS-K has developed an excellent information infrastructure consisting of hardware, software, network where it maintains a high-speed 4 Mbps Internet access system and also a strong intranet catering to internal communication within the organisation. A number of business databases such as Cygnus, Reuters Business Insight, Prowess etc. and subscriptions to a number of journal publications like Emerald, Elsevier and Ebsco are provided by IBS-K. Wi-fi connections are provided for the students and staff members almost at every location in the campus. For the purpose of teaching and research, a large number of sophisticated software packages like Oracle, SPSS, SAS, SAP, Rational Rose and others are licensed for regular use. A special intranet site called 'Faculty Zone' has been provided to all the faculty members of the institute. The objective was to disseminate various work related information (starting from class schedule to student feedback, discussion forum and reporting of various kinds). The faculty survey revealed that high bandwidth Internet facility encouraged the faculty members to use knowledge/information access tools like web surfing and e-mail frequently. The effects of such facilities have been reflected in the usage pattern of information extraction by the faculty members. 33 per cent of information required by the faculty is extracted from Internet, compared to 27 per cent from the internal library and 10 per cent from the external libraries. It was observed that electronic journals and databases were used by selective faculty members, who have orientation towards research or those who are pursuing doctoral level research. Although a significant percent of faculty members search the organisation web site (Faculty Zone) for curriculum, examination papers, faculty feedback and industrial project progress related information, not much of subject oriented technical information is available on the site. IBS has recently introduced discussion forum on its site and solicits faculty suggestions on various problems. However, the survey confirms that so far only a handful of members have posted suggestions to the forum, i.e., taken active part, while many of them remained passive or silent and felt no urge to respond. This is an interesting approach, but lacks marketing to the participants, as the clear goals and objectives are not specifically laid down. Hence, knowledge initiatives have become more individualistic and personal goal oriented, instead of organisational.

6.2 KM culture

The organisational culture with respect to learning and knowledge sharing among the faculty members is mostly informal and limited to peer group internally. Knowledge interactions are restricted to some closed pockets of the individual rooms encompassing a few faculty desks only, mainly through direct communications. Quantum of knowledge communication with external faculty members of other business schools is significantly low. It is interesting to note that substantial knowledge/information communication takes place on informal individual efforts with non-IBS-K experts. For this, the communication channels used are mostly direct interactions and telephone calls. It is always important to have proper feedback of KMS projects. Necessary measures should be established to assess the impact of KMS and degree of usage of the knowledge. Sometimes it is required to be known by the knowledge project leader whether the right knowledge is being captured or not. However at IBS-K, this initiative is relatively low as of now. It has been experienced that such project feedback facility is almost absent. The impact may be reflected in the usage of large number of edited books and journals, which are not adequately used by the faculty members. 64 percent respondents prefer external Journals and books as opposed to internal publications. On the other hand, formal course handbooks, power point presentations and other teaching tools are not commonly available to the teachers, who are to take new courses or who are not sufficiently equipped for teaching the courses. This may be stressful for the faculty member and goes against the principle of reusability of knowledge in the organisation.

IBS-K conducts a Faculty Development Program for its own faculty and teachers from other business schools, where eminent academicians and industry leaders are invited to share their experiences. Also, IBS-

K organises an academic symposium and a high-level corporate interaction forum every year. These events reflect the positive attempts of social interactions in terms of knowledge sharing at the IBS-K. It is important that the working knowledge needs to be captured and distributed through well-designed work processes only. At the IBS-K, a few methodologies have emerged to capture and use knowledge automatically through the work processes. Devices have been designed to evaluate faculty performances and distributed through the web site. Data is generated as part of the process. Some excellent data repositories of placements and summer projects have been designed, which get updated with work processes. This leads to efficiency of placing the students at corporate houses for summers and final jobs. In 2007, IBS-K has been very successful in placing 410 students in summer projects and 277 students in final jobs.

6.3 KM motivation / incentives and senior management support

IBS-K has taken considerable steps to motivate the faculty members at both individual and group levels towards the process of creating and distributing knowledge. The organisation provides better pay packages than those of similar activities and standards. Apart from the salary, there are number of incentives for positive contributions in the knowledge activities. The non-PhD members are always encouraged to complete doctoral program. The institute even bears the financial burden of PhD programs undertaken by a few faculty members, who enrol in the IBS PhD scheme. An appreciable amount of incentive facilities are being provided to the faculty members in order to increase knowledge activities in the community. It is experienced that a weeklong faculty development program (FDP) is conducted every summer at IBS-K, where all the members participate. All the cost of participation in the FDP is borne by the management. Nominations to seminars, external programs and conferences (including selected international conferences) are also provided to the members. In the year 2006-07, nearly 15 such nominations were recorded at IBS-K. There are also monetary incentives for publication of papers in internal journals and edited books published by the organisation. The faculty members, however, feel that prime movers for writing articles and books are peer recognition and annual job appraisal. Only 16 percent voted for money incentives. It is interesting to note that 70 percent of members perceive monetary incentive to be low compared to the writing effort. IBS-K has produced 45 research papers in the past year. Around 50 percent of the respondents indicated low time availability to take part in the activities related to knowledge contributions. They indicated their busy schedules mostly in teaching and examinations activities. One should note that for any institution of higher learning, published research articles, case studies and other documents may be extremely useful component for knowledge sharing, as well as these contribute to output performance of the given organisation in highly positive manner. Davenport and Prusak (1998) defined knowledge as an evolving mix of framed experience, values, contextual information and expert insight that provides a framework for evaluating and incorporating new experiences and information. In case of a sustainable academic institution, knowledge often becomes embedded not only in the form of high level research articles, but also in the form of presentations, lecture materials, book reviews or case studies. Thus, a stock of these outputs becomes essential to consider while measuring knowledge performance of an academic institution.

Apart from faculty development programs organised in regular intervals, IBS-K also sends selected faculty members to specialised training programs from time to time. Such specialised inputs help the faculty adapt to new technologies and changes in the management systems. IBS-K management is also eager to organise short-term management development programs (MDPs) by its own faculty members, where participants from industries and other institutes get opportunities to learn and interact. Ultimate objective of any KM project is to transform the organisation into a learning organisation. IBS-K has shown active interest in the process of continuous learning. There are significant encouragements to faculty members in pursuing their Ph.D. work. Frequent review of curriculum is essential for maintaining the standards of courses. Regular faculty feedback systems, industry interfaces through projects, management research and management development programs are indicators of continuous learning. Importance of rapidly changing curriculum cannot be ignored in a business school, which is oriented towards learning. The IBS-K frequently reviews and updates its curriculum. It has been observed that during the past three years, IBS-K has introduced more than 20 courses in the basket of electives, which the final year students can opt for. The emerging subjects like CRM, Business Intelligence, Managing Knowledge Workers, and Wealth Management are some examples, which have been included in the curriculum. The regular feedback and monitoring system works both ways from students as well as from the faculty members and the data is displayed in the 'Faculty Zone'. This enables the appraisal system to be realistic, dynamic and transparent to the concerned faculty member.

IBS-K has also been successful in collaborating its expertise with local industries and institutes. It takes active part by joining a number of management bodies of the Confederation of Indian Industries (Easter

Region), which is a strong mouthpiece of the industries located in this region. A number of collaborative projects, research programs and corporate social responsibility (CSR) oriented activities have been taken up by the business school in recent years. As part of CSR, IBS-K has also established The ICFAI Republic School to offer quality education at school level for children coming from underprivileged sections of the society. Finally, IBS-K management is also concerned about conducting annual conferences, specialised seminars and Management Development Programs (MDPs) throughout the calendar year. In the year 2006, MDPs and consultancy projects contributed significantly both in terms of revenue generation and knowledge creation and sharing.

Table 1: Assessment of KM involvement at IBS - K

Factors under consideration	KM involvement of the organisation (IBS-K)	KM performance perceived in the organisation (IBS-K)
Integrated technical infrastructure	High Dedicated computers available to each faculty and staff, High bandwidth internet, Office automation software and online database/repository.	Internet is major source of knowledge extraction. Websites are the most popular medium of knowledge acquisition after library books. Usage of electronic journals and databases are slowly increasing with time.
organisational culture	Relatively Low Mostly individualistic approach for knowledge sharing.	Sharing of knowledge limited to peer group internally. Communication is low or absent among other external business schools. A few have shown interactions with external experts predominantly based on personal acquaintance. IBS-K Faculty zone utilisation is low and erratic. Postings from faculty members are almost non-existent. Utilisation of internal journals for knowledge acquisition low compared to external journals.
Motivation and commitment of users	Moderate Pay-scale and allied benefits above sector average FDP organised on regular basis for faculty. Nomination to seminars/conferences. Monetary incentives for teaching/ publication/ research. Encouragement in pursuing PhD.	High number of faculty pursuing PhD programs. Increase in number of research publications. Monetary incentive for internal journals perceived to be low. Variety of internal journals and edited books published. No standard course handbooks for teachers. Attrition rate of faculty members perceived to be low.
Senior management support	High Top management commitment towards investment in infrastructure, training and development activities. Encouragement in specialised training and higher studies Frequent curriculum review Regular feedback system. Good industry interface (Internship programs/MDP).	Nomination to seminars/conferences of faculty members high and generally perceived to be useful. Few members nominated for highly specialised training programs Favourable response to feedback system Lukewarm response to curriculum, Internship programs in Faculty zone

7. Conclusion

The current exploratory study on the IBS-K will be useful to understand the complexities of the key mechanisms that a business school should adapt to be successful and sustainable in an academic marketplace. Management of the IBS-K has successfully implemented integrated technical infrastructure in phases over the past few years. This has resulted in the organisation adapting to the electronic medium for access and communication of information and knowledge. A portion of the faculty members are also conversant with access and usage of international journals and databases through Internet.

Table 2: Important performance parameters of IBS-K

Parameter	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07
Student enrolment	124	199	277
Faculty in roll	20	30	42
Faculty attrition	3	2	3
Minimum student salary (INR '000 annually)	120	120	180
Maximum student salary (INR '000 annually)	620	1400	1400
Median student salary (INR '000 annually)	252	320	400
Research articles published	17	27	45

The organisational culture of IBS-K is focused towards individual skill and performance improvement. But there is hardly any effort to form teams or groups for long-term projects and assignments. The faculty members are primarily responsible for teaching, project guidance and examination activities, although individual researches are encouraged to obtain a higher ranking among the business schools in the country. The departments are not provided with research grants or research-based industrial projects. These lead to lack of cross-functional activities among the members of IBS-K. IBS-K because of its superior pay structure and other incentives for additional academic activities, has managed to motivate faculty members towards continuous learning and also contribute positively to the organisation. This has also been reflected in the low rate of attrition of the faculty members during the past few years (table 2). The school frequently encourages its faculty members to participate actively in seminars and conferences both within the country and overseas. This undoubtedly will have an impact on the organisation in the long run.

Contribution of the top management has positively directed the organisation towards achieving a learning organisation orientation. As it is felt that all the faculty members should have doctoral degrees, the existing non-Ph.D members are always encouraged and often pressurised to pursue their doctoral activities. The IBS-K provides state-of-the-art infrastructure facilities to elevate its standard to an international level. It is also preparing for getting accreditation from AACSB, an US body for accreditation of international business schools. Developing an organisation towards a learning organisation needs time, practice and generative experience- it is therefore a long-term commitment. Although there is general agreement that there is "no right model" and learning organisations are created through attention to values and processes, the organisation needs to create a climate in which experiential learning is managed effectively throughout the workplace and in which individual learning is harnessed to achieve organisational learning. In the current study, it is revealed that IBS-K has been able to put positive efforts in all the four components discussed in section 5. Impact of these has been reflected in the output performance parameters of the business school, which may transform the school towards long-term sustainability in the academic marketplace. It is clearly indicated in the table 2 that the business school registered a growth of 40-50 percent every year in terms of student enrolment. Academic infrastructure including internal faculty and operating space are also increasing proportionately. It is also interesting to note that the management has been successful to keep faculty attrition at a very low level by providing attractive pay packages and other incentives. There has been a steady and significant growth in median, maximum and minimum salaries earned by students through campus placements. On the other hand, it is observed that research initiatives among the faculty members have significantly increased during the period under study. Networking with the industries in the form of MDPs, consultancy projects and internship projects have no doubt increased during this period.

In this paper, we have explored various influencing factors or antecedents, which are important to transform an academic institution of higher education into a learning organisation. We have argued earlier in this paper that no researchers so far have been able to identify the array of success factors to compose a transformation matrix we are looking for. However, our study on the IBS-K reveals the four important factors to be useful in the process of organisational learning and may be useful inputs to achieve leadership in the academic capitalism. Integrated technical infrastructure, organisational culture, motivation and commitment of users and senior management support proved to be successful in case of IBS-K. It was observed that IBS-K scored relatively low in the culture factor, which resulted in individualistic excellence rather than group excellence. This has been reflected in the scattered improvement activities among the faculty members. However, over the period an efficient performance monitoring may be able to rectify the knowledge strategies and bring further improvements into the system.

8. Limitations and future research

The current study is exploratory in nature and considers the case of a single business school in India. It will be interesting to study similar academic houses and compare the results for further precision in validation of the factors considered in the study. It will be extremely useful to generate a model based on confirmatory factor analysis and structural equation modelling in order to study independence or co-linearity among these factors and also the impact of these factors on individual performance variables.

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