



Empowering Tomorrow's Leaders



The International School of Management (ISM), Patna, has earned a name as one of India's leading B-Schools offering professional courses. It offers youngsters an opportunity to achieve a professional qualification accredited by the industry body for their chosen careers and get fast-tracked into their dream jobs

The advent of the 21st century witnessed a yearning among the youth of Bihar for high-quality, globally benchmarked professional education as they witnessed the youth in metro cities enjoying the benefits of economic liberalisation and industry deregulation policies. Youngsters from the aspirational middle class with higher disposable incomes quickly jumped on the bandwagon and joined various institutions in metro cities. Those motivated youth were vying for quality professional courses, enabling them to get attention on the national stage, land highly paid jobs in India and abroad, and enjoy material comforts.

This migration severely impacts state human capital and financial resources. At the same time, the high cost of education in metro cities hampered the prospects of thousands of talented youth who were not so blessed financially. This expanding income inequality fuelled demands for high-quality globally benchmarked educational institutions, especially in Tier II cities. A new group of well-qualified ecopreneurs, familiar with new digital technologies, sprung up to meet this rising demand. They devised a vision to promote quality professional courses affiliated with national and international benchmarking agencies.

These institutes offered the youth in Bihar a cost-effective way to continue their professional studies and succeed professionally.

One of the most successful institutions was the International School of Management (ISM), Patna, established in 2010.

Deval Singh, Vice Chairman of ISM Patna, said that students from Bihar have been doing well in IIT-NEET and UPSC examinations. It proves that their



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– Deval Singh, Vice Chairman



MILESTONES

- 2010** : ISM Patna was established offering PGDM, accredited by the AICTE.
- 2011** : The campus was inaugurated by Chief Minister Nitish Kumar.
- 2013** : Launched BBA and BCA courses after getting affiliation from Aryabhata Knowledge University.
- 2016** : Doubled the number of seats to 120 in BBA and BCA each
- 2018** : ISM Patna participated in Times B-School ranking.
- 2019** : ISM Patna stood at 37th rank in Times B-School ranking.
- 2021** : Added two more courses -- BAJMC and B.Com Professional.
- 2021** : Increased BBA seats to 180 and BCA seats to 240.

IQ level is quite high. Those who have cracked these prestigious competitions could have done wonders if they had got support at the primary and secondary levels. They have been achieving it with their efforts alone.

He said, "Recently, we hosted a National summit to discuss why Bihar lags behind in research despite doing well in medical and engineering. The experts opined that students failed to showcase their best due to a lack of a support system. The existing universities are in bad shape. They lack proper faculties, labs, and resources. There is no grant for research."

Deval Singh said the ISM Patna was established to help the youth acquire professional degrees in Bihar. "Our youth faced mounting challenges in metro

cities due to the perception built decades ago. Bihar has moved on, marching ahead, but the perception continues to bother whenever the youth from Bihar travels to a metro city with a language barrier."

The ISM Patna was established in 2010 and offered a two-year full-time Post- Graduate Diploma in Management (PGDM), equivalent to an MBA, approved by the All India Council for Technical Education. At that time, only a few colleges offered MBAs that used to hold value in the market outside the state.

The college was established in 2010. Chief Minister Nitish Kumar inaugurated the campus in 2011.

"Trust deficit was a major challenge for the team. Winning people's trust was our main aim. We invited several ministers and other dignitaries and advertised in newspapers and electronic media. We used all available mediums to dispel any such notion. The result was positive. The demand increased for high-quality professional courses. It inspired us to start new courses."

The institute launched Bachelor of Business Administration (BBA) and Bachelor of Computer Application (BCA) courses after becoming affiliated with Aryabhata Knowledge University in 2013. The institute was allowed to start with 60 seats in each programme.

Over the past decade, the focus on professional courses like BBA and BCA has shifted from the metros to small towns. With Tier II cities becoming the new centre of India's economic growth story, parents are pressing for such courses for their children.





“On joining, we realised their major difficulties. Since they came from the interior of Bihar, lack of command and knowledge of the English language and computer literacy were the major obstacles. Thus, we launched two bridge courses to prepare them. The two-month-long Personality Enhancement Programme (PEP) included knowledge of basic computers like Excel sheets, Word documents, PowerPoint (PPT) presentations, and English communications. Unless we bring them at par with other students, they will feel inferior, and their objective of joining the ISM will not be achieved.”

He pointed out that building a particular class equals building a society. So, everyone gives them the feeling of equality and confidence that others won't make fun of if they make a mistake. The basic focus is to evolve them as human beings because having knowledge alone is not enough; presentation skills are very important. Even improving the diction is equally important. This is an important part of presentation skills. These barriers must be removed.

Another major aspect that makes the ISM Patna stand out from the crowd is its syllabus. The syllabus prescribed by the university was not refreshed as per the market demand.

“We improved it by enhancing value-added courses. The basic curriculum devised by the university was taught for the university exam, and the value-added courses were devised to make the students market-centric. We also adopted a 360-degree approach. We had mentoring programmes to remove whatever problem students were facing with a personal touch.

Developing the personal connection was an important aspect.”

Faculty

Initially, the ISM Patna invited faculty members from various campuses of the prestigious Indian Institute of Management (IIM), but this was not fruitful. So, the institute created an advisory board composed of IIM faculty members to mentor the ISM faculty members and guide them about the subject matters and market demands that should be transferred to the students. All its value-added courses are reviewed by the IIM faculty members and delivered by the ISM teachers.

Bachelor of Business Administration (BBA) is one of the popular courses among students aspiring to venture into management. ISM Patna introduces them to the various aspects of management that form part of effective business management and prepares them to pick a specialised branch later on, mostly as part of the postgraduate study, either PGDM or MBA.

Deval Singh said that a degree in BBA & BCA prepares students with basic knowledge about corporate management. Special attention is given to skill development that helps students understand the diverse functioning of an organisation. These graduates can find jobs in the various departments of the organisations as members of sales teams or as management trainees. Some companies recruit fresh graduates, which can be a great learning opportunity for the latter. Armed with work experience, students with a BBA background can pursue a PGDM or MBA and gain specialisation in a specific management domain.

The ISM Patna has been increasing its capacity to admit more students to meet the rising demand. Currently, it can admit 180 students for a BBA degree and 240 students for a BCA degree.

In 2021, the ISM Patna added two more courses -- a BA in Journalism and Mass Communication (BAJMC) and a B.Com Professional.

The International School of Management Patna also partnered with SolBridge International School of Business South Korea. A new horizon started with the opportunity for students to study for one trimester in South Korea without extra Tuition Fees. With this partnership, a major thrust on quality education will certainly strengthen the management students' (the human capital) ability to think outside the box.

BBA: 1st step to Biz World

Talking about the significance of a bachelor's degree in management, Deval Singh said that this is the most cost-effective way to enter the job market – it saves money and time. He said that the value of a Bachelor of Business Administration (BBA) degree depends on various factors, such as the candidate's career goals, the reputation of the institution, and the specific skills and knowledge that a student gains from the programme.

“People unaware of the programme, market demands, and employers' expectations may think BBA is worthless. They might suggest you go for an MBA before trying the employment prospects after finishing BBA. Another problem is the candidate's lack of self-confidence,” he said.

He pointed out that the ISM Patna has increased seats for the BBA programme from 60 to 180. It proves that there is a significant demand for this course. “Demand for any programme goes up only if there is demand in the job market. Also, we

guarantee 100% job placement assistance because we are confident in training the students and making them a corporate fit. Thus, it is easy to get employed.”

He also pointed out that some students take BBA as their graduation degree before pursuing a master's. The BBA degree has a subject curriculum related to Finance, Marketing, Economics, HR, Business Studies, Education, and many more. Management studies provide candidates with a strong foundation in business principles and management.

“Many BBA students join an MBA or PGDM course immediately after completing their end-semester exams. I am of the strong opinion that they must explore the market before pursuing an MBA degree. Getting two years of work experience before the MBA programme will significantly boost their career, help them understand market needs and opt for the right area of specialisation,” he said.

Placements

Deval Singh said that placement is the key. Knowledge alone is not important. “Our students are placed in the top MNCs across the world. Every parent dreams of a successful career for their child, and we emphasise extreme efforts to give students the best opportunity to appear for interviews in big companies and secure a high-paying job. In recent years, ISM and students' collaborative efforts have made it possible for the students to secure around Rs6 LPA average package and Rs18.5 LPA highest package during campus recruitment.”

“We start working on placements in the second year for undergraduate students and from the very first year for PGDM students,” he added.

Industry veterans visit the campus and inform first-year PGDM students about the market requirements, knowledge, and skills the market needs. At the end of the first year of PGDM, the



institute holds a mandatory summer internship programme for every student to attend. It is also added to their result card.

“Usually, AICTE or universities demand a one-month summer internship. But our PGDM is an autonomous course. We are free to make amendments. We can even change subjects and modules. PGDM is a six-trimester programme. We can increase it to a three-month internship, add a winter internship, or send the students for a pre-placement internship. We do as per the requirements,” he said.

The module has been prepared with an eye on the market demands for undergraduate courses, starting from the bridge courses. Undergraduate students have to go on a summer internship programme in the first and second years, while in the third year, they go on-the-job training. Every student has to go on these training programmes. It is part of the placement programme.

“There can be several potential benefits. The students may have access to a wider range of educational resources, networking opportunities, and potential employers in the field. Additionally, the summer internship provides valuable experience and career growth opportunities for aspiring professionals,” added.

Deval Singh said that ISM Patna has over 200 brands that accept its students for internships. If a student wants any particular company to go for the internship, he is free to go. Otherwise, the institute will arrange internship opportunities for them.



“More than 200 corporate houses are associated with us for placements. Name any big successful company; we are there. In the past 10 years, we have also got a good alumni base; they also asked us to send students for internships.”

Studying at the ISM gives you more exposure. You will learn to deal with a complex work environment, gain more contacts, and grow your network. You will have easy access to books and other study amenities. You will gain a better perspective of the industry and become more aware of what is happening around you daily. Ultimately, after completing your studies, you can easily get placed in the industry you want to go and serve.

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Dr. Vijay Bahadur Singh
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