

♦ METHODOLOGY ♦

B-SCHOOL EDUCATION is undergoing a titanic shift in India, with growth continuing unabated, despite the ongoing global economic slowdown. Many of the top schools in our list have admitted more students and moved to other cities to set up campuses – even going international to expand their footprint. They are also bracing themselves to face intense competition from the best schools abroad. International collaborations for academic, faculty and student exchange have increased, with a large number of the top category taking up international accreditation.

The Business India Best Business School Survey, now running for 11 years, has retained its leadership owing to the consistency and robustness of research based entirely on empirical scores. That more than 300 schools have responded to our survey is an endorsement of the soundness of our approach in rating and ranking B-schools. Our questionnaire has more than 350 queries, of which, barring contact information, almost 85 per cent carry varying weightage for the score sheet. A few among them are: where is the school located; whether the faculty members get campus accommodation and also have a school to send their wards to; whether the library is open 24x7; whether the students stay at a campus hostel; whether there is a gym and sports facilities for students, etc. Faculty-related information accounts for the highest number of questions (almost 70), with the next highest relating to students. Our entire

inquiry is based on student outcome – a norm that is rapidly gaining currency in the global MBA education quality circles.

We have avoided the temptation to use subjective criteria, despite the fact that every year, beginning 2008, we have been polling the alumni, faculty and student community for their opinion using dedicated online questionnaires for each category. This year, too, we have received an overwhelming response from stakeholders.

After ranking only the top 10 schools and rating the rest for the past many years, we expanded our ranking list to 50 last year. This year, we have further introduced the top five ranks based on a range of diverse criteria: starting salaries, foreign jobs, in summer placements, faculty compensation, collaborations with foreign schools, etc.

Care has been taken to see that there are no sharp swings in the scoring pattern or list of questions, which may affect the performance of a section of B-schools. We have also taken adequate care to see that the diversified basket of B-schools that are run by the university system (both private and government-owned), autonomous schools,

corporate schools and departments of management of postgraduate colleges, are evaluated fairly in the final analysis. This has been done by devising questions that are specific to each user category. For instance, government university departments tend to score less on questions relating to international collaborations, international exchange of faculty and students, fee income, etc, but when it comes to intellectual capital, these universities tend to score more. Since this section has the highest weightage (28 per cent), there is a good chance that a balance is achieved.

The questionnaire comprises 12 sections, of which 11 consist of questions that carry marks. This year, the weightage given to faculty performance and facilitation has been further increased and there has been a marginal reduction in placement scores and alumni scores. The brand performance measured by background scores has been increased from 5 per cent to 9 per cent. Scoring has been done on a total of 3,000. The survey got a much better online response this year; it was open from April to July on our Website www.bibschooolsurvey.com. We also sent out our questionnaire to more than 2,000 B-schools from our database.

We have classified the schools based on the top 50 ranks, A++, A+, A, B++, B+ and B categories. Most of the 300-plus responses we received are from schools that have government approval, exceed the government norm for faculty numbers, use the scores of mainly Common Admission Test (CAT) of Indian Institutes of Management (IIMS) or Management Aptitude Test (MAT) of All India Management Association (AIMA), and have at least one or more international collaborations. Many among these also have more than one campus; are active in conducting conferences, seminars and inviting industry leaders to their campus; and offer more than Rs1.5 lakh placement salary. The average placement salary across our entire set of respondents is Rs1.5-2 lakh, with the average top 50 and A++ category schools going up to Rs5 lakh.

♦ A. THOTHATHRI RAMAN

