

# Globally yours

## India's management institutions move from competitiveness to leadership at the world level

In a country where there is so much hand-wringing about the quality of higher education and the failure of Indian universities to rank among the world's best, management educations provide a bright spot. IIM Bangalore (IIM-B) figures in the top 50 in three different categories of the well-regarded *Financial Times* rankings and in the top 100 in a fourth. Our one-year, full-time executive PGP is ranked #27 among global MBA programmes; our flagship two-year full-time PGP is ranked #36 in the Masters in Management category; and IIM-B is the only Indian institution to figure in the top 50 in executive education (currently ranked #45). Also, our week-end postgraduate programme in enterprise management has entered the *FT* top 100 in the executive MBA category for the first time this year. The Indian School of Business (ISB) and our fellow IIMs at Ahmedabad and Calcutta have also been doing well in the *FT* rankings.

### How did we reach here?

The IIMs have a tradition of good teaching and this is reinforced by an internal culture that respects the best teachers. IIM-B is no exception and when I joined the institute faculty in 1996, most questions from colleagues centred around what I would be teaching and what new courses I planned to offer.

By the mid-1990s, IIM-B had started becoming part of international partnerships, including Henry Mintzberg's International Masters Programme in Practising Management (IMPM). We soon realised that our peers from leading global institutions focussed on a different question: they wanted to know what research we are working on.

By 2005, many influential members of our faculty were convinced that knowledge creation was an essential second leg for the institute to stand on. What was earlier an individual choice now became an institutional priority.

Since then, many steps were taken to reinforce the importance of research and publication (R&P). First, quality standards were set – the institute developed a graded list of journals. Incentives were introduced for publications in the journals at the top of this list. High quality journal publications became essential in recruitment and promotion. Since 2014, we have a formal US-style tenure system in place. The doctoral programme, an essential complement to research productivity, has been strengthened over the years to become arguably the best doctoral programme at an Indian



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management institution.

Over the years, our faculty have published in the top academic journals in their respective disciplines as well as in top practitioner journals like *Harvard Business Review*. But, in terms of number of papers in these top journals, we are still quite some way away from the top global schools.

Case-writing continues in parallel, and IIM-B's cases are distributed through the world's best distribution channel, HBS Publishing.

### What next?

IIM-B's *FT* rankings suggest that we are already globally competitive. However, some challenges remain in attaining global leadership. While we have a few foreign (non-Indian) faculty, we have constraints in offering a compensation that is attractive compared to our global peers. Attracting the best foreign students is also difficult. Visa restrictions and salary structures in India are barriers to foreign students seeing Indian B-Schools (whose recruiters are primarily Indian companies or MNCs operating in India) as attractive.

As management scholars, resident and working in India, our best insights are into management in this country. It is unlikely that we can sit in India and advise Tesla or Amazon on their US strategies with much credibility. Just as India's global power and influence depend on its economic growth and development, our ability to achieve 'thought leadership' will depend on India's ascendance in the business and economics sweepstakes.

But there are opportunities too. The new MBA in Business Analytics, which we have launched this year, provides an excellent platform for contemporary variants on the MBA theme.

Since IIM-B joined the edX MOOCs platform in 2014, we have developed 50+ courses covering all the core MBA subjects with more than a million learners from across the globe. We see the MOOCs platform blended with some synchronous online classes as an excellent way to provide insightful learning experiences to learners in under-managed sectors in India and overseas.

On the research front, while we remain committed to publishing in the top journals, we are forming inter-disciplinary teams to address some of the big problems and challenges faced by the country, such as the growth of the MSME sector, manufacturing and healthcare. ♦

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(Views are personal and don't necessarily represent the official position of IIM B)

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\*By Hansa Week survey - 2014 to 2019

\*\*By Business India survey - 2016, 2017 &amp; 2019

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