

How government support, good research and thrust on quality can make Bengaluru an education hub

Educationalists and industry insiders came together to discuss how Bengaluru students can be made industry-ready during the Bengaluru Chancellor's Conclave. Experts said that 95 per cent of candidates could not be hired, not because there was no vacancy, but the applicants were not fit for the job. Globally, only 48 per cent of the employees can meet the requirements of their job while in India, only 40 per cent fit the list. According to the World Bank report on learning, an average Indian youth cannot do complex calculations. They can read but cannot decipher the meaning behind it. Studies have shown that only 40 pc of youth are employable for technical work, said Sumit Kumar (Vice-President and Business Head, NETAP at TeamLease Skills University) who was moderating the session.

Around 50 per cent of the organisations have blamed skill shortage as one of the major reasons for lack of employment while 45 per cent of the employers have said that hiring people without the required skill set leads to a high hiring cost and 54 per cent of the organisations have said hiring people lacking talent leads to productivity issues. Educationalists and industry insiders highlighted the need for organisations and institutions to work more closely together to better train students and solve challenges faced by the industry. On one hand, educationalists complained that unlike in other nations, Bengaluru-based organisations do not consult academia for helping them address industry issues.

"In the West, corporates are depending more and more on institutes. That culture needs to happen here as well. Every now and then, a hackathon can be organized by corporates and offer letters as prizes to winners. That is one way in which they can motivate and inspire students. It is not possible to train students to cater to the needs of every organization. So the organisations have to come together and tell academia what is the need of the hour, what are technologies we can include in our syllabus. Everywhere it is possible to bring a change in the interest of the corporate, the student and the institute, we have to bring it", said Dr Savitha, placement head at MS Ramaiah Institute.

“Once a year, I hear from institutions asking me to grant internships to their students. For the rest of the year, I don’t hear from them at all. There should be more regular interactions between industry and institutions so that students are being prepared for practical challenges in the industry even while they’re still studying”, said Rajashekar Rai, Global HR Director of Sasmos Tech. “The industry also has to prepare the hiring managers to recognise what kind of candidates you can get from colleges. Institutions have their own limitations. They have infrastructure issues and a lack of access to the practical issues of the industry. I represent a defence organization. We manufacture different electrical, electronic and electro-mechanical components for UAVs, missiles and aircraft. This segment cannot expect readymade students at all.

It’s impossible”, says Rajashekar Rai, Global HR Director of Sasmos Tech. Experts also called for more apprenticeship and internship opportunities for students in the industry highlighting the role of such programs in preparing students to be ready for the industry. The apprenticeship in India is only 0.1 per cent compared to 3-4 per cent of the same in the European market and 0.5 per cent in the United States. Experts also highlighted the need for more interactions between students and industry experts. “We have mandatory internships for our students, apart from guest lecturers every alternative day by people in the industry.

Our students who have completed the internships come back and give a presentation about it. We make sure at least one industry expert is present to judge the student”, said Dr Reema Chaudhury, Director, Directorate of Student Affairs, and MS Ramaiah University of applied sciences. “We send our students for internships every two days a week. Apart from that, we make sure our students have regular interactions with industry experts”, said Dr H R Venkatesha, Director, Acharya B School. Educationalists highlighted a silver lining of the pandemic. As virtual interactions have become more normalized, it has become more common for Bengaluru students to interact with CEOs and industry insiders sitting across the world in the US or Canada. Online seminars are easier for both students and guests from the industry to attend.

Choosing the right curriculum is key to success

Let me remind you of the number of students going out of this country. If that money had been saved, I think this country would be very different. We have not given enough importance to addressing the brain drain. Today the trend is even for undergraduate studies as we are sending students to other countries

Dr. M R Jayaram, Chairman, Ramaiah Group of Institutions

We need support from the government as well as tweaks in their policies. Currently, private universities are providing world-class education. But there are issues like 18 pc GST and high property tax which are detrimental. I also urge institutes that have been providing quality education for 15 to 20 years to offer distance education

Dr. P Shyama Raju, Chancellor, Reva University

The Centre of Excellence should be set up in all the four directions of the city. Currently, a Centre of excellence has been set up at Electronics city and it is quite far. The Government should take a lead in setting up these centres. It will be expensive for one institute to set up such a centre so it should be pooled in so that all are benefited

Dr. Joseph VG, Chancellor, Garden City College

Govt should allow private educational institutions to impart agricultural courses. As more than 70 pc of our population are still dependent on agriculture, it is not right to ignore these huge numbers. It is essential to provide scientific training to those involved in agricultural activities

Narayan Rao R. Maanay, Secretary, BNM Institute of Technology

The educational institutions have been hit hard due to Covid. It is not right to impose non-residential property tax on educational institutions. I urge that there should be 25 pc service taxes like earlier. We need to stress on digitisation. Financial support should be given for educational institutions for requisite hardware

Dr T Somashekar, Chairman, Indian Academy Group of Institutions

Any educational institution has to be financially very strong to give quality education. Today, due to the Covid situation, in the higher education industry, a lot of students are finding difficulty in paying the fees. Regular scholarships are taking a lot of time to reach the institutions

Dr T Somashekar, Chairman, Indian Academy Group of Institutions

Training the teachers is key for quality education. Currently, we are facing a shortage of quality teachers and hence there is a need to train the teachers. Though NEP has been rolled out, there is a lack of awareness among the rural students. I urge govt to take up awareness camps related to NEP at taluk, district levels

Keerthan Kumar CEO, Soundarya group of institutions

Important exams like CET and NEET should be held on time. If there is a delay, students may head out of the State. A medical college is required to have 20 acres to operate but how is it justified if 100 property tax is imposed? We request a waiver on this tax

Rajiv Gowda S.V, CEO, East Point Group of Institution

Karnataka has already implemented the national education policy on October 18, 2021, and the other states are looking up to Karnataka due to their implementation policy. The NEP requires curriculums to be forward looking specially with the onslaught of digital technology which has helped in connecting people irrespective of the time and location.”

Dr. Venugopal K R, Vice Chancellor, Bangalore University

Focus on syllabi in keeping with the scenario. There should be internship options in government offices

Prof. Gopalkrishna Joshi, Executive Director, Karnataka State Higher Education Council

NEP has given freedom of choice for students. Now, students can become good citizens by studying science, technology, finance, history

P Pradeep, Commissioner, Collegiate Education

Covid has made digital education a big stake. Multi-media plays a very important role in digital education. However, there is a lack of training in this space. Hence, we need to train the trainers in such a way that teachers are good at digital training as well.

Dr. M Sai Baba, Registrar, Ramaiah University of Applied Sciences

“The teachers should understand what the student wants and set the curriculum. They should translate the knowledge into the generation. There is no shortage of data; but , we need to motivate students to adapt to the new learning system as well as hands-on training. Faculty members should be empowered to have a flexible thought process

Dr. Kuldeep Kumar Raina, Vice chancellor, Ramaiah University of Applied Science

“Multidisciplinary education is the way forward as we are living in an interconnected world and every discipline is very closely related with each other. Curriculum under NEP is an integrated system where skill development and other core learnings form an important part

Dr. Lingaraj Gandhi, Vice Chancellor, Bengaluru Central University

“When we think of curriculum, we think of the stakeholders, which in this case are the students. The new system of entry and exit options will benefit students. We can give 40 pc of our education from open platforms. We are designing the curriculum in a way that the students get the skill not just from the core faculty but also from core values

Professor G R Naik, Vice Chancellor, Garden City University

“While designing the curriculum there are quite a few challenges, should the curriculum be designed based on the requirements of the industry or should one become leaders and make policies that would encourage people to invest here. Looking around I feel that as educationalists we are only reacting and not proacting.”

Dr. Nagraju, Principal, Amrita University

“While designing the curriculum we should keep in mind that our goal is to make the students more employable and we should teach the students to be on their own, and the students should

be encouraged to take up higher education. The curriculum should also help in the overall personality development of the students.”

Dr. S Y Kulkarni, Director, BNM institute of Technology

My observation as an academician for 40 years and then an assessor of NAAC is that we lack behind in industry-institute interaction. Let there be an industry-institution interaction policy. I do not think that unless such a policy comes in, the time students spend in internships will become more meaningful”

Kiran G Reddy, CEO and founder principal of AIMS Institutes.

Every now and then, a hackathon can be organized by corporates and offer letters as prizes to winners. That is one way in which they can motivate and inspire students. It is not possible to train students to cater to the needs of every organization. So the organisations have to come together and tell academia what is the need of the hour, what are technologies we can include in our syllabus.

Dr Savitha, Placement head, MS Ramaiah Institute.

The “5 Ds” that would help in implementing NEP - “Designing the curriculum, delivery of curriculum, developing students to be problem solvers, directing the students and devoting students to believing in the process.” The experts ended the session by emphasizing that grades do not accurately reflect the true potential of the students and organisations should not gauge students based on their grades but should focus on their skills instead. They also stressed again that the collaboration of institutions and industry would benefit the students in their future.

R Samuel, Manager, Career Development Center, REVA University

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Rajashekar Rai, Global HR Director of Sasmos Tech

Globally, only 48 per cent of the employees can meet the requirements of their job while in India, only 40 per cent fit the list. According to the World Bank report on learning, an average Indian youth cannot do complex calculations. They can read but cannot decipher the meaning behind it. Studies have shown that only 40 pc of youth are employable for technical work

Sumit Kumar, Vice-President and Business Head, TeamLease Skills Unv

There is a good industry-academia tie up in the foreign countries. We also need to ave a robust tie up. There should be stress on teachers training.

Adviteeya Kumar Uday, CEO, Cambridge Institute of Technology

Bengaluru which has earned many sobriquets like Silicon City, Start-up City should soon become Education Hub

Chetan Singai, Special Officer, Karnataka Council for Higher Education