CRITICAL ISSUES IN PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION

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Professional education has grown very rapidly in India over the last 30 years, with the proportion of those who attend tertiary institutions to the relevant age group rising from 6% in 1983 to around 20% by 2011. Sadly, this growth has been greatly compressed into only a few areas. First, most of the growth has occurred primarily in professional fields, especially engineering and management and has been in private institutes rather than public ones. Such rapid growth has given rise to crucial challenges. Apart from the need to ensure quality to build graduate education and research universities, to provide equity of access and build excellent liberal arts universities, there are new emerging issues in the professional education.

Student Learning - Student learning is everything from different pathways to graduation, encouraging student voice in student learning, and encouraging them for larger conversations about their education (Lisa Nielsen's Innovative Educator blog that focusses on student voice). So often we focus on teaching, but it's learning that matters most.

Technology - Even after all these years, technology is still a hot button issue. Some people love it and use it flawlessly every day, while others hate it and don't see why they need to be forced to use it at all. Resistance to technology comes in many forms, but one of the key resistance challenges identified in the report is 'comfort with the status quo'. According to researchers, teachers and school leaders often see technological experimentation as outside the scope of their job descriptions.

Social Media - Twitter has exploded over the past few years. More and more educators are joining and finding members to their Professional Learning Network (PLN). What's even better is that they are sharing resources and they are also using it to connect for professional development.

Social media will be a major important player in the years to come.

Professional development - Key among all challenges is the lack of adequate, ongoing professional development for teachers who are required to integrate new technologies into their classrooms yet who are unprepared or unable to understand new technologies.

Effective formative assessments - Assessment is an important driver for educational practice and change, and over the last few years we have seen a welcome rise in the use of formative assessment in educational practice. However, there is still an assessment gap in how changes in curricula and new skill demands are implemented in education. Simple applications of digital media tools offer considerable promise in giving teachers timely feedback they can use.

Thus, in view of the above discussion, we can predict a paradigm shift in the education delivery module.

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