CORPORATE IN COMPETENCY DEVELOPMENT: B-SCHOOL PERSPECTIVE

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ABSTRACT
India churns out tens of thousands of graduates each year but less than half of them are "employable" or possess the basic skills necessary for any industry role (report says)[1]. With the growing concern that B-schools are facing an identity and image crisis, it is imperative to develop research based teaching and a strategic collaboration with corporate to address the current business scenario. World-class research universities are pioneering such strategic partnership which can go beyond the traditional approach of funding for discrete research project.

Higher education needs to prepare students to tackle issues in the complex and challenging world that they will face as professionals[2]. The biggest challenge for the B-school in today's competitive environment is to develop a new breed of managers who have knowledge and necessary skills to lead the organization in the difficult time ahead. Developing every B-school student to be market-ready and make them employable is the foremost task in front of any B-school for their survival. In short, making it as a vital centre of competence to help tackle social challenges and drive economic growth are the key concerns for many B-schools. Business schools are grappling with the challenge to create new generation leaders for the companies. Competency development through corporate B-school partnership is the only way out. Industrial training by corporates has a pivotal role in competency development. This research work is intending to analyse and evaluate the training quality and support provided by corporates to develop skills and core competencies of a B-school student. Level of confidence and maturity a student gain after his/ her industrial training is another objective of this research paper. B-school students in Bangalore city would be included as part of data collection, and identify the skill gap, so that policy are addressed for better skill-job match.

Key words: B-school, Industry, Skill, Competency Development.

INTRODUCTION

Higher education needs to prepare students to tackle issues in the complex and challenging world that they will face as professionals (Brew, 2010 & Gutierrez, 2011). The biggest challenge for the B-school in today's competitive environment is to develop a new breed of managers who have knowledge and necessary skill to lead the organization in the difficult time ahead. Researchers and practitioners alike have raised the issue of the misalignment between the competencies which the MBA curriculum attempts to impart and the competencies which the managers need while on job (Anwar, Al-Shami, & Ahmed, 2006; Blass & Weight, 2005; Elliott & Goodwin, 1994; Gupta, Saunders, & Smith, 2007; Kleiman & Kass, 2007; Rubin & Dierdorff, 2009; Jain & Kamal, 2010). To demolish this gap a healthy conversation between corporate and B-school about their demand and ideas is the need of the hour.

B-school graduates convert their theoretical knowledge into practical skill during their industrial training. Here corporates play a very important role to shape the future of a graduate. Well-structured training programme can

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[1] Report by Aspiring Mind.

[2] Brew, 2010. Gutierrez, 2011.

lead to clear vision among the graduates about the level of competency they need in future to become a part of an organization and how they can climb the ladder gradually.In one of the Indian studies by T V Rao, June 2007 W.P. No. 2007-06-05 IIM A Research and Publications IIM A has listed most frequently mentioned strengths of Top level managers from Indian Industry (N = 531 Top level Managers assessed by around 5300 assessors. Strengths mentioned frequently for more than 10% of the 531 managers.

STRENGTH	PERCENTAGE
1. Domain knowledge	40%
2. Communication	28%
3. Team work	23%
4. Hard working	21%
5. Interpersonal skills	19%
6. Calm & composed	19%
7. Delegates	16%
8. Organized	13%
9. Motivational skill	10%
10. Positive attitude & thinking	10%
11. Open minded	10%
12. Analytical	10%
13. Honesty & Integrity	10%
14. Innovative	About 10%

A proper combination of above mentioned skills, knowledge and attitude can develop required competency among management graduates in India.

COMPETENCY
Success of a company is most often based on a unique and rare ability of its employees to do something well. Continuous learning plays an important role in company's success.There is variety of thought related to competency. But for this present research the word competency has been considered as three overlapping domain, i.e. knowledge, attitude and skill. To develop competency among management graduates all three domain has equal importance in the process of value addition of a company. Competency-savvy managers work well across organizational boundaries, willingly share resources, and think long term (Prahalad and Gary, 1990).

ABOUT THE STUDY
This particular study focused on a broad objective to evaluate and analyse (as per management student's perception) the competency development among B-school students after completion of their industrial training. This paper also seeks to assess and understand the student's perspective after completion of industrial training towards the mismatch (if any) between theory taught in universities and practical training given by corporates.

METHODOLOGY
SAMPLE AND PROCEDURE
The sample for this study consisted of students from various B-schools in Bangalore and Mangalore. A list of target B-schools were drawn by convenient sampling. Four B-schools from two cities of Karnataka were selected for data collection. Students of these selected B-schools had undergone training in approximately twenty different companies in different sector in all over India. 208 questionnaires were distributed through various modes. Some research questionnaires were hand delivered to the student studying in universities at different semester. These students were chosen as per their availability. In most of the cases questionnaire were got fulfilled in front of the researcher and few were collected on next day. Some questionnaires were also delivered by email. Fifty one questionnaires were received from various places out of that forty were complete questionnaires. Response rate was only 25% in this study.

RESEARCH QUESTIONNAIRE
The research questionnaire, which was developed particularly for this study, comprised two sections; Section A and Section B. Section-A contains total six questions which solicited information on personal profile of the student such as gender, age, specialization, work experience before joining MBA, etc. Section-B highlights total twenty eight questions on various aspects like competency development, training structure and procedure. Out of twenty eight questions eight were open ended. From remaining twenty questions some were multiple choice and some were yes/no type.

SAMPLING ISSUES
The bulk of the sampling for the study is not administered because of time constraints of responders (In most of the B-school in Bangalore students who has done at least one industrial training was not present physically, during the month of study), and therefore, researcher view this sampling approach as somewhat narrow and, accordingly, believe that the implications should be viewed with caution and perhaps confined to the specific types of organizations that were sampled.

ANALYSIS
Study says that out of 51 responses of B-school students (18 Female & 33 male), 84% said yes that training has developed new skills whereas 16% of population said training did not develop new skills among them. 92% of B-school students believe (as per data) that their soft skill has enhanced during training. 82% of population feel skilled in their particular area after training and 18% of students did not feel skilled after training in a particular area. 76% population considered duration of training was sufficient and 24% said no, duration was not sufficient to learn some new skills. About the mismatch between theory taught in universities/B-schools and practical (real corporate challenges), 51% of population said yes and 49% of population said no. 74% of population feel that their expectation from training has fulfilled and 26% feel just opposite. When asked about their expectations from training, only 37% of population answered, 63% population comes under no answer category for the particular question. Figure 1 (Frequency Bar chart) & Figure 2 support the above discussion.
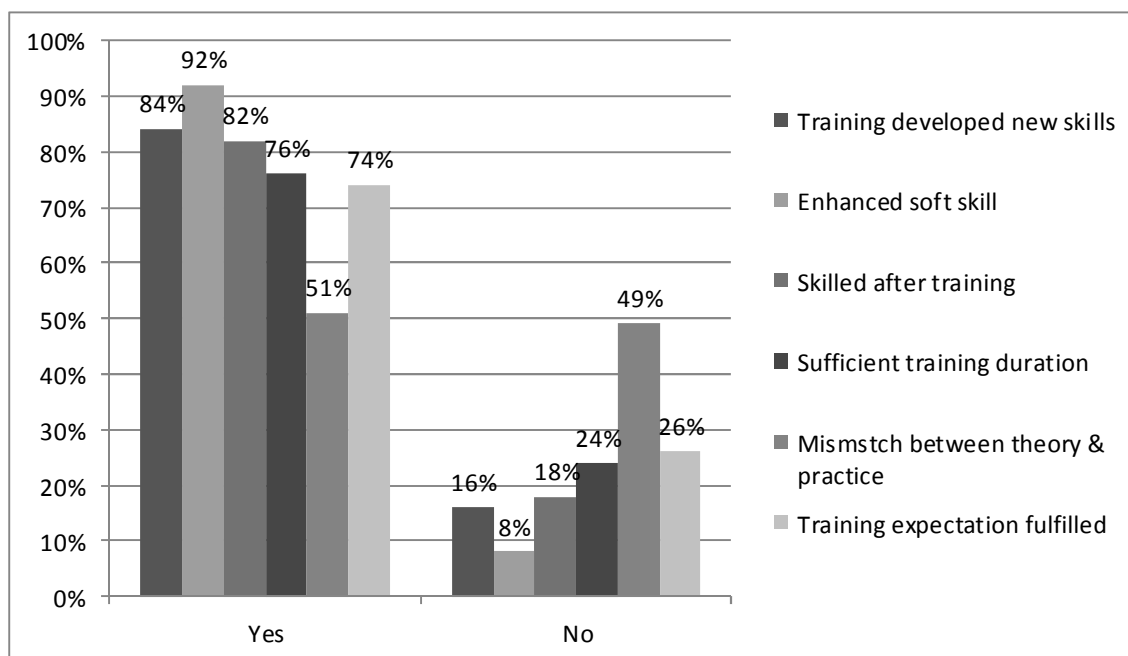
Figure 1 (Frequency Bar Chart)
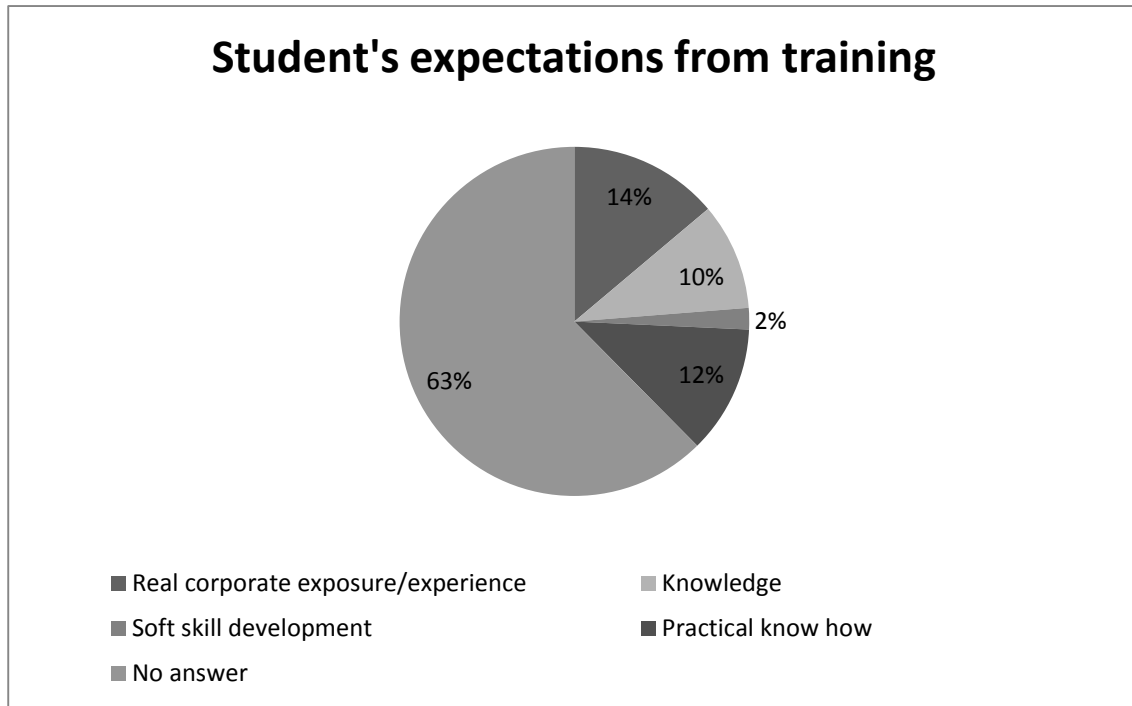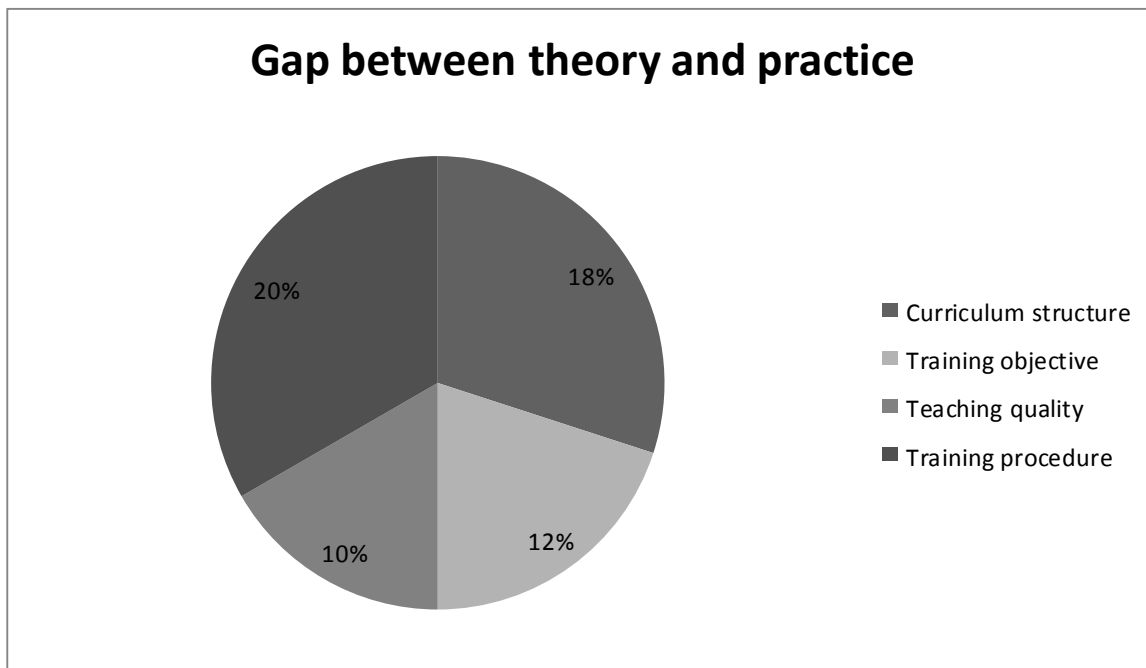
Figure 2 (Expectations from training)

Student's expectations from training

- ■ Real corporate exposure/experience
- ■ Soft skill development
- ■ No answer
- ■ Knowledge
- ■ Practical know how

Figure 2 (Gap between theory & practice)

Gap between theory and practice

- ■ Curriculum structure
- ■ Training objective
- ■ Teaching quality
- ■ Training procedure

Above figure.3 shows training procedure is one of the biggest reasons followed by curriculum structure behind the gap between theory and practice.

33% of population feel very confident in the particular area they underwent training, 4% of population are not so confident, 59% of population are somewhat confident and 4% of population has said that there is no change in

their confidence level even after completion of training. When they asked about the structure of training, 31% of population said it was well structured, 53% feel somewhat structured and 16% of population believe that training was not at all structured.

Figure 3 (overall satisfaction from training) depicts the overall satisfaction of B-school students from training in their respective area.

Figure 3 (Overall satisfaction from training)
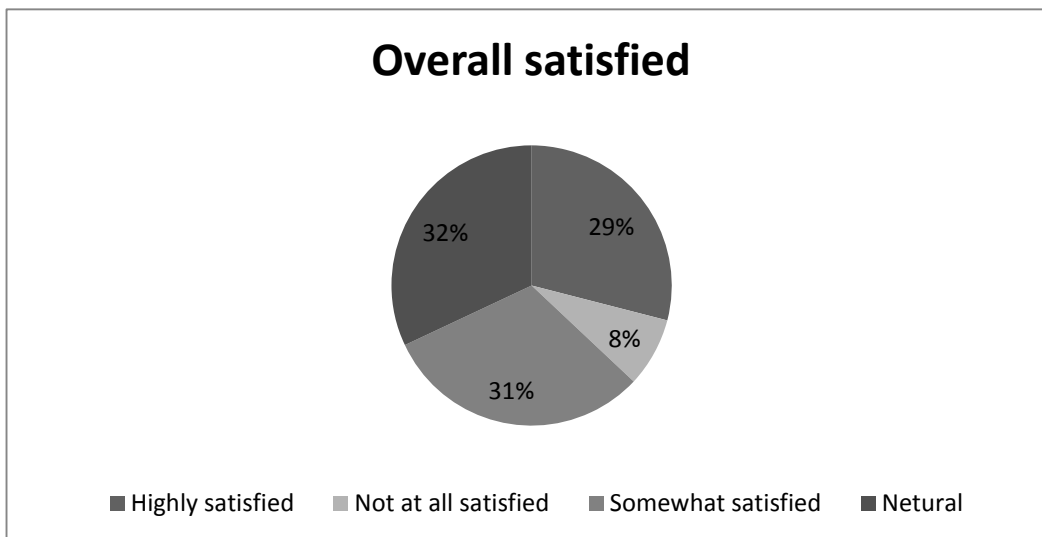
From cross tabulation (see annexure; Table.1), among the respondent who said training was well structured 81% are highly satisfied, 12% are somewhat satisfied and 6% are neutral. Among the respondent who said not at all structured 38% are not at all satisfied, 25% are somewhat satisfied and 37% are neutral.

Figure 4 (Training structure)
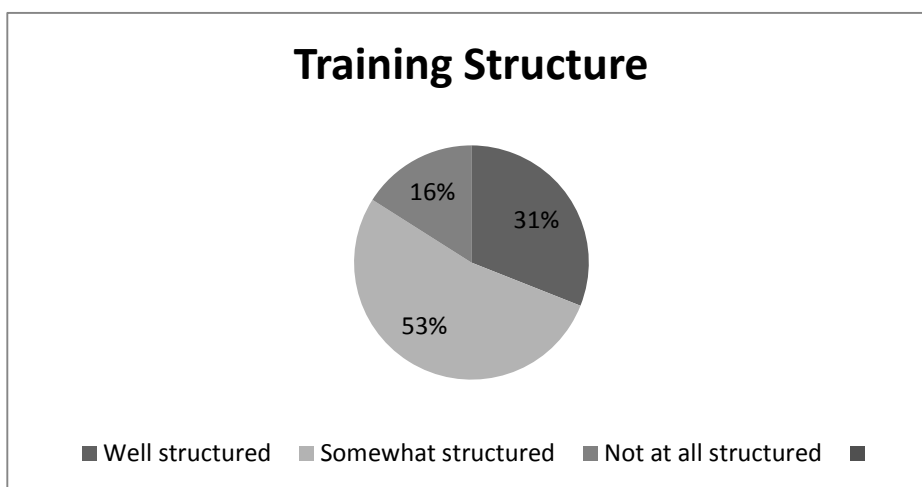
Study indicates (see annexure; Table.2) that among the respondent who said training was well structured, 100% respondents believe that training has developed new skills. Among the respondent who said training was

somewhat structured, 85% respondent developed new skills. Among the respondent who said training was not at all structured, 50% developed new skills.

From crosstab (see annexure; Table.3) 74% respondents who believe that training will help them in career 42% said training was well structured. 10% respondents who believe training will not help them in career 40% said training was not at all structured. 16% respondent can't say that training will help them in career 62% believe training was not at all structured and 38% believe somewhat structured.

Study reveals (see annexure; Table.4) that among the respondent who said there is a mismatch between theory and practical 31% believe gap is in curriculum structure, 19% said gap in training objective, 15% sees gap in teaching quality and 35% of respondent said the gap is in training procedure.

FINDINGS

1. B-school students (sample population) were asked about their expectations from training; a big lot (63%) of respondent could not answer. This indicates lack of clarity in students' community about what to expect from training.
2. Another important finding is though 63% of the population could not answer about their expectation from training but only 25% said that their expectations from training were not fulfilled. 75% had their expectations fulfilled, it clearly shows that there is no benchmark for them to expect from training. Academic environment could not bring them on a platform where they could build their expectations from training.
3. 76% of respondents who said training duration was sufficient were mostly confined to a particular kind of work that too very basic level. 24% respondents said training duration was less to learn new skill, were actually got exposure to various activities of an organization. It means Corporates lack planned and structured training where they could actively engage them and develop their competencies.
4. 51% of respondent believes that there is a mismatch between theory taught in universities and requirements of corporate. Factors which create this gap are mainly training procedure (20%) and curriculum structure (18%). Training procedure is the first factor to create this gap followed by curriculum structure.
5. When asked for suggestion to improve current training system, many of the respondents said that trainees should be considered as a part of the organization and should be given opportunity to know the real corporate challenges and develop skills and competency to face those challenges.

CONCLUSION

The training is an important tool to connect Corporates with Academics but the levers of this tool are not in sync. Academics and Corporate both have not been very successful to use this opportunity effectively to prepare a competent manpower for future. Academic institutions are responsible for creating right frame of learning desires among students and Corporates are responsible to fulfil the need and beyond. Then only employable graduates will be produced in this country.

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ANNEXURES
Table 1. Training was well structured * overall satisfied Cross tabulation

		Over all satisfied				
		Highly satisfied	Not at all satisfied	Somewhat satisfied	Neutral	Total
Training was well-structured	Well-structured Count	13	0	2	1	16
	% within training was well structured	81.3%	.0%	12.5%	6.3%	100%
	Not at all structured Count	0	3	2	3	8
	% within training was well structured	.0%	37.5%	25.0%	37.5%	100%
	Somewhat structured Count % within training was well structured	2	1	12	12	27
		7.4%	3.7%	44.4%	44.4%	100%
	Total Count % within training was well structured	15	4	16	16	51
		29.4%	7.8%	31.4%	31.4%	100%

Table 2. Training was well structured * training has developed new skill Cross tabulation

		Training has developed new skills		
		Yes	No	Total
Training was well-structured	Well-structured	16		16
	Count % within training was well structured	100%	.0%	100%
	Not at all structured	4	4	8
	Count % within training was well structured	50.0%	50.0%	100.0%
	Somewhat structured	23	4	27
	Count % within training was well structured	85.2%	14.8%	100%
	Total Count % within training was well structured	43	8	51
		84.3%	15.7%	100%

Table 3. Training was well structured * training will help you in career Cross tabulation

		Training will help in career			
		Yes	No	Can't say	Total
Training was well- structured	Well-structured Count % within training was well structured	16 100%	0 .0%	0 .0%	16 100%
	Not at all structured Count % within training was well structured	1 12.5%	2 25.0%	5 62.5%	8 100%
	Somewhat structured Count % within training was well structured	21 77.8%	3 11.1%	3 11.1%	27 100%
	Total Count % within training was well structured	38 74.5%	5 9.8%	8 15.7%	51 100%

Table 4. Training was well structured * training will help you in career Crosstabulation

		Where is the gap you feel					
		Curriculum structure	Training objective	Teaching quality	Training procedure	Not applicable	Total
Find mismatch between theory and practice	Yes count % within find mismatch between theory & practice	8 30.8%	5 19.2%	4 15.4%	9 34.6%	0 0%	26 100%
	No count % within find mismatch between theory & practice	1 4%	1 4%	1 4%	1 4%	21 84%	25 100%
	Total count % within find mismatch between theory & practice	9 17.6%	6 11.8%	5 9.8%	10 19.6%	21 41.2%	51 100%