

FUNDAMENTALS OF HIGHER EDUCATION - FRESH VISION

Neeta Baporikar



Himalaya Publishing House
ISO 9001:2008 CERTIFIED

FUNDAMENTALS OF HIGHER EDUCATION – FRESH VISION

Neeta Baporikar

Professor (Strategy and Entrepreneurship),
Namibia University of Science and Technology, Namibia.
Doctoral Guide, University of Pune, India.



Himalaya Publishing House

ISO 9001:2008 CERTIFIED

© **Author**

No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording and/or otherwise without the prior written permission of the publisher.

First Edition: 2017

Published by : Mrs. Meena Pandey for **Himalaya Publishing House Pvt. Ltd.**,
"Ramdoot", Dr. Bhalerao Marg, Girgaon, Mumbai - 400 004.
Phone: 022-23860170/23863863, Fax: 022-23877178
E-mail: himpub@vsnl.com; Website: www.himpub.com

Branch Offices :

New Delhi : "Pooja Apartments", 4-B, Murari Lal Street, Ansari Road, Darya Ganj,
New Delhi - 110 002. Phone: 011-23270392/23278631; Fax: 011-23256286

Nagpur : Kundanlal Chandak Industrial Estate, Ghat Road, Nagpur - 440 018.
Phone: 0712-2738731/3296733; Telefax: 0712-2721216

Bengaluru : Plot No. 91-33, 2nd Main Road, Seshadripuram, Behind Nataraja Theatre,
Bengaluru - 560020. Phone: 080-41138821; Mobile: 9379847017, 9379847005

Hyderabad : No. 3-4-184, Lingampally, Beside Raghavendra Swamy Matham, Kachiguda,
Hyderabad - 500 027. Phone: 040-27560041/27550139

Chennai : New-20, Old-59, Thirumalai Pillai Road, T. Nagar, Chennai - 600 017.
Mobile: 9380460419

Pune : First Floor, "Laksha" Apartments, No. 527, Mehunpura, Shaniwarpeth
(Near Prabhat Theatre), Pune - 411 030. Phone: 020-24496323/24496333;
Mobile: 09370579333

Lucknow : House No. 731, Shekhupura Colony, Near B.D. Convent School, Aliganj,
Lucknow - 226 022. Phone: 0522-4012353; Mobile: 09307501549

Ahmedabad : 114, "SHAIL", 1st Floor, Opp. Madhu Sudan House, C.G. Road, Navrang Pura,
Ahmedabad - 380 009. Phone: 079-26560126; Mobile: 09377088847

Ernakulam : 39/176 (New No.: 60/251), 1st Floor, Karikkamuri Road, Ernakulam,
Kochi - 682011. Phone: 0484-2378012, 2378016; Mobile: 09387122121

Bhubaneswar : 5, Station Square, Bhubaneswar - 751 001 (Odisha).
Phone: 0674-2532129; Mobile: 09338746007

Kolkata : 108/4, Beliaghata Main Road, Near ID Hospital, Opp. SBI Bank,
Kolkata - 700 010, Phone: 033-32449649; Mobile: 7439040301

DTP by : **Rajani Tambe.**

Printed at : M/s. Charita Impressions, Hyderabad on behalf of HPH

PREFACE

With more books on education especially higher education than most faculty members, policymakers have time to read and few professional incentives to do so that encourage them to do so, it seems prudent to begin by asking why.

Why do we need yet another book on higher education?

It may be that authors lack some objectivity when it comes to answering the question, but it seems to me that there are five reasons that might be offered in support of this particular book. I did not have them, this clearly in mind when I started, but as I now see the book in its entirety, I believe they justify yet another book on higher education, specifically one that explores how the different facets of higher education need to be seen in a holistic and integrated manner to facilitate better learning, lifelong learning and knowledge society.

This particular book is needed because after many years, the education community has finally discovered that higher education is more than teaching – it is more about learning process, student development, faculty development, research process, academic leadership and knowledge management and we need resources that further cultivate and capitalize on that interest. That we have so long ignored looking at these aspects in a holistic way is somewhat difficult to explain. It seems more a case of benign neglect than wilful rejection. Most of us just assumed that higher education was an automatic, inevitable outcome of good teaching, policies and programmes and so we focused on developing these that too in a silo approach. That we all but exclusively focused on them in a linear way is a fact documented by even a cursory content review of the education literature. Its books, journals, magazines, and other publications address every aspect of how to teach or how to do research or how to do faculty development, etc. No corresponding cadre of volumes describe all these facets of higher education at this level of detail.

As a result, practitioners and policymakers know considerably less about higher education in an integrated manner learning than they do about teaching-learning process, student development, faculty development, research process and academic leadership leading to the need for effective knowledge creation and management. The learning outcomes of higher education cannot be assumed or taken for granted. This book aims to cultivate our understanding of higher education in a more holistic and inclusive way – it does so by linking the various processes in knowledge creation to practice.

It addresses a simple question—what should higher education embed to make effect and create lifelong learning in this knowledge society? Second, despite the widespread interest in higher education, few resources translate the talk into concrete policies and practices. I am regularly perplexed and dismayed at how ideas and issues in higher education become trendy and faddish. Conferences feature them as themes, periodical publications prepare special issues on the topic, and blue ribbon committees write reports on their state within institutions. But does all this attention generate change in higher education practice? I am doubtful, in part because most of the talk occurs at such a high level of abstraction. It would be presumptuous and inappropriate to present a definitive set of policies and practices for higher education, but there is a need for ideas and examples, and that is what this book aims to provide. It seeks to answer this question: What should higher education fundamentally include or be about in order to maximize outcomes for students and society at large? Third, we need resources that propose higher education strategies based on what is known about it. The need to connect practice to what has been discovered

empirically is obvious. Behind all the policies, practices, and behaviours used to facilitate learning ought to be some theoretical or empirical rationale. The justification ought to be more substantive than doing something because it has always been done that way. It is as if the two closely related territories of teaching and learning, students and faculty, research and practice, institution frameworks and its leadership are separate planets, unknown and seemingly inaccessible to one another.

Who should build the bridges necessary to connect these?

As it stands now, the task is the responsibility of no one, and so few in the academy try to connect them. Those of us who do build the bridges know that there are no blueprints to follow and few rewards to honour our work. But we keep building because it seems so clear to us that these territories need to be connected for synergic effect and impact. I have confessed to some of my colleagues that I am glad I am writing this book now and not at the beginning of my career when my skin was thin and optimism unrelenting. Many will find the changes I propose disturbing. They challenge long-held assumptions and traditional ways of thinking about instructional roles and responsibilities. I expect they will spark controversy. My hope is that this disagreement will motivate others to review the research, study the theory, reflect on practice, and then build better and stronger bridges.

We need books on education especially higher education so as to create knowledge more analytically and more objectively. I have aspired to write such a book, one that deeply and honestly traces my own growth and development as a higher educational professional. My efforts do not stand alone; they need to be reported in the context of what is known and what others have experienced. I have aspired to write a book that is more than just another book with fundamentals – but it includes many techniques, presented in ways that reflect the dynamic, complicated milieu in which higher education prevails today. And finally, I have aspired to write a book on higher education that is intellectually robust—one that makes us think, challenges unexamined assumptions, asks hard questions, and does not offer facile answers. I wanted to write a book that makes us appreciate what hard, mentally stimulating work higher education can be. That kind of book values, indeed honours, the wisdom of practice. We need many more books of that calibre.

Finally, we need this book because it offers a positive way to higher education. Despite efforts during the past twenty-five years, instructional improvement has been slow in coming. Little documentation can be summoned that supports overall improvement in the level of instructional quality. Faculty development continues to operate at the margins, thriving in times of supportive administrations and withering when the institutional commitment falters, academic leadership questionable, and research grants diminishing.

Distinctions Worth Noting

A couple of distinctions about this book are worth noting. First, this book is about fundamentals of higher education not education *per se*. Second, it is about fundamentals in this current era. Some may associate that with being about education *per se* and use the two terms interchangeably. But there are a number of significant distinctions between the two phrases ‘education’ and ‘higher education’ and ‘current era’ vs. ‘dated era’. I have chosen to not to use the education descriptor in the dated era.

Overview of the Book

The book is primarily divided in two parts. After the overview of higher education which is the first chapter, Part A focuses on the core functions or expectations of higher education and deals with teaching-learning process, student development, faculty development, research process, and academic leadership. Part B focuses on the contemporary issue in higher education and deals with lifelong learning, technology in higher education, knowledge management, innovations in education and quality assurance.

Brief Description of the Contents

Overview of the higher education in changing times, the first chapter introduces higher education and the premises on which it is based. Based on this and the experience in the field of higher education of more than two decades, I have come to believe that in order for higher education to be effective, there needs a relook and changes in the way the core functions of higher education are carried out. Part A deals with each of this function and the changes required are discussed in chapter two, three, four, five, and six. These chapters are the heart of the book as they deliberate with the core functions: teaching-learning process which is at the core of any education *per se*, research process which should be at the heart of higher education to enable individuals to move on the path of lifelong learning, student development which is the purpose of education in generic, faculty development the conduit through which the purpose or goals of higher education are achieved and then is the academic leadership which is ultimately responsible to the society for creating and nurturing talent.

Part B focuses on the contemporary issues in higher education and deals with lifelong learning, technology in higher education, knowledge management, and innovations in education, quality in education, and future trends in higher education. These chapters are devoted to the purpose of what higher education is and means in today's era and the expectations from different stakeholders. It deals with the issue of lifelong learning, technology impact on higher education and knowledge management – the ultimate end of what higher education should mean, innovations requirements and above all, the quality assurance in higher education due to proliferation of universities and higher education institutions by private players with profit motive and business models in the sector. The chapters do raise questions about the relationship between learning at different stages, colleagues and the institutions of higher learning, issues of power, status and development, the conception of the faculty's role and profession, knowledge and knowledge creation, and other organisations in the educational landscape.

However, not everything possible can be included in the book. Although each important theme of higher education is discussed in a separate chapter, they are interconnected and overlapping. Some activities and practices done to advance one may help to accomplish one of the others at the same time. Some of the changes are inseparably linked. For example, faculty development would lead to developing academic leadership, support research would lead to knowledge creation or student development would mean holistic and inclusive teaching-learning process.

Acknowledgments

No book happens without the support of many people. Among the people to thank are a number of academic colleagues and associates from the various universities and institutions I have been teaching and teach. I work with many wonderful people and these folks have supported

me in some very special ways. As the years of one's career stretch out, colleagues come and go, but some stay, and those productive professional associations grow into firm friendships. Those colleagues are special, and I am lucky to have a few of them as my friends. My original book proposal benefited enormously from feedback offered by the publishers. The manuscript was strengthened by insights of three external reviewers.

I had two brothers, all extremely important persons in my life; none remain. I dedicate this book to Uday Deshpande who supported me in pursuit of higher education.

I am blessed to have the love and support of my daughter Neha throughout my career. Finally, there is my husband Jayant who lets me work on weekends, fixes dinner and takes care of home. He carves eagles, herons and takes care of technology, vehicles and equipment. He is the ardour of my life.

NEETA BAPORIKAR

neetajb@rediffmail.com



BRIEF CONTENTS

Preface

Brief Contents

Detailed Contents

Glossary

1. Overview of Higher Education 1 – 6

PART A: CORE FUNCTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION

2. Teaching-Learning Process 7 – 40
3. Student Development 41 – 79
4. Research Process 80 – 116
5. Faculty Development 117 – 157
6. Academic Leadership 158 – 201

PART B: CONTEMPORARY ISSUES IN HIGHER EDUCATION

7. Lifelong Learning 202 – 216
 8. Technology in Higher Education 217 – 227
 9. Knowledge Management 228 – 247
 10. Innovations in Higher Education 248 – 258
 11. Quality Assurance in Higher Education 259 – 274
 12. Future Trends in Higher Education 275 – 279
- Further Readings** 280 – 292

CONTENTS

- 1. Overview of Higher Education** 1 – 6
- Learner Focus
 - Current Requirements in Higher Education

PART A: CORE FUNCTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION

- 2. Teaching-Learning Process** 7 – 40
- Introduction
 - Teaching-Learning Process
 - Understanding Class Happenings
 - Active Learning
 - Enhancing Students' Readiness to Learn
 - Striving for Academic Excellence
 - Establishing Credibility
 - Enhancing Student Engagement
 - Effective Teaching and Student Motivation
 - Study Skills – Teaching How to Learn
- 3. Student Development** 41 – 79
- Introduction
 - History of Student Affairs
 - Evolution of Student Development
 - Developmental Needs
 - Holistic Student Development
 - First Principles of Student Development
 - Student Development Checklist
 - Conclusion
- 4. Research Process** 80 – 116
- Introduction
 - Research Process
 - Research Promoting Strategies
 - Researcher's Qualities
 - Research Life
 - Conclusion

5. Faculty Development	117 – 157
➤ Introduction	
➤ Overview	
➤ History of Faculty Development	
➤ Models for Faculty Development	
➤ Faculty Development for the Net Generation	
➤ Faculty Development as Institutional Leadership	
➤ Faculty Development and Collaborative Learning	
➤ Strategies for Faculty Development	
➤ Appendices	
6. Academic Leadership	158 – 201
➤ Introduction	
➤ Theory and Practice of Leadership	
➤ Need for Academic Leadership	
➤ Changing Dynamics of Academics	
➤ Strategic Approach to Academic Leadership	
➤ Effective Institutional Budgeting	
➤ Academic Leadership and Globalization	
➤ Academic Leadership Case Studies	
➤ Thoughts for Academic Leaders!	

PART B: CONTEMPORARY ISSUES IN HIGHER EDUCATION
--

7. Lifelong Learning	202 – 216
➤ Introduction	
➤ Background	
➤ Comprehensive Lifelong Learning Strategies	
➤ Action Plan for Instilling Lifelong Learning	
➤ Relevance of Lifelong Learning in Knowledge Society	
➤ Conclusion	
8. Technology in Higher Education	217– 227
➤ Introduction	
➤ Background	
➤ Technology Effect on the Teaching and Learning Processes	
➤ Technology Influence on Success and Performance of Students	
➤ Dynamics Affecting the Adoption of Technology in Teaching	

➤ Holistic Framework to Adopt Technology-based Teaching-Learning Process	
➤ Conclusion	
9. Knowledge Management	228 – 247
➤ Introduction	
➤ Background	
➤ Genesis of Knowledge Management	
➤ Knowledge Management Strategy	
➤ Knowledge Management – Illusion or Reality	
➤ Conclusion	
10. Innovations in Higher Education	248 – 258
➤ Introduction	
➤ Background	
➤ Outlook on Innovation in Education	
➤ Significance of Scaling Innovation	
➤ Need to Scale Innovations	
➤ Strategies to Scale Innovation	
➤ Implications	
➤ Conclusion	
11. Quality Assurance in Higher Education	259 – 274
➤ Introduction	
➤ Quality in Higher Education	
➤ Purpose of Quality Assurance in Higher Education	
➤ General Concept of Education Quality	
➤ Functions of Standards	
➤ Classification of Standards	
➤ Models of Quality in Education	
➤ Conclusion	
12. Future Trends in Higher Education	275 – 279
➤ Introduction	
➤ Reality Check	
➤ Future Trends	
➤ Other Developments	
➤ Conclusion	
Further Readings	280 – 292

CHAPTER

1

Overview of Higher Education

Imagination is more important than knowledge. Knowledge is limited. Imagination encircles the world.

– Albert Einstein (1879-1955),
German-born theoretical physicist

Higher Education is based on the following main expectations: the needs of the parties involved in complex evolving systems that build society based on people talent, and the higher education providers in charge of training as the key leaders striving for excellence in design, organization, and pedagogical means.

In its Commission Work Programme 2013, the European Commission 2012 states that: Education and training systems are not keeping up with changing labour market needs – resulting in shortages in key areas like science, mathematics, and e-skills. Higher education is not sufficiently connected to research and innovation activities and is slow to build capacity in areas like ICT – which both reflects and contributes to a lack of internationalization. Life-long learning is still developing, and public policy and business practices do not reflect the need for older workers to extend their working careers (p.7).

The evolution of information technologies, mobile devices, and social media as well as the needs of students, workers, and academics has experienced rapid changes in the last years. This complex and dynamic reality requires new forms of delivery of learning contents to students, the building of special learning environments and new teaching methodologies for academics. Old teaching practices (from the building of teaching material to the evaluation processes and tutorial services) need to be adapted to provide customized and context-adapted learning opportunities. There are drivers, barriers, and success factors of distance and mobile learning that need to be explored, such as widespread availability or the lack of policy support.

The European Commission makes special mention of the strategic role played by the knowledge triangle—education, research, and innovation—in regional economic and social development. Universities and research centres are an essential pillar of the knowledge society. According to OECD 2008, tertiary education policy is increasingly important on national agendas as it is a major driver of economic competitiveness in an increasingly knowledge-driven global economy. Countries must raise higher-level employment skills to sustain a globally competitive research base and to improve knowledge dissemination in societies. Education contributes both to social and economic development through four major missions: The formation of human capital (primarily through teaching); the

building of knowledge bases (primarily through research and knowledge development); the dissemination and use of knowledge (primarily through interactions with knowledge users); and the maintenance of knowledge (inter-generational storage and transmission of knowledge).

The European Standards and Guidelines (ESG) by the European Network of Quality Assurance (ENQA) embody the first step for incentive actions by stakeholders for self-assessment and internal Quality Assurance (QA) in Higher Education Institutions (HEIs). In any country, higher education providers and their partners such as companies share additional State intervention at different levels in order to develop stronger, increasingly dynamic collaborations, aiming at conformity of training offers with effectiveness of training processes and efficiency of the organizations of educational and professional training: a triangle of performance including outcomes, results in terms of knowledge ownership and skills, and available resources. The motivation relies on the assumption that higher education institutions are key actors for the future of the societies facing the future for sustainable development based on employability, innovation, and social cohesion.

As a consequence, higher education providers should first focus on the needs of citizens and second, move towards excellence for mutually beneficial relationships between parties, including the public, the partners, the staff and pedagogical teams with different expectations. EFQM Excellence model will guide HEIs' organizations to achieve and sustain outstanding levels of performance that meet or exceed dialogic outcomes. Their recognition will rely on the fact that they operate in different environments, sharing a common mindset based on a number of attributes and ways of working to shift the boundaries. Even though the expectations of parties differ, a common goal is to be achieved, sharing quality criteria, expenses and benefit, and better knowledge of each other's context. The factual approach of excellence is a key to identify new opportunities in the training market, both for the business of the higher education institutions and that of the companies; increasing the worthwhile potential effect for society and citizens throughout their lives.

The strategy complies with the accepted definition of University Lifelong Learning (ULLL). This is defined as 'the provision by HE institutions of learning opportunities, services, and research for the personal and professional development of a wide range of individuals lifelong and life wide; and the social, cultural and economic development of communities and the region. It is at university level and research-based; it focuses primarily on the needs of the learners; and it is often developed and/or provided in collaboration with stakeholders and external actors''.

The higher education offer is therefore a mix, including continuing education, adult education, postgraduate studies and professional training and non-variable parts can be brought out and shared, including a repository of skills with collective and social intelligence, and appropriate organization and processes. The challenge is for learners, staff, and structures to be able to change: perceive, anticipate, and adapt with an area of autonomy and self-decision-making. In complex environments, internal and external, with increasing public diversity (number, prior experience and cultural backgrounds), by obligation or voluntary initiative, it is an opportunity to develop innovative trainings relying on the collective and intercultural skilled workforce. This relies on values and a spirit of excellence to manage the present and prepare the future, based on upstream knowledge and operational skills for transfer. Work Integrated Learning (WIL) is a way to unify cultures (education and professional training) and enhance efficiency, being closer to society's needs, i.e. giving people the opportunity to learn and to develop their skills to face workplace evolution all through their life.

Based on the international diversity of the community of practice of higher education, the common key factors, levers, and processes that can be identified to guarantee quality and sustainability

of training offers giving meaning to guidance to excellence; a global vision not depending on local constraints but helping to manage specificity and singularity of WIL models in higher education. Usually, WIL is developed at local level with motivated small teams and an area of autonomy. What about bigger structures or merging when changes in the market and career advancement modify the situation? Such a demanding approach of the training offer in close relationship with the actors will face difficulties; they can be explained by the broader field of skills required for teachers, the readability of the complexity-benefit ratio of WIL in addition to the understanding of the goal by managers or the strategic committee, the joint design of formative work-situations to achieve training outcomes and the relationship between actors to invent and develop a common understanding. The innovative issue is to make clear the main aspects and guide to good practices for higher education institutions, taking into account their local environment. Indeed, the spirit of standards is only useful when specific constraints in the context are taken into account.

These virtues are formed in man by his doing the actions (in Ethics, ii-4)

– Aristotle (–384, –322 BC).

Greek Philosopher

The evolution of society, the State regulations or financial incentives require internal changes in higher education organization in order to achieve increasing outcomes for learners. But to focus only on the learner's satisfaction is not enough for training centres as the dialogic expectations of all stakeholders have to be satisfied for the chosen market; they are parts of the complex higher education system for education and training. As a consequence, striving towards excellence seems a logical target while implementing quality and continuous improvement in higher education. Higher education providers should be key actors of the dynamic triple helix of evolution with State and partners as industries and companies; the aim is to develop human capital, financial resources, and knowledge in scientific fields and incentive commitment to create innovation. In this way, higher education will strengthen collective and social intelligence based on better understanding of each other (including organizations), shared values and trust relationships for common training projects and developments. With respect to learners, the curriculum should be adapted and pedagogy aligned to integrate such requirements; this is the responsibility of the pedagogical team in a given framework and with the support of strategic committees. Higher education providers should be learning organizations, with progressive levels of standards with a strong network of partnerships and community of practices.

We must make life a dream, and make a dream a reality.

– Pierre CURIE (1859–1906).

French Physicist

Hence, higher education should be a learning system with quality spirit to enhance long life learning. The higher education provider and the consequences for the higher education organization, the skilled workforce and the operational processes to be decided when efficiency is a clue to achieve society outcomes. Key words are: learning organization, including the growing competences of the staff and pedagogical team, and processes; upstream co-design of training offer with partners including selected specification requirements with respect to quality criteria and learners' outcomes in the identified market context; and responsibility and commitment of parties at all stages of the multi-level hierarchical structure. Quality Assurance (referring to standard ISO 9001 first and further to 14001, 26000 and 50001) and Excellence target as per EFQM, drive inventiveness of built-on dedicated structures for training on an appropriate process map, head committee and monitoring committee aware of higher education environment, knowing Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities

and Threats (SWOT) matrix to detect innovation opportunities in the business. The issue is to ensure internal support of resources that make the business, i.e. the talent in the staff who compose the higher education provider's core. Hence, change needs to be driven by leaders and managers respecting harmony as higher education is national agenda in many countries cutting across all lines and stakeholders.

The level of satisfaction of graduates is not enough for success as expenses should be shared but also benefits, developing strong partnerships, and a common culture. Higher education providers will be submitted to external evolution with higher requirements and financial incentives of their partners. This should be identified, integrated, and followed. Aware of issues, higher education provider should prioritize resources to support the pedagogical team; tutors included the inner added value of the training centre in the business that makes real the strong mutually-beneficial relationship with partners. Efficiency relies on environment knowledge, professional skills at all levels with collective intelligence with partners and adapted processes to specificities. Of course, the global guidance for higher education quality gives the target, but the local autonomy of talent strengthens innovation for the global balance of higher education providers.

LEARNER FOCUS

The knowledge is the only material that increases when it is shared.

– *Socrates (-470/469 – 399 BC).*
Greek Philosopher

The aim of higher education is to give the keys for the selection of efficient pedagogical means with respect to the specification requirements, putting learners into a learning situation and formative position in the workplace as a way to achieve a high-level quality standard for higher education; leading to innovation. The issue of learner-centred pedagogy is to act upon individual needs respecting the collective expectations: security through reduced risk and fear, belonging to the groups and values, comfort to facilitate testing actions, recognition through feedback and personal development. It is assumed that outcomes are identified upstream with the partners and the resources available. Sharing a common concern is an appealing solution for efficient training, taking advantage of work-experience for ability, knowledge ownership and transfer between increased number of groups with a diversity of prior experience and learning paths; the result is a hybridization of pedagogical means, that unifies academic and professional training with a focus on the learners' behaviour: learning ability, reflexive competences, and collective intelligence.

CURRENT REQUIREMENTS IN HIGHER EDUCATION

When the time comes to hire someone for your company, you have the choice to find either a very experienced and skilled one (Advanced/Experienced) or a young person just graduated from college or a school that provides higher education (Fresher/Graduate). These two people could have one common point, they do not know anything about your industry and it will take time for them to be really efficient, even for the experienced. This is why some companies gather together to work with some school or higher education institution to set up a training program that integrates your needs and gives the trainees the opportunity to have an education with global knowledge in several topics they need to have, but not only; the trainees will/could have a very strong and specific training in one item

or subject that will respond efficiently to your needs. In fact, is this not the purpose of any education? Using the right tools, knowledge, and behaviour to manage any professional situation!

I had the chance to be trained this way, going back to school to learn the skill I was supposed to know for my next position in the company but not only this; also being able to ask for changes in the organization and drive them for a better flow of all our processes. That was the choice of my company, setting up with other companies coming from automotive, space, chemicals, electricity activities; such different areas, but all together they have agreed on a common academic progress. Trainees will become managers and engineers able to work in any companies with the efficiency of a very skilled and experienced person!

Even with my short experience in the company, this way to learn gave me not only the professional managerial and scientific skills like any other MBA, but also the Human Resources (HR) basics allowing me to understand the complexity of any relationship at work. Sharing my experience and knowledge, and learning from students like me coming from other companies and activities was one of the best choices I had done and an unforgettable life experience.

Everything is about timing, so why should we be stuck in just “one model” of education? We need agility, we need responsiveness, and we need customization.

If you think of living your professional career without going back and forth to “learning” whatever the way of getting it, you could become obsolete for your industry. Also, what a big step done by Universities or all higher education institutions, if you look back in the 80s and 90s! They have now to be close to what is happening in the industry. They have to be “on time”, giving the right skills, the right education at the right time to match the real needs of the companies they deal with, and offer the best payback of their investments.

But to achieve this kind of perfect timing, we need to have 2 main actors sitting and sharing together what one wants and what the other can do for him.

What a good idea to have both the same customer and supplier relationship between institutions and industry as we have in all kinds of business models. Not only looking at what is needed today but also preparing the future, because it takes time to train, both of them will have to project themselves and innovate about things that do not exist today. With this kind of close relationship, it is not only higher education institutions that will learn, just answering the requests, but they anticipate needs and give the industry the opportunity to go further and not any more alone. And if you agree with this, you may also agree with the vision of not any more a part of your life studying and another one working, but always learning according to what the work is or will be. Is this not a kind of continuous improvement of the human being?

Universities are moving towards a new paradigm characterized by vanishing borders and global competition for students, talented staff, knowledge, and funds, all of which means working for excellence and cooperation in a framework that emphasizes an economist’s vision of higher education. Higher education has undergone a process of democratization. In developed countries, access to university has increased from around 10% to over 50% of the population over the last few decades, lessening the value of a university title as a social positioning instrument. Meanwhile university fees have tended to increase. At the same time, the number of universities competing, including many new private institutions, has increased. All this is driving students to demand higher quality education for greater future employability.

From a business perspective, companies demand higher education institutions supply knowledge and immediately productive skilled professionals as well as collaboration in life-long learning, which is continuously needed to update changing professional skills. In addition to providing education, universities are central players of the knowledge economy, and have become an important industry in them, contributing more than the automotive or financial services industries. From an economic viewpoint, higher education institutions, companies, and the public administration are the key agents of a regional innovation system in which the competitiveness of each player, individually, and that of the region itself, depends on its collaborative networks as much as on each agent's internal factors. The benefits raised from university-company collaboration for both parties are many, but some of them are: Universities have opportunities to research and test real applications, access to real data, obtaining new equipment or finance in exchange for advice or consultancy. Companies can count on universities' research capacity, new technical solutions to improve the business performance and access to skilled students and graduates. When this collaboration transcends the research arena and extends to education, for instance, by introducing projects co-guided by university and company staff, students are able to develop a higher level in professional competences, access job opportunities faster and more smoothly and to present much more appealing curricula.

For higher education leaders, managing this collaboration is more complex than focusing in a traditional inwards oriented management, but it is the way to make higher education institution more competitive and more attractive to new students. Work-Integrated Learning has proved to be one of the best synergic instruments to cope with most of the challenges described above. WIL is an umbrella term that covers different approaches to a social, cooperative manner of learning by 'doing'. The learner takes on the responsibility to do a task or project in a real work context with the supervision from both a company and a university. WIL provides well-documented benefits to the three parties involved. Furthermore, the use of WIL is likely to be a contributing factor to the progress of more developed countries as well as successful businesses and universities.

Today, the management of higher education institutions cannot rely simply on the good intuition or intelligence of leaders/managers, but requires professional tools and models that allow competition and satisfy the different stakeholders and customers. Regarding WIL, and besides the complexity of managing a higher education institutions, it is necessary to incorporate new procedures, organizational structures, pedagogy, learning and evaluative techniques, approaches to deal efficiently with expectations, experience, motivation, agendas and the real situation of the three parties involved: the learner, the society, and the academic team.

To embrace this model that favours the notion of a journey implies a mobilization and evolution of the entire higher education institutions: skilled workforce for research and teaching, administrative staff, and an appropriate organizational structure; with recognition that people from different institutions may be working together. This learner-centred offer must be available in a flexible manner and in different modalities (face-to-face training, distance learning, and hybrid solutions). It must meet the expectations of the public and thus promote the success of the greatest number. The goal is ambitious, but it is a challenge and an opportunity for the Universities and higher education to meet the issues both societal and socio-economic.

