

EPSI E-Conference - National Education Policy 2020: Impact on PGDM Education

Saturday, August 29, 2020

Dr. Jitendra K. Das, Director, FORE School of Management, New Delhi was invited as one of the eminent speakers at the conference organized by *Education Promotion Society for India*, alongside several policy makers, educationists, and thought leaders. **Dr. Das** spoke in the first session of the event on the topic of **'Development of Road-map for autonomy and becoming a degree granting institution' and its implementation** while touching upon the deliverable and autonomy as desired by the Higher Education Institutions. The theme of the session was **'NEP 2020 and PGDM B-Schools: Developing a Roadmap for Autonomy & becoming a Degree Grating Institution'**. More than 500 delegates from academia participated in this conference.

Dr. Das started his remarks with a revisit to the background of autonomy in management education institutions. He cited the example of the IIMs in the 1960s, which were autonomous institutions teaching management. They were not allowed to grant degrees since they were not granted university status but rather were created as Societies granting PGDM, considered equivalent to MBA. **Dr. Das** took the participants through why they were not allowed to grant degrees at par with IITs and why they perhaps chose not be granted university status. The reason behind this, according to **Dr. Das**, was that the IIMs preferred to have flexibility and speed of decision making, and hence autonomy was more important than the ability to grant degrees.



Dr. Jitendra Das, speaking in the Conference

According to **Dr. Das**, NEP 2020 is like a breath of fresh air and everyone should look at it positively. He however cautioned that the proof of the pudding is in the eating since for NEP 2020 is a strategy roadmap or policy document and its implementation will be key since policy is one thing, and making it happen is another. He mentioned that Indian regulators and management education institutions can draw lessons from the USA and UK the big democracies, China which is not a democracy and has made huge strides in higher education, and Singapore with its small size and lessons in policy execution.

He mentioned that fundamentally higher education is driven by choice of the student v/s at the 5+3+3 stage. According to him, even undergraduate level to an extent is less driven by student choice but PGDM reflects student choice to a greater extent driven by specific outcomes. Due to this reason, it is important that institutions work solely with the purpose of fulfilling aspirations of students. He then delved into the fact that India has over 3,000 PGDM institutions and the quality varies, and that the NEP 2020 is timely in its intent of improving quality.

Dr. Das then went on to contrast the existing regulator role with what would be ideal in NEP 2020's implementation. He mentioned that currently institutions are busy meeting requirements of regulators, not stakeholders like faculty, students, and recruiters. True autonomy is required so that the focus can shift where it should be – the role of regulator should be clearly defined in order to preserve autonomy. Policing role should stop; facilitator role should be the focus. Day to day and routine matters should not concern the regulator, in the view of **Dr. Das**. This kind of autonomy where institutes are free to define admissions process, programme offering, fees, faculty selection, etc. is desirable to perform and deliver. The important matter of autonomy in fees was highlighted by **Dr. Das** wherein he stated that quality has price associated with it; leave it to the institutes and students to decide the level as per the quality.

Finally, **Dr. Das** stressed on the need for a proper ecosystem for delivery of higher education, which includes both infrastructure and more research rigours.

Dr. Jitendra K. Das was accompanied by the following prominent panelists during the session:

Dr J Philip, Founder & Chairman, XIME Bangalore

Dr Madhu Veeraraghavan, Director, TAPMI, Manipal

Mr Shreevats Jaipuria, Vice Chairman, Jaipuria Institute of Management.