Management Education, Satisfaction, and Career Growth:
A Perspective of Techno-Managers

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The chapter aims at addressing some of the critical questions that will be of immense help to engineering graduates who are likely to consider pursuing management degrees. Data were obtained from a sample of 96 techno managers to explore their perception of career growth and opportunities after pursuing their management education. In particular, the chapter examines in detail the relationship between management education and career satisfaction in techno managers. Also, factors that influence in choosing a management degree were studied. A few of the critical findings from the study were that gender has not shown any significant difference in satisfaction. At the same time, experience has shown a significant difference in satisfaction. From the results obtained, it could be concluded that the techno managers were found to be satisfied with the career choice as an MBA after engineering.

INTRODUCTION

The world is moving at a faster pace. In this Volatility, Uncertainty, Complexity, and Ambiguity (VUCA) world, there is a considerable need for leaders and efficient individuals who can face challenges and turbulence in their roles at their organizations. In most cases, an engineer in today's world is technically strong in his specialization and is transforming himself into a manager. While this transformation happens, it would be of immense use to have pursued a management degree. A management degree will help engineers to make their final transformation into an all-rounder, charged with looking after a variety of departments and functions, not just their technical teams. It paves the way for accelerated promotion and enables them to realize their potential at an earlier age of their career.

Engineers are accustomed to solving technical problems, but managerial situations often require the use of much broader thinking, involving, and having concepts like financial or marketing or human resources. As they advance to the top-level positions in their career, they will need to think beyond their engineering domain, i.e., overall business like working with teams, projects, budgets, new product development, understanding customer needs, and analyzing market dynamics. These skills are essential as skills of engineer viz. elements of design, development, and engineering production (Caldecote, 1986). One who understands every aspect of business and builds a robust set of business skills can perform their duties efficiently and effectively. Management skills can take an engineer's career to the next level. To stay competitive in the job market, aspiring managers and engineers who want to advance in their careers need a diverse and robust set of skills. Baruch and Peiperl (2000) found MBA graduates to report higher workplace skills/competencies after their MBA education.

In India, the engineering curriculum represents more about their specialization in their engineering stream. After understanding the need for the management essentials in engineers, some of the technical institutions have started introducing one or two courses like engineering economics, accountancy, project management, human resource management, marketing management, and entrepreneurship in their curriculum. It is only when their roles begin to change, and while they grow up their career and when they start to take on broader responsibilities, they will realize the importance of these skills. Studying one or two courses in management essentials may not help an engineer to work efficiently or to face the problems that arise in the real world. To overcome them, engineers would need to have the management blend. A successful career after MBA entails both securing the entry-level position and doing well enough in both that position and subsequent positions to have a career growth.