

Transformation Journey of IIM Rohtak

BUILDING THE LARGEST IIM

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Prof. Dheeraj Sharma is an acclaimed Management Professor and Director, Indian Institute of Management Rohtak. He is also Professor at Indian Institute of Management-Ahmedabad (on leave). He is Academy of Global Business Advancement (USA) distinguished global thought leader for the year 2019. He has taught at numerous educational institutions in Europe, Asia, and North America. Prof. Sharma has a doctoral degree in business administration with a major in marketing strategy and a double minor in psychology and quantitative analysis from Louisiana Tech University, USA. He has published more than 150 research papers and 10 books. He is well known for his research, advisory, and public policy work.

He continues to serve governing and management boards of several government and non-government organizations. He is member of Economic Advisory Council of Government of Haryana. He is also advisor to Government of Punjab for prison modernization. He is President's nominee to Tejpur University, Honorary Professor of University of Delhi, Honorary Professor of Jawahar Lal Nehru University, and external member of academic council of NITIE-Mumbai. He is also member of standing committee for degree specification of UGC. He is editor in chief of Emerging Economies Case Journal and former associate Editor of Journal of Marketing Channels.

1. IIM's are amongst India's premier education centres for full-fledged professional management courses. What makes IIM, Rohtak exemplary in its offerings?

We had envisioned to provide participants of our programs most enriching learning experience through highest quality of management education in a diverse and thriving environment. My view is to make high-quality education available to the maximum number of deserving students from various student groups, including undergraduates, graduates, working professionals, and researchers. In line with New Education Policy-2020, IIM Rohtak has endeavoured to provide maximum opportunity to the maximum number of deserving students by introducing several new and innovative programs for different student groups. IIM Rohtak was the first IIM to introduce BBA+MBA degree programme in 2018. And now, IIM Rohtak has been the first and the only IIM to start BBA+LLB Integrated Degree Programme. In addition, IIM Rohtak is the only institution that offer a two year Post Graduate Diploma in Sport Management since 2018. Today, we are now poised to be the largest IIM in terms of number of students and number of programs. IIM Rohtak will have more than 1600 students in its long duration programme in 2022.

2. What is the seat sharing basis, meaning the number for students from Haryana and the rest of India that get admission in the institution?

IIM Rohtak is proud of its diversity. We maintain excellent student diversity in terms of regional diversity, gender diversity, and academic diversity. Additionally, we have students from varied economic backgrounds from wide spectrum of society. This diversity is evident from its student strength that represent almost all the states of India across its various residential and non-residential programmes. The flagship programme, Post Graduate Programme in Management has student representation from 25 states. All degree programs have representation from at least 23 states. Therefore, IIM Rohtak presents kaleidoscope of India in itself.



3. Today, the percentage of girl students at IIM, Rohtak is higher than that of boys in a state that was once notorious for having low literacy rate where the female gender was the most deprived. How has your institution bridged the gap and done away with disparity?

IIM Rohtak has created a benchmark for other management institutions in the country through its record gender diversity. From 9% female students in the MBA programme in 2017, we have been able to achieve the benchmark figure of approx. 70% consecutives for 2 years in 2020 and 2021. Therefore, IIM Rohtak is now number one in the world in terms of women representation in its MBA program. IIM Rohtak has been able to achieve this exceptional success with its resilience and consistent efforts over several years.

We designed a unique outreach program. We conducted interaction sessions in major cities and periodic online seminars to encourage women students to apply to IIM Rohtak. Further, we offered assistance to them in availing various state and central government scholarships. Next, we invited eligible women candidates along with their parents to visit the institute and interact with IIM Rohtak community members. These students were also provided AC 3 tier fare, local transportation, and campus stay facility for their visit. Finally, we were able to





get four major banks that process large number of education loans within 24 hours of application. Last year, more than 120 education loans were processed in 24 hours. As you would already know majority of the students who study at IIM Rohtak avail education loans due to our facilitation. Through our efforts we were able to contribute to the 'beti bachao, beti padhao' initiative of the government.

4. Just as there is a glut of BTech students similar is the situation for MBA students. How does IIM, Rohtak differentiates itself from the rest in terms of quality of education imparted, overall grooming of the students as well as placement possibilities?

The institute focuses on providing the holistic learning experience to its students that shall make them business leaders, managers, and policymakers who will exhibit superior work ethics, high commitment to work, and a positive attitude. Apart of academic curriculum engagement, we are also engaging students through management summits, leadership lecture series, virtual tours, etc. that keep the students updated on the latest trends and demands of the industry. Moreover, a continuous assessment methodology has been adopted wherein students are assessed on their daily learnings to facilitate the constant learning process in online mode. Our methods help students acquire more focused approach towards understanding the industry requirements and prepare themselves to be ready as per current and future requirements of the industry.

5. Upgrading knowledge and skills is a natural desire and necessity to retain one's relevance in the dramatic world of business. Could you share something about short term or refresher courses offered by your institution to working professionals?

The industry today is constantly looking for committed

professionals who can analyse problems and articulate solutions in the most efficient manner. IIM Rohtak at a very early stage, identified the scope of short duration specialised programme for such experienced professionals and introduced a pool of executive online Management Development Programmes in the domain of HR Analytics, Data Analytics, Project Management and Analytic, Strategic Management, and Supply Chain Management among others. These programmes received an overwhelming response from the corporate world. Several faculty member engage in consulting assignments to keep abreast of latest developments in the industry allowing them to fine tune their offerings. Consequently, we have been able to regularly introduce variety of new programmes every year. This year, executive Management Development Programmes like Lean and Operations Management, Product and Brand Management, and Strategic Digital Marketing and Analytics are being introduced.

6. Innovation or thinking out of the box hold the key to success. How does IIM drive this integral feature in its curriculum to make their students to think differently?

We constantly review the curriculum in view of industry expectation, latest management concept, and dynamic global business environment. Institute organizes regular interaction with management thinkers, industry, policy makers, and experts in implementing the most optimal curriculum for its students. We attempt to offer new elective courses in our flagship MBA program every year to align the student preparation with industry requirements. We have also introduced simulation-based learning using live data to augment decision making in our student. Simulation allow application of theoretical knowledge in business decision making. These activities help students keep to be relevant and agile in line with the industry expectations. Furthermore, all IIM Rohtak faculty members

write cases every year that elucidates unique business situation and dilemma. Case writing and case based pedagogy helps student in contextualising knowledge and learning and also keeps faculty topical, relevant, as well as far-sighted.

7. In recent years IIM, Rohtak has attracted a lot of attention as a premier institute for professional studies with record enrolments. How was this spectacular turnaround achieved?

I believe that innovative and specialised programmes in niche areas of management education are the reason we have attract so much attention. Our programs provide excellent educational and developmental opportunities to participants, which makes them industry-ready. Consequently, the institute has been able to attain 100% placements for its students consecutively for many years now. The average salary has been continuously increasing since last 3 years even during the year of COVID crisis. The students are also provided an excellent peer-learning environment, students can take several live projects, participate in national and international business competitions, and connect with industry experts for knowledge sharing and continued learning process through our lecture series and management conclaves. Our students have assisted in organization of physical conferences, online conferences, and events. All these conferences and events have demonstrated that IIM Rohtak aims to deliver varied and wide-ranging learning opportunities to its students, which in turn also brings us record enrolments.

8. What is the way forward that IIM, Rohtak is working on for itself and its student community or how does it see itself a decade from now?

The next major project for IIM Rohtak is to develop its extension campus in Gurgaon. IIM Rohtak has been allotted land in the heart of Gurgaon by Government of Haryana. Therefore, a centre of excellence can be developed soon in Gurgaon. With a GDP of \$370 billion (PPP basis), Delhi NCR is now ranking 30th globally in terms of the size of the economy of a region and is expected to be 11th globally by 2030 according to Oxford Economics forecast. I believe that primary drivers of NCR growth are a juxtaposition to policy-making, availability of superior and growing infrastructure, and excellent education and research institutions. IIM Rohtak's presence in Gurgaon can help leverage our existing expertise and scholarship to contribute to the growth of this epicentre of business activities of the world.

IIM Rohtak will offer several non-residential courses in its Gurgaon campus. Also, IIM Rohtak will offer large number training and development programs for corporations and government. Finally, IIM Rohtak is likely to run specific programs targeting the entrepreneurs and family business owners. Overall, we hope to serve the nation by providing opportunity of getting top-class management for individual from all spectrum of life. As part of social responsibility, we are determined to continue participating in various critical policy-making studies and projects that may eventually benefit various sections of the society.

