

'Business education should break free of old model'

Speaking at an IFIM B-School conclave, IIM-K Director Debashis Chatterjee said students should be emotionally literate

TEAM BLOC

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Management education needs to be liberated from the teaching methods of the past, said Debashis Chatterjee, Director, IIM Kozhikode, at the inaugural of an international conclave on learning ecosystems, on Tuesday. The event was organised by IFIM Business School, Bengaluru to commemorate 25 years of its founding.

Business school graduates will be solving fewer technical problems and more adaptive ones, and they will have to contend with a wide range of workplace options and uncertainties in the VUCA world, he said.

"Nothing in an MBA class teaches them to be emotionally literate," he added.

Chatterjee said it's no surprise that the biggest draw for recruiters are the PPE (politics, philosophy, eco-

nomics) graduates of Oxford and Harvard, as they are more adaptive and flexible at looking at problems. "The focus of management education today is too narrow and the messaging too linear," he added. Chatterjee said the priority is to break free from the 'engineering' model of management, complete with algorithm spread sheets and killer apps and move "towards unscripted real-world challenges that concern us as human beings."

Liberal enquiry

Emphasising that management education should move towards liberalism, he said, "We need to unlock the MBA curriculum from the determinism of the scientific method to the freedom of liberal enquiry. Liberal education in management is not a self-in-



Debashis Chatterjee, Director, IIM Kozhikode, in Bengaluru on Tuesday

dulgent luxury nor an ivory tower experiment as recruiters are competing to hire skills of creativity, listening empathy and vision. Liberal education is the response to future, not past challenges."

"Education of the heart will be critical in a world of profound interconnectedness. *Buddhivritti* and *hridayavritti* have go in tandem. Students need to develop relational competencies and be aware of the interconnection of self, others and larger systems," emphasised Chatterjee, adding: "Manage-

ment deals with people, their values, their growth and development. Human beings are the source of management. AI, analytics are just resources."

Earlier in his talk, Chatterjee said that the 21st century learning is not about transferring data from one head to many heads, as is done now, but from many hubs to more hubs. "Learning is now a function of flexitime, not a class period. Technology has enabled learning to spread from hardware to software and now to everywhere," he

said. With the jobs market in transition and the gig economy booming, the best chance of workers succeeding is for them to have an education throughout their entire working life.

Lifelong learning

"Lifelong learning is important for the next generation," said Eric Cornuel, Director-General, European Foundation of Management Development (EFMD), through video-conferencing at the conclave in Bengaluru.

He questioned whether traditional education and training models by business schools and corporate universities will help workers remain employable and relevant.

"Even if automation does not displace millions of jobs, career patterns will change and, to remain competitive and give low- and high-skilled workers the best chance of success, we need to offer career-focused education during the life span of an individual," said Cornuel.