



Methodology

Celebrating a decade of the only empirical hard-core research-based media rating of B-schools, it is time to recall how this research was done over the years. We deliberately chose an empirical scoring format over subjective research. Seeking opinions from a small pool of respondents, popular among media houses in India and abroad, meant the development of a long, involved questionnaire.

When we started, it was more to elicit information and less to use for differentiating the schools on the basis of their quality. This was one reason why for the first seven years of our research, we ranked only 10 schools and rated the rest. It was only natural that we received comments like: “your questionnaire made us realise that we need to maintain records of many things which we have ignored”, “your questionnaire is being used by us as an internal template for tracking quality”, “it is a huge learning experience” and “it took us nearly two months to complete our answers to your questions, but the exercise was well worth it; we learnt so much about ourselves” – by email and post over the years.

Our research questionnaire looked at B-schools from almost 600 angles through 180-odd questions. Some of these were ‘yes’ or ‘no’ answers, but some, like publishing the track record of the faculty, required intense research before the B-school could answer the question. We had been improving our questionnaire by including a few new questions and dropping some others every year, based on the B-school community feedback. In recent years, we introduced questions relating to faculty participation in corporate boards and alumni support to B-schools. The questionnaire reflected changing trends in the industry.

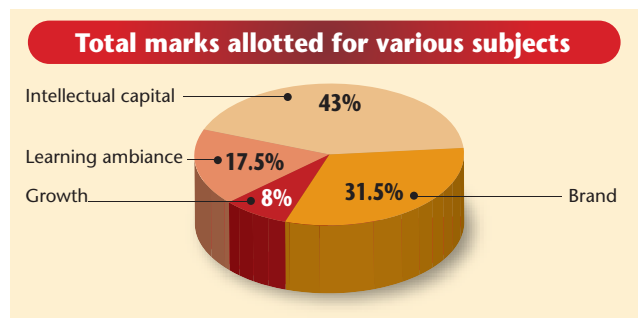
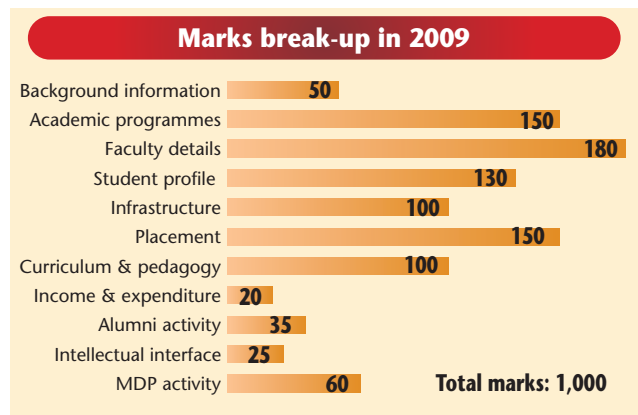
Online survey

We started using our Website, www.bibschoolsurvey.com, almost five years ago for our research. This year, we added another dimension to our research by launching the annual survey as an online programme, allowing B-schools to register on our Website and seamlessly fill in content and data during the entire process of survey – giving them an opportunity to revise their information without having to refer back to us every time. We had posted our questionnaire to 2,000-odd schools from our database and e-mailed around 1,400 schools between April-end to July-end this year, allowing the longest time for response by any media survey.

We were pleasantly surprised to see that over 60 per cent of the schools registered on our Website for the online questionnaire. We introduced three different feedback surveys for students, faculty and alumni to gauge the quality of the B-school of their choice. There was a reasonable response rate in each segment. In the growth segment, results of the feedback surveys were factored in. B-school participation in media surveys has remained more or less stagnant, with around 200 B-schools participating every year. This year, we had 190 schools responding to our survey. Some of the schools from the previous year failed to return their

questionnaire, while some new B-schools were eager to fill out our questionnaire. We chose a small percentage of schools that had not responded to our survey, like ISB, IIM-B, IIM-K and IIM-I, and included these using information available through Websites, peer discussions, print media, etc.

Individual scores were assigned to each of the parameters, with the total scores being compiled adding up to 1,000



marks (see chart: Marks break-up). The break-up of each parameter and their scores was done to reflect the importance given to aspects like quality of students and faculty; commitment of the institution in developing infrastructure facilities like library, canteen, entertainment, hostels, faculty accommodation, wellness, etc. We also needed to measure the extent of brand equity enjoyed by the school and the relative investments made in it by interfacing with corporates. Placements also play a crucial role in attracting students, as does building the brand equity of the institution, which helps retain top talent among faculty, besides helping to build the profits of the institution. We have a minute scale perfected over the years to measure placements.

We initially ranked 10 schools and rated the rest using A, B and C grading, within which we had introduced Level 1, 2 and 3 for each category. Later, we replaced these with more robust indicators: A++, A+, A, B++, etc. Three years ago, we introduced an additional 10 schools to our ranking and this year, the number has been raised to 50 schools.

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