My Journey with IIMA: An Autobiographical Account

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W.P. No.2014-03-14
March 2014

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My Journey with IIMA: Autobiographical Account

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Summary

Organizations and Institutions are platforms of learning and growth. It is left for us to choose our path and give and get the best during the time we are associated with it as a stake holder. This paper is a narrative of forty years of association of the author with IIMA-21 years on a full time basis, 7 years as Adjunct and a few years in between as a Visiting Professor. The paper intends to portray IIMA as centre for learning, academic leadership and Institution Building for any faculty member. It is a platform to learn from the various roles one performs there and from different organizations with which one gets to work with. Offering various programs that are innovative, courses that are new, interacting with colleagues and participants of various programs, doing research and even visitors to the Institute-they are all sources of learning. The author’s narration of personal experiences, learning and accomplishments are described in support of this. Giving is the best way of getting.

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Introduction

Ravi Matthai stepped out as Director in 1972 and remained a Professor until he passed away in 1984. He had several opportunities to join the Government in a prominent position but chose to remain as a Professor, even though he had no special privileges. After working for over a decade at IIMA, Dr. Rangarajan went on to become the Deputy Governor of RBI. He keeps coming back to the Institute, which he holds close to his heart. V.S. Vyas who was on the PMs Advisory Council joined in the early seventies and retired from the Institute. Udai Pareek joined in 1973 and remained at IIMA till he retired in 1985. Khandwalla was quite famous in the US with his book on ‘Design of Organizations’. When he joined IIMA in 1975 as a visiting Faculty, most people thought that he would go back after a year. He stayed on and retired from the Institute. Had he returned to the US, he might have been voted as one of the top level Management Gurus like Ramcharan or C K Prahalad. Prof. K. Balakrishnan returned back after a short stint at AIM Manila to teach and was one of the most popular teachers. If he stayed on in the USA and wrote like C K Prahalad, his name certainly would have been added to the list of Management Gurus. He retired from IIMA. He continues to be respected as a great Teacher. Many Professors with Degrees from some of the best Universities in the world chose to remain at IIMA and made a mark. Professors like V. L. Mote, P M Shingi, V R Gaikwad, Pulin Garg, Amar Kalro, Sasi Misra, Indira Parikh, D. Tripathi, K.R.S Murthy, G.R. Kulkarni, V.K. Gupta, M.N. Vora, remained professors at IIMA, retired from here or at best from sister Institutions and made valuable contributions.

In this working paper I like to offer my tributes to the Indian Institute of Management and all the great Professors who worked here for long years. As Ravi used to say, the Institute culture was designed to make every Professor a “Man on Mission” and an Institution Builder. He/she may contribute to the profession in several ways besides research, writing, teaching, dissemination of knowledge, Institution building and Management. This narration of my own journey showcases how IIMA offers a platform for an interested professor to learn, grow and contribute to its growth in different forms. In the process, it helps you grow and even make a mark in your own little way. This is equally true for all other organizations (profit or not for profit, government or Non-governmental etc.). One should not merely look at the salary but focus on the opportunity one gets to make an impact and get going in life. As Harsha Bhogle, one of our alumni stated, “like in cricket, one should enjoy the process of playing every minute and hit every ball to the best one can, thinking that it is the last ball.” The same principle can be applied even to work life.
In December 2013, I completed 40 years of my association with IIMA—21 years as full time Faculty, 7 Years as Adjunct and a few years in between as a Visiting Professor. In exhibit 3 I have given a chronological account of some significant events of my education and professional journey. To ensure that I continue to be associated with the Institute I love, I became a member of the IIMA Society a few years ago. While at IIMA, every short leave I took was to make an academic contribution—be it in Implementing HRD systems in BEMIL or starting a centre for HRD at XLRI or to work on a book on HRD at IDS, Sussex (sponsored by the Commonwealth secretariat). Every assignment resulted in a publication. When I came to IIMA, I had a few papers to my credit and a book in the making based on my thesis. In the last forty years, I have authored, co-authored, edited or co-edited over 50 books in different areas: Health and Population, Education, Entrepreneurship, Organizational Behaviour and Development and HRD (Exhibit 1), and perhaps over two hundred papers in Indian Journals, Books and conferences. A few of them were published abroad as most of my work was more relevant to India. It had global applications but I was more interested in writing for Indian readers and Indian managers.

Humble Beginnings at IIMA

I came to IIMA in June 1973 on a six week visit to work with Udai Pareek and complete the book ‘A Status Study of Population Research: Behavioural Sciences’ for Tata McGraw-Hill funded by the Family Planning Foundation in New Delhi. Dr. Pareek had a great Secretary by name Mr. Kuppuswamy, who was earlier working with Prof. Ishwar Dayal. Kuppu was a great secretary. He used to type non-stop, completing almost 100 pages a day. He completed typing my 700 page manuscript in just one week. Udai and I would pass on all the material from our review of researches and he would go on typing tirelessly. During this time, I stayed with Udai in one of the three buildings adjacent to the campus in Satkar Society. I enjoyed the heavy rains that year. While I was completing this work, Udai introduced me to other Faculty in the OB area and also to Ravi Matthai, and Samuel Paul the Director at that time. He mentioned to them my interest in Education. Ravi was interested in education systems, but I had no idea about his exact interests. All I remember was a letter that we had written from NIHAE (Ministry of Health where I was working I was working as Assistant Professor Education and Training) four years back to the Director IIMA, wanting to know about their work in Education. For some reason we had not got any reply to our letter. My own interest was in higher education and my Ph. D. thesis was on Professional Socialisation of Medical Students.

It was during my first visit that I had long discussions with Dwijendra Tripathi on Institutional Environment. While I stayed with Udai during the six weeks, I got to meet many of the Faculty. I was introduced to Prof. B. G. Shah who was working on a project to evaluate the experience of GIIC, GIDC, GSIC and GSFC on developing entrepreneurs. This project was sponsored by Dr. V. G. Patel who was the Chief Economic Advisor in GIDC. While I had never met him in those days, I had heard
about his interest in Behavioural Sciences (BS) and his questions about the use of the BS training in developing entrepreneurs. Apparently, he started the Entrepreneurial Development Programs under the joint leadership of these corporations under the roof of ‘Parishram’. Once I met him, he mentioned that they had been running Achievement Motivation Training (AMT or a BS training) to develop entrepreneurs and that he would like to scientifically ascertain if the AMT and BS Training made any difference in developing entrepreneurs. We were to design an evaluations study. BG Shah formed an interdisciplinary committee consisting of Prof. Gaikwad, Udaip Pareek and himself from IIMA and included Dr. M. C. Shetty - a well known economist from ICICI Bank. He invited me to design the study and assist him and the team. Even before joining IIMA, when I was still working in Udaipur, I prepared an evaluation design of the program and visited Kappadvanj, where Anil Trivedi was conducting a five-day Achievement Motivation Training for potential entrepreneurs. I went there on my own and thanks to staying in an unhygienic hotel, I contracted jaundice. It took me a few weeks to recover. However, my visit and observations paid off as BG Shah and the team were happy with the work done.

First Appointment and Teaching

In the meantime, I was offered the appointment at IIMA by Prof. Paul as Faculty Research Associate (FRA: a designation IIMA had in the initial years while recruiting young Faculty, who were supposed to do more of research and less of teaching). In fact, in early seventy four when I offered to teach a course I learnt from Prof. Paul that one of the OB Area Professors complained to the Director that I was recruited to do research in Education and I should not be allowed to teach more than a course or two. That is why my initial years at IIMA were devoted more to research and less of teaching. The only courses I taught in the initial years were a Laboratory in Entrepreneurial Motivation, which I designed along with Udaip and a course on Consumer Behaviour along with Prof. Sasi Misra. This was because I had just worked on a series of Sales Style Diagnosis Exercises (published by IE Learning Systems Pvt. Ltd. - a firm in Delhi) and used it on a group of DCM employees facilitated by George Koreth. As soon as I joined IIMA, I spent a good deal of time completing the evaluation study of the Entrepreneurship Development Programs. This required visiting Baroda, Surat and other places to study entrepreneurs and their recollection of what they learnt in the EDPs. This was a great experience. Though it was considered to be a Research cum consulting project, the work that I did formed a good basis for the four organizations to continue funding this venture. Our study clearly established that the Behavioural Training or AMT was impactful and made a difference. I also prepared case studies of a few entrepreneurs and registered the same in the IIMA case series. These were short cases. The four of us also prepared two papers along with cases and laid ground for the course on LEM (Laboratory in Entrepreneurial Motivation). The study was completed in within three months of my joining. It not only put me in touch with officials in the Government like Anil Shah, Pathanakar and
V G Patel, but also taught me how it was to work like a team with V R Gaikwad and BG shah.

**Health and Population Unit (HPU)**

It was during this time that another team was being formed at IIMA, to work on Population Programs in India. Both the Education Systems Group (ESG) which I joined and the HPU Health and Population Unit) were aimed at achieving the Institute’s mission of professionalising management in all sectors of the economy and to realise the vision of Dr. Sarabhai and Matthai of ensuring that the institute works on all sectors. The Institute already had a Centre for Management of Agriculture (CMA). A Banking group was formed earlier and dismantled after NIBM came into existence (with some help from IIMA). A cooperatives group was formed and subsequently it became a part of CMA. Prof. Satia and Nirmala Murthy were recruited by IIMA to work on the India Population Project IPP–I). The team of IPP consisted of V K Gupta, Baldev Sharma, Udai Pareek, and M N Vora as part time professors to work on the project. Satia and Nirmala were full time Faculty, leading the project. This was also treated as a research cum consulting project. Sometime later during the year, Baldev Sharma left to join XLRI. As Udai was not able to give sufficient time, it was in this context that I was requested to join the team. I happily joined the team to study the Population Management program funded by the World Bank. As a part of the project, we were to study the current situation of Family Planning programs in six districts of UP, design a few experiments and suggest improvements in the management of population programs in UP. This gave me yet another great experience of working with a team of Faculty colleagues. Satia, Nirmala, VK, Vora and I used to travel to various districts in UP (Rae Barelli, Pratapgarh, and Sultanpur etc.), visit the Primary Health centres (PHCs) and District administration, diagnose the situation, conduct experiments etc. We stayed in government guest houses. Though they had hardly any facilities, it was still a great experience. In some of the places, all four or five of us had to share a room. Jileebees were often the only available breakfast we could get. The sweet taste of Jileebess that Prof. Vora and I used to go in search of is still fresh in my mind.

IIMA also set up an office in Lucknow with Mr. B. L. Mittal (a PGP from IIMA) as a liaison officer. After a number of visits, I chose to work on the Behaviour of the Health and Family Planning workers. It later became a famous ‘Worker Client Transactions’ Project. I used to visit the villages along with the family Health and Planning staff of PHCs and record their transactions. We were later assisted by Samaresh Sengupta and a number of other staff. A number of cases came out of this project like ‘Thaneswar Primary Health centre, Shri Sen and Basu’ etc. We held a large number of programs to teach management of PHC medical officers and district administration. While this was a very exciting experience in terms of teaching, it was also a very frustrating experience in terms of the implementation on the ground.

**Education Systems Group (ESG)**
I spent a good deal of my time working on Education Systems. Udai Pareek, Ravi and I were constituted as an Education Systems Group. Paul made the announcement of this group with Udai as the coordinator. As a team, the three of us used to meet at least once a week and discuss what we wanted to do. We picked up a project from the Gujarat Agricultural University (GAU). The GAU had just been formed combining three Agricultural colleges at Anand, Navsari and Junagarh into one. The former Secretary, Education in Gujarat, Mr. Mehta was appointed as the Vice Chancellor. The university consisted of three campuses (Navsari, Anand and Junagarh) with their separate Directors. Each of the three directors had a lot of clout. The Academics were the Deans and others. The organizational structure was not very clear and was still evolving. Our project was to study the decision making structure and suggest future course of action in terms of both-structure and decision making systems. Udai, Ravi and I spent almost a year visiting various campuses of the University, developing a methodology and also doing the study.

It was during this time Ravi, Udai and I were invited to attend an International Seminar of Educational Administration at the Asian Institute of Educational Administration, New Delhi (later became NIEPA and now NUPA). This was sponsored by UNESCO. It was a four day program. I was there from day one and Udai and Ravi joined subsequently. In the first two days of discussions, I was repeatedly mentioning the use of Sensitivity training and Behavioural simulation in training educational administrators. They used to listen patiently as I was from IIMA, however they never took my points seriously. Perhaps, this could have been because of my age. I was very young - less than 30 years at that time. The next day when Udai Pareek and Ravi joined the meeting, Udai mentioned the same points on BS and T-Group training. Dr. Abdul Latif, one of the organisers of the program from UNESCO rushed to Udai to get his quotation and made sure to record it as his quote and continued repeating this quote in subsequent discussions. That evening in a dinner party, I pointed out to Dr. Latif that he had ignored my comments in the last two days and rushed to include Udai’s comments in the proceedings. I still recollect his reply, “It matters not only what you say but also who says it.” This was a great lesson that has remained with me all through my life - I should not feel offended if what I say is not heard. Instead, I should feel humble by remembering that I need to grow to be noticed. Now a days, I am sometimes worried if what I say is being taken too seriously and others are being ignored. When there is a lot of weight given to one’s words, one has to be even more careful as there is much greater responsibility.

Birth of the Jawaja Project

Prof. J P Naik, Member secretary of ICSSR and Education Advisor, Anil Bordia, Joint Secretary Education and Mrs. Chitra Naik, Director Education from Maharashtra, also attended this conference at Asian Institute (NIEPA). It was during this conference that Ravi mentioned in his chat with J P Naik and Anil Bordia, about the education group’s interest in working with the state government department on managing education. Anil
Bordia and J P Naik arranged a meeting of the five of us at Nirullas' in Connaught place to discuss this issue. It was in this meeting that Anil Bordia suggested that ESG of IIMA work with the Rajasthan Government as there was a High Power Committee report (High Power Committee as it was headed by a Minister) and any assistance in implementing would be a good way to professionalise management in the education sector. All of us agreed and a committee consisting of JP Naik, Chitra Naik, Bordia, Udai, Ravi and myself was formed. Later, the Director of Education from Rajasthan Inderjit Khanna was also included. This laid the foundation for what later came to be known as the Jawaja Project. Many more details have been included in Exhibit 2.

**Entrepreneurship Programs at IIMA**

My work on evaluating entrepreneurship development programs in Gujarat, led me to present a paper on the effectiveness of behavioural science interventions in developing entrepreneurs. It is this paper that later formed a basis for my writing a ‘Behaviouristic Model for Developing Entrepreneurs’ (Rao, 1975). This was first published as a working paper and later by the SIET Institute Journal and the Maharashtra State Industrial Development Corporation. This seemed to have attracted the attention of Dr. Richard Morse, who visited the institute to select faculty to participate in a workshop at East West Centre Hawaii. He discussed with some of the faculty at IIMA and requested Dr Paul to nominate one Faculty. Dr Paul nominated Prof. Gopinath from CMA to attend the workshop. Then came a letter from Dick Morse drawing attention to the work that I had done and inviting me for the workshop in addition to Gopinath. Thus, two of us ended up at the East west Center, Hawaii. It was around this time that I presented a paper in a conference held at Delhi on the effectiveness of Achievement Motivation training. David McClelland, who was visiting India at that time, happened to drop into the seminar. Manohar Nadkarni and Udai mentioned to him about my work in evaluating Gujarat experiences. He sat in my session. He later visited IIMA and addressed the students of LEM and others in public. His session was well attended by many across the city of Ahmedabad. It was at this time, he also invited me to join him and adapt for India a scale to measure “Psychosocial Maturity”-some work being done by Abigail Stewart at Wesleyan University. He passed on his paper “Power is the Great Motivator” which was then being published by HBR. I happily agreed as I had never been to USA until then and it would be a fantastic experience.

**Work with McClelland @ Harvard**

I was quite excited to go to the USA with two invitations—one from McClelland from Harvard (to be his Research Associate for four months at Harvard and adapt Stewart Maturity Scale) and the second from East West Centre (to attend a workshop on Identification and Selection of Entrepreneurs). I wanted to use this opportunity to visit some of the stalwarts in Psychology. Udai wrote a letter to Chris Argyris at MIT, Rensis Likert and Ron Lippit at Michigan, Mathew Miles at Columbia University, and a number of others at UCLA. I needed money for my travel and stay. Prof. Paul granted US $ 200 (two hundred dollars) to cover the costs. I was very happy with this
grant. I still remember my trip to the Ford Foundation at New York to get the grant money and staying with Labdhi Bhandari at that time. Labdhi was doing his Ph. D. at Columbia University. This visit also gave me an opportunity to stay with David for a few days. It was at this time that I met C K Prahalad, who was doing his Doctorate at HBS. I carried some local preparations from Gayathri’s mother to CKPs kids Murali and Deepa. I still have very fond memories of the lovely dinner that I had at their flat, and the fresh strawberries with strawberry ice cream that CKP got for me after dinner. Staying with McClelland was an experience in itself, as his house used to be filled with many Indian Gurus. I came to know that David used to be a regular visitor to the Ramana Maharshi Ashram in Tamil Nadu. Dinners used to be community dinners with every one holding hands and saying a prayer before dinner. I spent more time at Wesleyan University in Middletown. Middletown was a couple of hours journey from Boston as Abigail Stewart who developed the Psychosocial Maturity Scale with David McClelland was teaching there. It was an experience working with her and learning to adapt her scale. I carried from India a lot of TAT (Thematic Apperception Test) stories and she would get me to score them and check. We finally adapted the scale and got it published by Manasayan in India as desired by David McClelland with the name Stewart Maturity Scale. David McClelland wrote the Foreword for it. Besides sitting in some of his classes in the William James Hall at Harvard, I used to visit McBer in the evenings along with McClelland. In those days, my focus was on the psychosocial maturity scale. Little did I realise that I was visiting one of the best to be known consulting companies and interacting with top consultants working at Mc Ber. During that trip, for the first time I realised how much I missed Indian food. Chinese restaurants used to be the most frequented places at Harvard. I also missed India and my family.

Malaysian connection- Endeavor and NERDA

At East West Centre, we were joined by two other Indians, Mr. Azad an IAS officer from the Ministry of Agriculture and Mr. Chedda from the State Bank of India in charge of SSIs. We had a lot of fun with the Malaysians, Indonesians and Philippino participants. We formed a great team. They were happy to know about the work that we had done at IIMA. It was here that we conceptualised forming an International Society for Entrepreneurship called “Endeavour” (Entrepreneurial Development Organization”). Malaysians were very serious about this. They also conceptualised a body called NERDA (National Entrepreneurial Development Association). We discussed it jointly and even floated a joint project on entrepreneurial identification and selection. The Malaysian team consisted of Dr Tajuddin Jali-Executive Director of Urban Development Authority Kulalumpur, Ahmed Berak-National Productivity Council, Johari Hasan-Dean from the Institute of Technology Mara and Md. Iqbal-Professor of economics from the University of Malaysia. The team was excellent. Tajuddin had connections with Dr Mahatir, who was the deputy PM of Malaysia. He managed large funding for the project. Within six months of having met, I found myself visiting Malaysia to promote NERDA and share my experiences. Dr V G Patel
was also invited. While in Ahmedabad, we conducted a study to survey practices of identifying and selecting entrepreneurs. This study conducted with Prof. T K Moulik, resulted in a book published by IIMA on Identification and Selection of Entrepreneurs. IIMA in those days still had a long way to go in marketing its books and other products. This book never got the attention it deserved in those days. But we had an international workshop on Selection and identification of Entrepreneurs. A good number of Malaysians and Dick Morse came to attend this workshop. It was a great success. Paul was very encouraging of the work that was being done on entrepreneurship. He even invited me to participate in an International Workshop held at IIMA on Management Education and to speak on the Entrepreneurship work at IIMA including the LEM Course. The paper can be found in the proceeds of the conference edited by Paul. LEM as a course, along with Project Planning for Industrial development (PPID) by Prof. Pathak and Seminar of Entrepreneurship or Historical Perspectives on Entrepreneurship by Dwiji continued. Although the Committee for Future Direction (CFD) chaired by Prof. Rangarajan (of which I was a member) did not agree to my suggestion for starting an Entrepreneurship Development cell at IIMA, we continued our work. Had IIMA started such a cell, the history of entrepreneurship in Gujarat would have taken a different turn. However it did take a different turn as IIMA did not pursue this and Dr V G Patel perused it and started the EDI which is now world famous.

Unfortunately, Endeavour did not take off as other participants of the East West Centre workshop did not show much enthusiasm. We met again at Honolulu but this time the team was somewhat different. Tajuddin did not participate but he started his own venture in Kuala Lumpur. Others invited me and Udaì to promote EDPs and AMT in Malaysia. Udaì went as a short term UNIDO consultant to MIDF and I joined him for a few weeks. It was here while working with MIDF (Malaysian Industrial Development Finance) and Institute of Technology MARA, we developed a number of Trainers of Entrepreneurship and also gave them the AMT methodology. These were remarkable weeks as we made a lot of difference to the development of Entrepreneurs and Entrepreneurship in Malaysia. Later, when Dr. Mahathir became the Prime Minister, he focussed a lot on entrepreneurship of Bhumi putras. The people whom we trained became significant agents in the transformation. NERDA promoted many activities and the Government of Malaysia undertook this in a big way. Later however, Tajuddin left his position as ED of UDA, Kuala Lumpur and started his own business. As a result, NERDA went into the background and PMs Economic Council took over the EDPs. A few years later I was invited by NERDA (1982). As I was preparing to go, Malaysia faced an economic down turn and it began to ‘Look East’ for its growth models. Due to budget cuts, NERDA itself was going slow. It still invited me to spend a few months with its newly formed Centre (this was later wound up as the founders became high profile entrepreneurs and gave up EDPs). However, in this trip, my focus in Malaysia shifted to HRD and I gave a number of seminars on HRD and drew parallels to HRD philosophy and Japanese management. A series of my articles were published by Malaysian business, a publication of the New Straits Times.
Team work at IIMA

Team work at IIMA was of a high order. Faculty bonding came from team projects like the India Population project. Various committees and particularly the admission committee provided many bonding opportunities. The 3 Tier program (This was a famous program designed by IIMA for corporates, where participants from three different levels in the same organisation would participate. Tier 1 would have Junior managers attending the program for a one month period, Tier 2 would have middle level managers attending the program for 2 to 3 weeks and Tier 3 would have senior management attending the program for 1 week) provided yet another opportunity as the sessions used to be held either in Agra, Jaipur or Goa. Only in the late seventies, these programs were held at IIMA once KLMDC was constructed. In the 3 Tier Programs, Faculty members used to sit in each other’s classes. Different ‘Areas’ (areas in the academic field are similar to departments in universities) used to debate on the design of various programs. Many Faculty members started involving themselves in professional bodies. For example, for many years the OB Area used to be the centre for managing the Indian Society of Applied Behavioural Sciences (ISABS). Similarly, the P&QM Area was participating and driving the Computers Society of India and also Operations Research society, to the extent I recollect. The Committee for Future Directions (CFD) provided another opportunity as it met frequently across six months to debate, discuss issues and circulate views to faculty. V S Vyas, one of the members of CFD became the Director. The IIMA review Committee formed by Ravi also gave new directions to the Institute. Meanwhile, Samuel Paul became the Director while the deliberations on the future direction were going on and he was also associated with the Review. The convention for the Director to appoint a Review Committee developed well in the subsequent years, though the seriousness may have varied marginally from time to time. The Public Systems group (PSG) was not formed overnight. There was a lot of debate and a committee was constituted with Nitin Patel as the coordinator. Health, Education, Transportation, Urban systems, Energy etc. were combined to PSG. We struggled hard for many years to find commonalities. The main commonality seemed to be that they are all largely managed by the Government. We even started a 2 Tier program in Public systems and conducted such programs successfully for a few years. I am still not sure of the reasons as to why we gave it up.

We worked very closely with the Government. The work in Jawaja got me closer to the Ministry of Education. Anil Bordia became a good friend. I could walk into Shashti Bhavan any time, without an appointment. There was always a welcome gesture from the Joint Secretary Education. We undertook the Adult Education evaluation project with a high degree of sincerity in 1978. Anil Bhatt, T P Rama Rao and I constituted the team and we toured the villages of Rajasthan and visited most of the NGOs. By that time we had also completed our study of computerisation of Transfers and location of schools using the Dharampur model. We were very happy with the results of the study.
Unfortunately, it could not be implemented in spite of our efforts to convince the Education Minister from Rajasthan that he could accommodate more requests for transfers by using the Computer applications. Today, the same study has become a necessity and gets into an e-Governance issue. Ranjit Gupta, Mohan Kaul and I were asked to design an Institute of technology for North East located in Arunachal. We visited Itanagar and toured North east and designed an institute with an innovative model. The NERIST came into existence and I am told it is still using a large part of our design. We never had the opportunity to visit NERIST again as Mohan left for Malaysia and Ranjit got busy with Jawaja and other projects.

My Term as PSG Chair

I was appointed as the PSG Chairman after J K Satia’s term was over. I made efforts to enlarge the group and introduced a large number of secondary members. We started focussing on sectors like energy with Ramesh Gupta and Shishir Mukerjee, Nitin, Raghuram and others in transportation, Maru, Giridhar, Nirmala in health, Anil, TP, Ravi, Udai and me in education, Anil and Maru in Urban systems etc. We also recruited at least five new faculty (T J Ramaih, who later left to join WHO, S R Ganesh to work on Institution Building and Government systems, Ashok Subramanyam, Ganapathy and for a short time Lahariya to work on Government systems.). The group introduced new courses on Managing Social Development programs. The second year courses it introduced later paved way for PSG starting a fellow Program. This helped as there were uncertainties on whether the Fellow program should be offered by the areas only or by the groups and centers as well. After some amount of debate, the faculty finally agreed that the fellow program could be offered by PSG like any other.

IIMA Directors

I had the good fortune of working with all the Directors of IIMA during my tenure as a faculty. They were my Faculty colleagues first and then good friends. Samuel Paul was very encouraging. He used to mix well with faculty. He always invited newcomers to his house for tea. Govindarajan and Umakant Srivastava joined around the same time as I joined. Paul invited me and Uma for tea to his house. He had a special guest that day-Mr. Yougandhar, IAS officer in charge of the IAS training, Academy at Mussourie. IIMA was doing a module for them and he was visiting IIMA. He became a good friend. Many years later when I invited him to join the Board of the Academy of HRD, he readily accepted. Paul also encouraged young faculty. I was asked to address the first IIMA Society conference on HRD. While it was rightly Udai who should have been addressing the gathering, giving that opportunity to me was a reflection of Paul and also perhaps of the Institute’s philosophy. The badminton courts behind the 5 series houses where Paul used to join us to play badminton, added a lot to the friendly atmosphere of the Institute and closeness to the Director. We never discussed institute issues at the badminton court. It was pure badminton that was played, but the game definitely established a different kind of spirit. Jain saab, SS Rao,
Pramod Verma, Gopinath, Subhash Mehta, Paul, Sasi, Isaac, Seshan, Rakesh Khurana, SC Kucchal, TP Rama Rao were some of the colleagues who used to visit and play badminton rather regularly.

Prof. Vyas was also very friendly. He travelled abroad a lot as he was highly sought after by various international bodies. I was the PSG Chairman during his time. I must mention an interesting encounter I once had with Prof. Vyas. It was during summer. The summer vacation at IIMA used to be around six weeks and the faculty could use the vacation in whichever way they wanted. I was invited to conduct a Training program in KL, Malaysia. Around the same time, I was also invited to participate in an Entrepreneurship Development Workshop by the Ministry of Youth and Culture of Malaysia. As both the workshops were to be conducted with a few days gap between them, I took permission from Prof. Vyas for both the workshops. I was originally intending to stay for all the three weeks. However, after the first program I decided to return to the Institute and spend time with the family. During that time, I went to meet Prof. Vyas on some PSG matter. After discussing the PSG matter, I mentioned to him that as I had not completed my work in Malaysia, I had to return to Malaysia during the break. He was visibly upset and said, “TV you are doing too much of travelling. Your colleagues have also complained about the same. I suggest that you drop the trip.” I reminded him that he had sanctioned the trip quite some time back and I could not drop the work at this stage as the tickets had already been booked by the Ministry of Youth. This sudden change would not only inconvenience them but would also project the institute in poor light. Prof. Vyas did not listen. He simply said, “No. You don’t go”. Upset, I returned home. In an hours’ time Prof. Vyas called me back and said, “TV, my apologies. I am sorry to have said what I said. You please go ahead. Don’t change your plans and don’t worry I will take care of colleagues”. I was very touched by this. I think all directors have a huge challenge in managing issues of envy and comparison between colleagues. Handling this appropriately is a big challenge and it is certainly not easy. Having made a mistake, Vijay was very prompt in making amends. Such actions enhance the effectiveness of a Director. Vijay was also known for encouraging PSG and it was seen in the many faculty recruited that year. However, most of them left a few years later. Vijay was also generous in honouring the recommendations of the selection committee. I always used to maintain that the selection committee only recommended whether the person was appropriate to be a faculty member or not and it was the decision of the Director and dean to put the person in an appropriate grade—Either as Assistant or Associate or Professor. The selection committee should not be asked to recommend specifics. However, Raghavachari (The Dean) and Vijay used to insist on a definite recommendation. They normally gave more than what we recommended and rarely less.

I had relatively little interaction with Dr. I G Patel. Soon after he joined, I left for XLRI and by the time I returned, he was leaving. Prof. N R Sheth took over as Director from him. Like the others, Prof. NR Sheth was a very friendly and affectionate person. During his term, I served as the PGP review committee Chair,
PGP Chair and also FPM Chair. Very un-assuming, he was the easiest person to work with. He would listen and honour Faculty’s recommendations. Under his leadership, all activity heads could implement the reforms they felt appropriate, provided they took the other faculty along. During Prof. Sheth’s time, we faced some amount of turbulence as there was a difference of opinion amongst the faculty on how we should respond to the Government of India’s request for training (The then PM, Rajiv Gandhi wanted all his Ministers and Senior Civil servants to be trained). While some felt that we need to firstly study and establish the needs etc, other faculty felt that we should be proactive and just grab the opportunity. All of us witnessed some stormy meetings on this issue. Meanwhile, ASCI and TMTC moved quickly, got the work and started training government officials.

This incident brought out clearly the challenge that a director faces in trying to balance between maintaining the institutional way of responding versus doing something drastically different. Those who have been with the Institute for long years, acquire the personality of the Institute, internalise it, and hence may respond in ways that may appear very conservative and not very proactive. Even during Pradip Khandwalla’s time, we faced similar such issues. For example, an innovative program like the One year International program in management akin to the PGP-X or what was started a decade later by ISB, was dropped due to this conservative approach by some of the faculty. Similarly, both Anil Gupta and I proposed the two institutions we started to be taken over by IIMA. Pradip was personally receptive but it could not be pushed through the Policy Planning Committee. Had things turned out differently, the Academy of HRD (now an independent Society) could have been a part of IIMA and prospered immensely like the centre for values founded by S K Chakravarthy at IIMC. At the same time, Prof. Sheth was gracious enough to encourage us in our institution building activities. When the National HRD Network decided to start an Academy of HRD at Ahmedabad and asked me to be its Honorary Director, Prof Sheth as the then Director not only agreed but permitted me to spend as much time as possible to start and build this institution. The only condition he put was that I should document it as an institution Building experience and share it with IIMA. This is something I did do a couple of years later. I left the Institute during Prof. Khandwalla’s time. All the subsequent Directors Prof. Jahar Saha, Bakul Dholakia and Samir Barua were good friends. Each of them had their own distinct personality and it showed in the way they managed and further built the Institute. I consider each one of them to be a remarkable person in his own unique way. All of them were recognised by various agencies and forums in the country even before they became Directors and they continue to do good work even after they moved out from that role.

The Story of Human Resources Development: IIMA’s Role

It was Udai Pareek who got me involved in a consultancy project sponsored by L&T, to review their Performance Appraisal system. Udai submitted a project proposal in which he included me as a consultant. In those days, seniors and juniors worked
equally hard. Uday was particularly skilful in dividing the work and ensuring an equal share. Both of us interviewed a number of managers at L&T and got their suggestions. The consolidated view of all managers (including a young manager in those days like A M Naik whom I had the opportunity to interview and who made a distinct mark on me) suggested a system which later became an open appraisal system. The system we suggested went beyond appraisals and was called ‘Human Resources Development system’. The history of HRD in L&T and later in SBI were well documented in various papers. The consulting reports were also published later by the Academy of HRD (AHRD). One led to the other and HRD or HR as a profession got reasonably well established by the early eighties. IIMA gave us the platform and we persisted with our ideas and philosophy. Our contributions, sincerely and persistence of effort were rewarded amply by the good will and praises of people. At times both Uday and I were even given the title of “Fathers of HRD”. I do not know if such titles are appropriate, but we did pursue the cause of HRD all through our life beginning 1975. Neither Uday nor I were trained personnel managers and there were many aspects of Industrial relations, which we did not know. I still remember sitting with Uday in Hotel Tajmahal Mumbai one fine morning, consolidating our notes and sharing our thoughts. It was here that Uday suggested the creation of a new department to pursue the philosophy of development and use the suggestions given by the L&T managers to change the performance appraisal process and link to development through counselling, career development, potential assessment, OD and other mechanism. This resulted in the creation of a new system and a new Function. However, the real credit first goes to the L&T Chairman at that time Mr. N. M. Desai, then to the appointed HRD Chief and until then the GGM Personnel Dr D F Pereira, and their team including Govind Advani, S R Subramanian, and many others. Holk Larsen attended two of our presentations and fully accepted our recommendations. Task forces were appointed and they did a marvellous job across the first three years in imitating and stabilising the HRD systems at L&T. Thus, IIMA and L&T gave us the opportunity and the credit of being the main promoters of HRD, goes to them.

State Bank of India with whom Uday had been working as a consultant for many years along with others like MB Athreya, SK Bhattacharya (SKB) etc. should be credited as it was the second organisation to follow and implement HRD systems. BEML was also amongst the first few Public sector to adopt HR systems for growth and expansion. Bhattacharya and Uday worked together to restructure many companies and HRD found a place in all their recommendations. SKB was so sold on HRD; he always wanted Uday to be a part of this team and was instrumental in introducing HRD in many places. Two senior professors at IIMA worked as an invisible team along with their junior colleagues like me.

It was at this point that Ravi who was on the Board of BEML invited them to undertake a reorganization and suggest a future strategy. This resulted in SKB undertaking the consultancy assignment. SKB suggested a long term plan of growth-moving from being a 70 crore company to a 700 crore company. To make this happen,
a new structure was required. To put the structure in place, Udai Pareek suggested having an HRD department. It was at this point that BEML was prompted by the two consultants to approach IIMA to spare my services to set up the HRD department. I was barely 32 years old and almost all the GMs in BEML were at least 20 years elder to me. The strategy we used was to introduce the system as a trial in two departments. Once we gained the necessary experience, I would join them to take it forward. As a young Professor was not likely to be taken seriously by senior GMs, we decided to ask for a General Manager position with the highest salary being paid to any GM. It still worked out to be far lesser than what they would have had to pay consultants and they would have a term appointment. Later on, I requested that the designation be converted to an Advisor in General Manager capacity as I did not want any internal issues due to my appointment. While my assignment at BEML was less than a year, it was instrumental in building my determination to fight it out with various forces and establish HRD. My experiences were documented in detail in the book, ‘Designing HR systems’. One of the chapters in the book was fully devoted to the experiences at BEML. As soon as I returned from BEML, I wrote an article 'HRD: Old wine in a new Bottle' to counter the criticism that there was nothing new in HRD. Udai and I also planned to write a book on HRD and we organised a workshop at IIMA. We wrote various chapters for this workshop, which were later published as Designing HR systems. It is this workshop that Dr Anil Khandelwal, one of the participants, keeps referring to.

As the IIMA faculty were involved in more than a hundred projects, while in PSG, I prepared a paper on the Institution Building work done by all the faculty.

PGP Review and PGP Chair

The year after I returned from XLRI, Prof. Sheth took over as Director, as Dr I G Patel left to head London Business School. There was a feeling that the PGP needed to be reviewed as it had not been changed for over a decade. I was asked to Chair the review. Professors Umakant Srivastava, S C Kucchal, K. Balakrishnan, A. K. Jain and P R Shukla were the other members. We spent enormous amounts of our time interviewing everyone who came for placement to the Institute, alumni and the faculty. We closely examined the course content and structure of other Schools from across the globe. While we set out to review our course structure, we also found that Harvard and a number of other top Business Schools were also reviewing their curricula. We also discovered that IIMA had the highest number of pages to read and the contact sessions etc. as compared to almost all the B-schools across the world. There was clearly a need to restructure and refocus the PGP. We decided to get the Objectives, and framework approved first by the Faculty. Prof. Sheth agreed to this. We were successful in getting the objectives, mission and the number of contact sessions approved by the faculty. We computed the reading speed of students by working with 34 students. We found out that their reading speed varied from 6 pages to 40 pages an hour for various subjects, with average speeds around 29 to 30 pages. Contrast this to Harvard, where the
estimates were an average of around 15 to 20 pages per hour. The teaching load for the first year courses varied from 306 hours at Yale, 616 at Harvard, 630 at Virginia and 405 at MIT, as compared to 632 at IIMA. An estimate of the total preparation time required was also highest among 10 B-schools of the US including Wharton, Yale, Stanford, Columbia, Tuck, MIT, HBS etc. These were all rationalised.

After a good deal of debate and looking at the data of other schools the faculty approved, we decided that the new thrust of the program would be to 'prepare leaders and change agents'. After this we formulated the recommendations based on various inputs received. Some of the remarkable recommendations included introduction of half credit courses, additional IT related inputs as technology was growing rapidly, spreading some of the courses across more terms so that learning becomes more meaningful, introducing summer training as a method of understanding organizations and making presentations on return. For example, the OB courses were to begin with introduction to organisations. Most students came without prior work experience. Hence, providing students with an understanding of how organizations were structured, providing the context of organisations was important so that they could understand all the courses they went through. Therefore, the first month itself was to be devoted to providing an understanding of the nature of organizations. We also felt that this should be done by getting the student to visit an organization, study the way it is structured and the way the functions are divided. Students were also required to make presentations of the organizations they visited, so that they learned about different types of organizations (Banks, Schools, Government departments, Branches of various agencies, sales and marketing, advertising, production, NGOs, Municipal corporations, R&D organizations etc.). This was followed with an introduction to personal and interpersonal dynamics, and then team dynamics and we ended with organizational dynamics. Students would be briefed before they went on their summer projects. The briefing would deal with understanding the organization, irrespective of the area of summer project. The student would be required to get a copy of the previous annual report of the company, analyse and understand its objectives, mission, vision etc. On return from the summer project, the student’s report was to be put up for discussion. The PGP review Committee was one of the reports that got a large percent of its recommendations accepted. It appeared that the Institute faculty were quite pleased with this. I was asked to Chair the PGP and implement the report. I happily accepted this. I thought that like in BEML which recruited me to implement the new HRD policy and systems, I got the opportunity to implement the new PGP.

I took the implementation very seriously and over the next two years, I implemented most of the recommendations which were conceptualised and desired by the faculty. This was also the time I was elected as President of ISABS and I was trying to register and push the National HRD Network. I was busy working hard to make all this happen. I tried my best to synergise all the roles. To share with you this effort-I would visit Chennai to meet the summer trainees to check if they had any issue and at the same time have an ISABS meeting with ISABS or HRD Network Chapter and also
take their help in meeting the PGP students. If we would have the summer program of ISABS at Clarks hotel in Jaipur, I would organise an HRD Facilitators program of NHRDN in the same hotel and get Faculty from ISABS as well as NHRDN to teach or participate in them. I was able to leverage the three roles in a way that all the three benefitted from the other. Those were also the years I got close to the students as PGP Chair. Harish Bhatt was one of those students who got close to me as SAC coordinator. In fact, I got Economic Times to publish a special edition on Management Education for which Harish Bhatt was one of the contributors from the student side. Similarly, Economic Times also published a special supplement on HRD for the First conference of the NHRDN. In those days, Economic Times and other such newspapers were less commercial and looked for genuine development and newsworthy items. Today, I realise that we are in a changed world. Many things are commercialised and it is not easy to get what we consider as newsworthy items. I sent a few articles to Economic Times (a few years ago) and as I did not even get an acknowledgement, I gave up writing for ET. Getting good ratings from students for teaching and getting best Teacher awards once in a while kept the motivation high for teaching well.

PGP Courses

I have always been interested in starting new courses. In my early years, I taught a course on Consumer Behaviour along with Prof. Sasi Misra. As a part of the course, we carried out a few exercises on sales styles and did some classroom experiments using role plays. Using this we even published a paper on effectiveness of varying sales styles on customers. Teaching with other colleagues was also a great source of learning. Well conceptualised MDPs and PGP electives, can lay grounds for experimental research. I started LEM in the first year of my joining. Later, I designed and taught courses on Human resources Development, Management of Formative years, Performance Appraisal, Managing Social Development Programs etc. Teaching always energised me. As an Adjunct Professor, I designed and taught four courses in the last seven years, besides the first year compulsory courses: Talent Management; Developing Entrepreneurial Personality, High Performing teams and Intellectual Capital through HRD Score Card 2500.

FPM Chair

In the two years of being the FPM Chair (1989-91), the struggle was largely focussed on ensuring that the students graduated in a five year period. Some candidates were taking as many as 8 years and I felt that it was a colossal waste of their intellectual capital. Even today, I regret how we missed graduating candidates like Durga Prasad, whom I consider to be a very bright candidate. Every year the Chairpersons of various programs change. There are several roles of Chairpersons. The Directors find it difficult to keep persuading faculty to undertake the administrative activities. In my view, while chairing the activity may be routine and many processes are well laid out, each Chair brings his/her distinctiveness in the way the role is performed. If there is scope for innovations within the activity, one should certainly take up the initiative and
follow the process to get it approved. If there is no scope, then one can be content with performing the role as per the processes laid. During my term as FPM Chair, there were no significant changes that were taking place. I always felt that the Fellow program should have many candidates admitted so that there was a critical mass in the classroom to teach and make the interactions exciting. Peer learning is also an important form of learning, and an optimal size is needed for such learning. The main thrust during the two year period as FPM Chair was to increase the candidates admitted by constantly pushing the areas to take more and also to make sure many graduate. We had a few problem candidates in terms of their not completing their work on time. Individual attention to each of these candidates took away a lot of time. During this period, one of the candidates took an unusually long time and this resulted in many avoidable faculty and committee meetings.

I also guided a few candidates for their thesis work as a part of the FPM: Nagabrahmam, Rajan Gupta, Uma Jain, Deepi Sethi are some examples. I also guided through the Institute, ten Ph.D.’s from Gujarat University. All of them worked on interesting topics. A number of them came from University of Udaipur where Udai and I worked. The Ph.D. candidates guided by me include: latte Mahendra Singhvi, Surabhi Purohit (now a Professor in Rajasthan University), Pratibha Mehta (currently UN representative in Vietnam), Dalpat Sarupriya (who retired as Professor at MSU), Deepankar Roy (who works as a Consultant for agencies like PRADAN), H N Arora (who retired as Chief of HR with Escorts hospitals), P V R Murthy (who edits NHRDN Journal and runs his own Company) and Fr. E. Abraham, (Director, XLRI). Many of the staff working with us at Udaipur joined us at IIMA, worked as Research Associates, got their Ph. D.s and made good careers for themselves. Late Dr. N. Dixit (who later went to Canada and got his Ph. D. and also worked as a Professor at IIM Lucknow as well as AHRD), worked with Udai and me on the LEM Course. P. Vijayashree who works with MCR Institute at Hyderabad worked on a project sponsored by McClelland on my return from Harvard and did her Ph. D with Udai. Mallika Sarabhai also did her Ph. D. With Udai and used the data collected in McClelland’s project of Psychosocial Maturity of various groups. Dr. M. L. Rao who later became President HR with Aditya Birla Group also worked with us on Education systems for a few years. Thus, IIMA served as a platform for Doctoral level studies with other Universities for interested staff, besides its own fellow program. Unfortunately the association with Gujarat University had to be discontinued in between due to some unfortunate administrative issues between the University and IIMA

Students and Alumni

The most important source of energy for a Faculty member is the response he/she gets from the students. In a recent course on ‘High Performing Teams’ that I offered at IIMA, I tried out a few methods. I gave a practical assignment and formed teams of six students. In four weeks time they were expected to choose a project, implement it and
show some measurable results. One group wanted to explore developing a lasting method of funding student NGO Prayaas on the campus. Another group wanted to explore IIMA starting an on-line education program and so on. They were to meet periodically, maintain a daily record of their growth as a group. Although some of the activities were difficult, given the time they took it as a challenge. At the end it was very satisfying to see their reports. It is always the good work done by the students that motivates and encourages a professor. The most exciting part of a Professors life is the interaction with students while on campus and with alumni once they leave. Alumni provide both satisfaction and pride when they succeed. Sometimes, they may even come to help the Professor in some totally unexpected situations. As they grow they also become sources of learning for professors.

I have had the good fortune of having some excellent students at IIMA. Some of them with whom I have maintained contact include: Raj Saha now at the University of Chicago; J. V. Singh at Wharton; Atanu Ghosh, Vijay Mahajan and Savita Mahajan, Harish Bhatt, Hema Ravichandar, Sanjiv Bhikchandani, Raju Vir, Tarun Govil, Ruby, Mallika Sarabhai, Arvind Agarwal, Harsha Bhogle, Krishna Prasad, Ramana Murthy, Kaundinya, Venkat Chengavally, Bhashar Bhatt, Murali, Joseph Mani, Marcel Parker, Arun Wakhlu etc. While some of them were not in my class, and graduated much before I joined IIMA, the IIMA connection makes you get connected. For example, Mallika had already graduated from IIMA by the time I started LEM at Institute but she used to attend my classes on LEM. Arvind Agarwal and Marcel Parker worked with me for the NHRDN. Many of the names mentioned in the book ‘Stay Hungry Stay Foolish’ by Rashmi Bansal are illustrative of the alumni who bring great pride to us. Several of them who joined Civil Services (IAS and IPS) and others who have done unusual things like setting up Pradhan, or Dhan Foundation (Vasimallai), or Aravali Institute (Varun Arya), Mastek (Ashank Desai), Sintex (Dangayach) bring great pride. I am happy that we use their case studies to teach subsequent batches of students. This is a unique privilege in Management and perhaps law, Social work and such other professions.

A very unusual thing I must mention here is the help provided by Mr. Ramana Murthy when he was Additional Director General Police in AP. My house in Hyderabad was wrongfully taken away and sold to others by some goons. They impersonated me and got the house registered in their name and were about to sell it to another party. When I came to know about this and brought it to the notice of AP police, it was Mr. Ramana Murthy who made sure that justice is done by investigating the case and preventing the goons from resorting to further criminal activities. He stood by us through his solid support. The IIMA alumni in Hyderabad were a great source of strength and support.
RMCEI

Ravi Matthai passed away on 13th February 1984. I was at XLRI. All our reactions were well documented in the Alumnus published that year. I saw him several months before he died. My interactions with him were quite frequent at IIMA-both at home in 501 lawns along with his adorable dog Puddles or at his office in wing No. 9. I did not inform him that I was going to XLRI as L&T Professor to start a HRD centre. I did not think that he would encourage me to take up going to XLRI as he has successfully poured water (in his own sweet style) on my earlier attempts to take up a couple of offers that I had to direct some Institutions. He always felt it was too early for me to be a Chair Professor or a Director. Those days, I was also a bit unhappy with Udai Pareek not being given a chance to direct the Institute. IIMA was likely to deviate from the set tradition of having only one of its professors as the director, by getting a director from outside. Hence, I avoided being a part of the decision making. I went through my own journey of guilt of taking a decision without Ravi’s inputs. In hindsight, I could have handled it much better.

The news of Ravi’s sad demise within a few months of my joining XLRI came to me as a rude shock. That day, I decided to return to IIMA at the earliest possible. I wanted to carry forward what Ravi stood for. It was not merely the Jawaja project that influenced me but his vision of the Institute. Ravi used to share a number of things about the processes at IIMA while we travelled to Jawaja and stayed in the Dak Bungalows of Beawar and ate in the Dhabas of Beawar along with the Independent Volunteers (Brian Pinto, Arvind Khare, Utpal Panda, Subramanyam and the NID teams from time to time). We not only travelled to Jawaja and the whole of Ajmer for the High Power committee report for several days but also travelled by road all the way from Ahmedabad to Sanawar to conduct the self-Renewal laboratory at Lawrence School Sanawar. In one of the trips, Mrs. Syloo Matthai and Ashok Matthai also accompanied us. Udai and I spent a week at Sanawar for the workshop. As the Matthaids were family friends with Shomie Das’s family, we had a lot of family meals almost all days at Shomie’s house. My interactions with Ravi from the time I joined the institute in 1973 till I left for XLRI in October 1983 were regular and frequent. Besides Udai, Ravi was a friend, philosopher and guide in most of the activities I undertook at IIMA. We also travelled together to Tilonia, interacted with Bunker and Aruna Roy at SWRC (for which Ravi was Chairman for some time) and visited their non-formal education enters and also had heated debates about making education more relevant to rural masses. Bunker had his own strong views in those days and they were quite different than those of Ravi’s-hence the frequent debates. I used to openly share my dilemmas and issues at the institute with Ravi. For example, I felt that I was learning a lot more about group processes at Jawaja than at ISABS. I was to go for the summer training for a couple of weeks at Bangalore to get certified as ISABS trainer. I shared with Ravi my reluctance. He advised me saying “TV, you can always get back to Jawaja and participate and experience the group dynamics. You should go for ISABS and get your certificate. “You can fire the gun only when it is filled with
**Bullets**. Once you have the ammunition you can always exercise your choice to fire it or not. If you don’t have it filled you can’t fire and you will have no choice”.

This advice stayed with me for many years. Today, I freely give the same advice to other whom I meet. Another incident that I recall is when I happened to hear one of my faculty colleagues in OB Area passing on a lot of negative comments. I was very upset and angry and I shared the same with Ravi. I told Ravi about the nuisance he was creating at the Institute and how other faculty were laughing at the fights among OB Area faculty who taught interpersonal relations to the students. After having heard my views at length, Ravi told me how this Professor was recruited on the suggestion of Dr Kamala Chowdhury. Justified his credentials and also my anger and ended with a concluding statement, “TV, whenever I faced such situations and felt angry with the behaviour of a colleague, my mother used to say, Ravi, Remember, All are God’s Children”. That closed the issue and I used to remember this advice. This also taught me a lot of tolerance. I found Udai to be a personification of tolerance and working with both Udai and Ravi was the best thing that happened to me. I was blessed and fortunate to have such teachers to teach me the value of patience, tolerance and positive thinking.

Having decided to cut short my stay at XLRI, I returned six months earlier than my original schedule. My family was very happy to come back as they disliked staying in Jamshedpur in those days. The best thing we had at XLRI was the excellent company of Faculty Colleagues and Jesuits as well as the close family atmosphere.

Once I was back at IIMA, I had to get back to MDPs in HRD which Prof. Ramadhar Singh and Sasi Misra had been leading. They made a mark besides doing something to continue Ravi’s work. It was at this point that Ravi Mattha Centre was conceptualised after several months and perhaps a year’s debate. As Education work was going on as a part of the PSG, to think of a centre outside came with its own issues. However, the Institute took a decision to establish Ravi Mattha Centre to pursue what Ravi was pursuing. Then came the challenge of finding an agenda. Both Ranjit Gupta and I were associated with the RMCEI and chaired it for shorter periods of time. Two of the activities we conceptualised were: starting a program on “Development Entrepreneurship” and writing on Institution Building experience of IIMA.

On Development Entrepreneurship (DE), Ravi was working with Ranjit Gupta on conceptualising a program to prepare development entrepreneurs. The ‘development entrepreneurs’ model was similar to Independent Volunteers who worked in Jawaja on a small fellowship after their PG for a year or two and facilitated skills development and entrepreneurship among the villagers. Ravi was also associated with IRMA and used to have frequent discussions with Dr. Kurien and also with Dr. Kamala Chowdhury in the Ford Foundation. The concept of DE was to be different than our PGDM and also that of IRMAs. Ravi perhaps did not come to a conclusion on the exact design but there was a proposal made for Ford Foundation. Ranjit was very involved in it and hence the idea was to be pursued. I suggested that Ravi’s thoughts
and ideas on Institution Building processes should be well documented so as not to forget the philosophy behind the Institute. We had to finally drop the DE idea due to strong views Ranjit had and lack of agreement on how to do it. Moreover, there was no surety on resources that IIMA could commit for it. Meanwhile, Ford Foundation had already sanctioned a good deal of money for that purpose, but it had to be returned after the Institute took a painful decision of not going ahead with it. Had we not taken the decision that day, by now IIMA would have had a centre for Development Entrepreneurs, perhaps several miles away from the current IIMA campus. The result of the second project was two volumes of essays written by many faculty members on Institution Building: IIMA Experiences. I was actively involved in the first one and the second one was carried out by Ranjit. When I returned to IIMA as Adjunct faculty, I was happy and proud to have got the third volume done with Prof. Vijay Sherry Chand with the title, “Nurturing Excellence: Indian Institute of Management” with contributions from a number of faculty members. To me, this is a landmark achievement. However, I hope that the Institute will publish the first two volumes someday. I keep requesting RMCEI, though there is little progress. One is thankful that the two volumes are available at least in a pdf format, thanks to the efforts by Prof. Shailendra Mehta. RMCEI currently works with a number of schools and other innovative projects in the education field and stands out as a good tribute to Ravi’s later years of work at IIMA.

Consultancy at IIMA

Most of my consulting assignments were undertaken a couple of years after I left IIMA in August 1994 as a part of T V Rao Learning Systems—a consulting company that I started. At IIMA, the consultancy was equally distributed among the social projects like the India Population Project. At IIMA, we followed a simple principle from the beginning of not charging for education projects. For example, we had done a large number of evaluations of the Adult Education program for the Ministry of Education without charging any fee. At best they reimbursed the travel and research assistance costs. The GAU project, work with Sanawar School etc. were others projects implemented without any charge. Jawaja was a research project sponsored by ICSSR. We did all the work in the initial two to three years with a grant of Rs. 50,000. The IPP was an apt consultancy, but largely research oriented, resulting in monographs and case studies.

Among the various projects I undertook at IIMA, given below are those I personally consider to be path breaking and worth a mention:

1. Designing and Establishing the HRD department and function at Larsen & Toubro. Spread across a five year period (1974-85), the work continued both at IIMA, at XLRI as L&T Professor and even subsequently after we established the National HRD Network. This also included the work done at L&T ECC to revise and establish the Performance Planning and Development system and recent years an OD project with L&T IDPL.
2. Work similar to what we did at L&T was done with the State Bank of India by Udai and me between 1975 and 1988. My work started around 1978 with the training of a Chief General Manager Mr. Shanmugam and continued till 1987 or 88 when there were changes in the CGM and the Dy MD of HRD. It took a totally different turn after Mc Kinsey entered the field. HRD was remarkably played down and SBI became excessively customer driven without corresponding changes in people processes. While this is what I personally felt, others may have had different views. I continued to work with SBI in implementing the recommendations of McKinsey in the mid-nineties. I also started a modified version of Assessment Centres for promotion to CGM and Dy MD cadres. I understand that subsequently the efforts that started with the help of Dr. Y V Reddy from the Ministry and Dr Tarapore from RBI took a different direction, due to leadership changes in the Ministry and the SBI itself.

3. Introducing and changing the Performance Appraisal system in Steel Authority of India (SAIL) from 1985 till 1994.

4. Organizational Diagnosis and Team building and HRD work at EID Parry, TI Group; Sundram fasteners, Sundaram Clayton.

5. 360 Degree Feedback based interventions along with Ramnarayan with the Mafatlal Group. This assignment was aimed at developing leadership competencies and changing the organizational climate.

6. Bank of Baroda reorganization done with Prof. NR Sheth, and Vijay Govindarajan.

7. Introducing HRD (including an attempt to initiate Assessment Centres) in Crompton Greaves.

8. Examining Communications as a strategy in HPCL along with Prof. S S Rao.

9. Evaluating and suggesting a new structure for the Audience Research Unit of the Ministry of Communications and Broadcasting.

10. In addition, there were occasional projects like HRD audit with the Birla group, Performance appraisal with NTPC, Climate survey with Volts, occasional lectures in RBI, Air India, PMS in Indian Airlines (with Jerome and Arun). Free consultancy with the Ministry of Education (later named as HRD Ministry) continued on behalf of the RMCEI. I spent a lot of time with them participating in the New Education Policy initiated by the HRD Minister PV Narasimha Rao and also in reviewing NIEPA. I had the opportunity be on the Committee of Management of Education with PVNR as Chair.

An interesting experience comes to my mind when I think of the work done while implementing Potential System in L&T. The HRD system we introduced required the assessment of Potential of managers using Assessment Centres. In those days, the Assessment Centre technique was not well known and it needed to be explained. Udai Pareek was scheduled to explain the system to General Managers and Heads of Departments of L&T. Due to some unexpected work at the Institute, Udai could not go to Mumbai to conduct the session as scheduled. He sent me to handle the session. I was just 30 years (in 1976) and all the senior managers were older to me. After a few minutes my explaining how potential appraisal was a more objective way of assessing
suitability for promotions, the participants stopped me and said “Professor, all this is not going to work in L&T as the promotions here are decided by who plays Golf with Mr. N. M. Desai (NMD) the President of L&T. There is no use of your talking any further”. They did not let me proceed. I then went up to Mr. Desai who was sitting a few floors above the venue of the workshop in Ballard estate building and mentioned to him what they said. He came down immediately to the workshop room where the participants were having fun. As soon as he entered there was pin drop silence. He started by saying, “I understand you are all saying that the promotions in L&T are subjective and decided by me on the basis of who plays Golf with me.” There was pin drop silence. After pausing for a few seconds he continued, “You are right. I am glad you realise this. Today I have no other way of knowing my managers apart from what I assess in situations like while playing golf. That is the reason why I don’t get to know the potential of many people who don’t play golf with me. I want more objective information through what the IIMA Professors are saying as Potential Appraisal system”. These powerful statements by NMD ensure that all the objections disappeared. None of the managers expected me to go to him and straight away share their objections. They also didn’t anticipate that Mr. Desai would come down himself to assure them of the new system.

It was great learning experience from many angles. I suppose that is how young professors gain confidence and learn.

Consultancy in most of these cases was not in-house training but a real consultancy involving diagnosis, solution presentation and assistance in execution. While executing there may be orientation workshops and train the trainer workshops in skills development. That was the pattern in all the above consultancies. To the extent I recollect, the average consultancy days used to be around 20 in a year against the 52 (one day a week formula) that was used since Sarabhai’s time. My travel in the first ten years used to be disproportionate as I was working in Rajasthan and UP for Education and Health projects. After I left IIMA and started TVRLS a research based consulting firm in 1996, we did a large number of projects and these may cross about 200. Many of them were short and did not have a long term involvement like those at IIMA. The situation in the country also changed and long term associations are very rare, even for the big five.

MDPs

During the years I joined, the Institute’s flagship MDP (The 3-Tier program) used to be offered outside the campus at Jaipur and Agra. I was asked to teach and it gave me a great opportunity to sit in the classes of other Professors like Dr. Rangarajan, Bakul Dholakia, V. S. Vyas, M N Vora, K R S Murthy etc. and learn from them. After Pradip Khandwalla joined the Institute, he tried offering workshops on ‘Creativity and Creative Problem Solving’. I started working with him. We offered at least four programs and I even invited him to do a Train the Trainer workshop for ISABS professionals and NIMID (National Institute for Motivational and Institutional
Development started by M S Nadkarni, M V Deshpande and others. Working with him on creativity workshops were a great learning experience. He used to invite famous personalities like Pearl Padamsee and other artists. Interacting with them used to be great learning. The participants of these programs still remember our inputs and methodology. Later Pradip brought out his book ‘Fourth Eye’ after testing out much of the material in these programs. It is a great book and I kept using it in the Entrepreneurship program. Even today I use the exercises in a variety of programs.

Udai and I used to be inseparable partners in giving MDPs related to Motivation. A Laboratory in Managing Motivation was offered in 1976 and 1977 as a two phased program. It was innovative in the sense that participants were required to get back after six months with a review of what they had implemented. Leadership styles and organizational effectiveness were the other innovative programs which later came to be known as 360 Degree Feedback methodology. This was offered first with Pradip, JP Singh and Ramnarayan. I conceptualized this program as soon as I returned from XLRI. I had two sources of inspiration for this course: First, repeated suggestions from participants in most of our programs that used instruments on locus of control, interpersonal trust, and tolerance for ambiguity, FIRO-B etc. that it would be nice if there was some way to validate their self-assessment with the assessment by others; and second, my repeated questioning about how useful will it be to get feedback from known people, if they can be trusted and can act as mirrors. If we can trust strangers so much for their feedback, in sensitivity training, how about trying out and testing feedback from known people? The moment I suggested a program with registration there months ahead and mailed the tools to known people, OB area approved the program and I requested Pradip to join to test out his tool on Management Styles. I also wanted to test out the Leadership Styles questionnaire I developed and was using so successfully in various IIMA programs. Later JP and Ramnarayan joined in this effort. This program was a great success. We got participants for three programs when we announced the first one and we ran at least two and repeated it later. Pradip, Ram, JP and I planned a series of four books using the data generated from these programs. Many who attended the program were already CEOs or later became CEOs (K L Chugh, Mahinder Agarwal of Gati, Mr Sinha of SRF, Anil Sachdev of Eicher, H N Arora from Reliance etc. Rishikesh Mafatlal and team joined the second). Pradip completed his book on management styles using his part of the data from the first few programs and Ram, JP and I could not keep up our commitment. It was decided at this point that Pradip’s book should be authored by him singularly as the other three of us did not complete our parts. At that time we seemed to be happy to be out of this as it reduced the burden of commitment to write three more books. It was not pursued by me beyond the first two programs as lot more effort was required by the MDP office to provide the research assistance needed to do the pre-workshop work and I had limited capability to assert myself on this issue. I also had some unhappy situations to face, due to lack of proper facilities in the MDC and some participants getting upset with the same. Rakesh Kumar who is now a General Manager in Bhilai used to assist in analyzing the data for these programs. As this was a new initiative, there were bound
to be some mistakes in the analysis. This was something that disturbed me as the feedback had to be error free, else we would lose credibility. Pradip felt that we should not give up and he continued. Later, this program picked up very well and Pradip continued it after launching ‘Managed Excellence’. The two tier program in Public systems was another innovation. The efforts by Uday and me helped us offer all the HRD programs that we did in the early eighties. Ramadhar Singh continued the programs with great dedication after I left for XLRI to set up the centre for a year and half and handed them back after I got back. A number of programs were offered on Performance appraisals and designing HR systems.

I am sure no program at IIMA could be as successful as it had been but for the support of the MDP staff. It is also true that the success of Professors there was also attributable partly to the excellent secretaries they had. The situation is different today with laptops and technological support, our self-sufficiency has gone up. I had Nambiar (who later went to Dubai), Duyal (who went to work with NLI), Murali (who later joined IIMK), Ravi (who continues at IIMA), and Bhaskaran (who worked with Anil till recently) as secretaries. They were a great support. They are the pillars of the IIMA family. For conducting the PGP, placement and other activities the Program managers were largely responsible. Ganapathy worked for many years as PGP manager and was a great support to any PGP chair, so were Santhanam and Rajagopal. The tradition continued later with officers like Ravi Acharya, Revathy, Sasi Nair, Jatin Nagori and so on. The academic support used to be provided by research staff, who are called Academic Associates today.

**National HRD Network and Academy of HRD**

The programs we ran in HRD between 1986 and 1989 gave me an opportunity to get participants as well as guest Faculty. This came in very handy in conceptualizing and finalizing the registration of the National HRD Network. Added to this Fr. E. Abraham from XLRI was registered for his Ph. D. with me at the Gujarat University through IIMA and stationed at Ahmedabad. He assumed the role of the Founder Secretary of the NHRDN and I took on the role of Founder President. We called ourselves so, in order to register and make the HRD movement go on. IIMA offered the necessary platform and all support in terms of time and congruence of the mission with its own mission of professionalizing management in various sectors of the economy. Ravi’s remarks that there was no one way of professionalizing management and each faculty can discover his or her own ways encouraged me to promote this body. The disappointment in me about the way HRD was being implemented, used or misused was growing and the HRD Network was conceived as I was leaving XLRI solely with the purpose of making HRD effective. The Bombay seminar where HRDN was conceived was entirely due to my repeated questioning of the members “Should we learn from each other only when XLRI or IIMA or L&T organize seminars like this. Can’t we learn from each other continuously? Can we also learn from others who are not present here and are doing excellent work or are groping with issues like the ones
we discussed”? IIMA, its mission to encourage faculty members like me to work on this theme and the presence of Fr. Abraham in Ahmedabad combined with his later becoming Dean XIM and Director of XLRI and the support rendered by L&T ECC, Bank of Baroda Staff college (K K Verma and Anil Khandelwal), the untiring efforts of S Chandrashekar of L&T ECC and the support of SAIL (M R R Nair who became the second President of NHRDN and Rakesh Kumar who worked here at IIMA and later joined SAIL) were some of the factors that made NHRDN become a reality and strong body.

In all these efforts, IIMA played a significant role. It nurtured such bodies by encouraging faculty to work for them. It was IIMA which was responsible for registering Fr. Abraham as a Ph. D. Student of Gujarat University. It gave me an opportunity to keep meeting Mr. Nair and many others in SAIL and get their support as I was having projects with both L&T ECC and SAIL. IIMA helped me to manage various National Conferences. As PGP Chairman and FPM Chairman it enabled me to network with many professionals while working for both these programs. All those who sponsored the first few Newsletters of XLRI Centre for HRD and NHRDN were the ones with whom I was working as a HRD Consultant: L&T, State Bank of Patiala, Sundaram Clayton, HPCL, MMTC etc. I never worked with MMTC but in one of the visits of MMTC Chairman to IIMA we talked about the newsletter and got his sponsorship. Keith D’Souza who was a student both of IIMA and XLRI later joined as a faculty of XLRI and worked as editor of the Newsletter. Thus, NHRDN is a story of Inter institutional collaboration for a cause and mission. As far as I am concerned, both were instrumental in its growth and we (Fr Abraham and me) used the opportunities and made this happen. I have described in detail elsewhere the birth and growth of both NHRDN and its Academy of HRD (see Rao, 2003 and Pareek and Rao, 2008). Baburaj Nair’s book on NHRD (growth of a Professional Body) also gives some details (See Nair, Baburaj 1995).

My Role as Adjunct Professor and IIMA Society Member: 2007-2014

I was given the 20 Year service medal on the Institute day in 1993, after having completed two decades at IIMA. As a part of my acceptance speech, I announced that to me, the 20 year service medal was an indication that it was time for me to leave. A few weeks later, I resigned with an eight months’ notice. Post facto, I must share perhaps what appeared to be the reasons.

I was a strong supporter of Pradip as a candidate for the Director’s position. When the Search Committee for the next Director asked me if I had any interest in being considered for heading the Institute, I replied with a simple “no”. I always felt that there were many competent people like Khandwalla, who were more appropriate and capable for the role. That is the respect I had for Pradip. As Pradip was first a friend and then the director, I felt it was appropriate not to take up any administrative roles, other than teaching.
Focussing only on teaching however, created a lot of dissonance in my mind. Thanks to my high involvement in various activities in the past like PGP, FPM, RMCEI, ISABS, AHRD, NHRDN etc., I was accustomed to a life of high activity. As I started focussing largely on teaching, I started observing that the same level of activity could not be maintained. Slowly, fatigue with doing the same thing over and over again started setting in. As I walked every day from house No. 424 to wing no 15 (my office), I missed the enthusiasm that I had in the past. On the other hand, there was a huge unrest in my mind that a lot more needed to be done in taking the cause of true HRD to organisations across the country. At the same time, I knew there were rules to be followed at IIMA with respect to the leave that one had and other commitments expected from the institute. The only way I could solve the challenge of my lower activity levels and promoting HRD was by moving on and working totally independently.

The final decision came based on the turn of events with respect to the Academy of HRD (AHRD was an Institution Building project of IIMA). AHRD was doing well. We announced a diploma program and it was getting stabilised. I suggested to IIMA that this should be taken up and managed by the OB area and it should be made a part of IIMA. Around the same time, Prof. Anil Gupta was also doing a great job with Shrishti, an association he started. We both approached the Institute to legitimise the two bodies and take them up as IIMA projects and involve others. Unfortunately, in one of the Policy Planning Committee meetings, this issue was discussed without either of us being present. Finally, both the projects were not approved as some members had reservations. It was disappointing to see that this could not be pushed. While Anil continued with high perseverance at IIMA, I decided to promote AHRD by leaving IIMA. Prof. Keith D’Souza came from XLRI on leave to head AHRD. He came for a year and stayed on for almost two years. He was leaving and I felt AHRD would be orphaned. Pradip perhaps sensed this and in a corridor conversation expressed the challenge of managing leave should I want to work for AHRD full time. Hence, moving out to promote AHRD—an institution building project was perhaps the best option. I finally left in August 1994 to head AHRD as Honorary Director. I can’t be a paid Director of a Trust and Registered not for Profit Society for which I was one of the main promoters. So I took up the honorary job. When we got some land in Hyderabad and Dr. Sethumadhavan took up the Directorship, AHRD shifted to Hyderabad and it was at this time I started TVRLS. The name ‘TVRLS’ was suggested to me by a few colleagues (Gopal Mahapatra and Jayesh Parikh) in 1996 in a casual conversation at Gujarat gas where I was facilitating an HRD audit.

Between 1994 and 2007, while I used to teach courses once a while at IIMA as visiting faculty, it was not every year. Whenever there was a shortage of Faculty, I was always available. It was during Bakul Dholakia’s time that the Institute decided to invite some of the ex-faculty, who was still within the extended retirement age. Prof. Dholakia wrote to me requesting me to re-join the Institute on a full time basis. I was 61 at that time and the retirement age was 65. By that time, my consulting company was doing
well and I did not want to have any issues of perceived conflict of interest. I indicated that while I would not like to join on a full time basis, I would be more than happy to serve as an Adjunct Professor. Having accepted this, I reduced the activity levels at TVRLS Ahmedabad and my consulting involvement with TVRLS and made Bangalore as the main Centre of activity with a new CEO. Ahmedabad office continued to be looked after by Dr. Raju Rao.

In the last seven years as an Adjunct Professor, I got immense pleasure in having designed and taught four new courses. I am particularly happy to have chaired the Golden Jubilee Planning Committee and brought out two new books: one that started the IIMA Book series by Random House and the other with Vijay on Nurturing Excellence. The Golden Jubilee was celebrated very well, though on hind sight it could have always been better-like everything else. We had a good team with Samir, Atanu, Ajay, Jajoo and other faculty. I am also happy we could revive the IIMA Society Conference started several years ago by Prof. Paul.

I was appointed as Adjunct Professor initially for three years. It kept getting extended until I mentioned to the new Director Prof. Ashish Nanda that I would like to be free from this role as I like to focus more on working and contributing as member of the IIMA Society and as a Board member elected by the Society. My strong association continues with IIMA. From the day I left IIMA, I wanted to join the Society as a member. In those days, I was told the individual membership fee was small. It was not strong enough to push me to wing 5 and get a form. I did get a couple of times the Society Enrolment form but never submitted it. It was finally a few years ago that I managed to enrol myself, at an enormously enhanced fee. I was very happy to become a member. It gives me a sense of connect with the Institute I love and feel I a part of though I am not a faculty anymore. I also used to feel a little strange to see very few IIMA Society members turning up for the convocation to say “Yes” to the Chairman’s question of graduating the students. It’s a wonderful feeling to be connected to IIMA as member of the IIMA Society for life (mine or that of the IIMA Society). I now have a legitimate right to continue to contribute to IIMA without expecting anything in return. This is my way of giving back to the Institute, where I grew and did whatever I have done.

**Conclusion**

In conclusion, I would like to reiterate that Institutions, like organizations are platforms for action, reflection, review and learning. Academic Institutions provide many avenues for growth. Besides learning from books and journals, one learns from one’s own actions, colleagues, students, visitors, staff, and one self through reflection. Growth requires initiative, experimentation, commitment and open antennas for learning. As Noel Tichy maintains, “One should have a Teachable point of view. Winners have clear ideas and values based on knowledge and experience. They articulate those lessons to others. Winning leaders draw from their past. Events early in
life shape lessons that they use in the future. They consciously capture these lessons and use them as guides”.

The last 40 years and my enriching relationship with IIMA is my humble teachable point of view.

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Exhibit 2: Jawaja Project of Ravi Matthaï

Jawaja started as a project in Educational Innovations in Rajasthan and not as a Rural Development Project. Eventually it got to be known as a Rural Development Project and Ravi Matthaï did not object to it as the ‘Rural Development Group’ at IIMA started taking interest in it, four years after the project was initiated and they worked closely with Ravi. In my view, it is still an Education project and it makes a lot of difference on how one views it. Given below is a little bit of history to put things in the right perspective, before the memory is lost.

After Ravi stepped out as Director, he was interested in pursuing professionalization of Management in the Education sector. I was recruited to work in this sector. The Education Systems Unit was formed at IIMA in 1973 with Ravi Matthaï, Udai Pareek and I, as members and Udai Pareek as coordinator. Ravi and Udai had their own ideas of Professionalising management of education. They wanted to make education systems more relevant, innovative, with properly defined goals and achieve them with the involvement of all faculty and perhaps use the lessons from managing IIMA, which by then was a great success story.

The three of us deliberated for a few months about the work we should be doing in Education and identified the following priorities:

1. To work with a University and explore professionalising the Management of the University
2. To work with a college, a school or other educational institutions
3. To work with a state department of Education and initiate innovations.

For the Universities, we were asked by the then newly formed Gujarat Agricultural University (where the Vice Chancellor V. R. Mehta invited us) to help them to study their decision making systems and organizational structure and suggest mechanisms to make it more integrated. GAU was formed with merging of three campuses and each campus had a Director-campuse and there were many issues of integration. The work went on for nearly two years and some small experiments were done. After this came the work at MPKV Agricultural University in Maharashtra. The MPKV project was done by Udai, Ravi, SP Agarwal and Ranjit Gupta. The details of our work in both the Universities are given in the book on Management Processes in Universities by Ravi Matthaï, Udai Pareek and T. V. Rao (Oxford & IBH).

For colleges, we did some work with St. Xavier’s college in preparing them for autonomy (which they did not get until many years later). However, the project had to be dropped after some initial work. We also organised a program on Institution Building in Education and Research attended by Kamla, Yash Pal, Alag, Nayudamma, Işhwar, Dhami Sinha and many others. The book was published by AIMA. We also started a program for Heads of Institutions on “Managing Change in Higher Education”. Ravi was also helping NCL, Pune and NID at this time. We did a self-renewal workshop for Sanawar School and also shared with the Indian Public Schools Association. Shomie Das actively promoted this work.

It was the third type of work that lead to the Jawaja project, years later. We were looking for people from any state government to invite us to undertake this work. The three of us were invited in 1974 to attend a meeting at the Asian Institute of Educational Planning and Administration (now known as NUIEPA University, Ministry of HRD) at New Delhi,
sponsored by UNESCO. The same workshop was also being attended by Mrs. Chitra Naik, the then Director of Education in Maharashtra and Anil Bordia Joint Secretary-Education, Ministry of Education, New Delhi. Ravi and Uday knew all these people and expressed their desire to work with a State department. The three of us had a meeting with J. P. Naik, Anil Bordia and Chitra Naik to discuss the plan of action. The meeting took place in Connaught Place in Nirulla Restaurant over lunch as we had to go out from the seminar for the discussions. During the meeting Mrs. Naik offered Maharashtra as a place for our work. Then, we did not know what exactly we wanted to do but merely said that we wanted to assist in professionalising management through some innovations. It was during this lunch meeting that Anil Bordia offered Rajasthan as a fertile ground for our work. As there was already a “High Power Committee” in education with the Minister of Education as Chairman and they had already submitted a report of educational reforms in Rajasthan, there was a lot of scope for innovations in Rajasthan. He suggested that he could get the Government of Rajasthan to extend all support and that if we could study it and help them implement, it will meet our objective and the State department’s too. J P Naik (member Secretary, ICSSR) offered to support it as a Research Project. The meeting ended with the agreement that the work will be done in Rajasthan and the task will be to help the government of Rajasthan to implement the High Power Committee report and the project will be called as “Educational Innovations in Rajasthan.” A Steering Committee was also formed with Ravi, Uday, T. V. Rao, J. P. Naik, Chitra Naik, Anil Bordia, Inderjit Khanna (Director Education) at that time to keep meeting once in a while and review the progress.

A sum of Rupees 50,000 was sanctioned by ICSSR to the project “Educational Innovations in Rajasthan” to meet the travel and living expenses of the Education Systems Unit form IIMA with Ravi Matthai as the Project Director.

We all met again in Delhi and later in Jaipur to begin the work. The High Power Committee identified many issues (some of these continue to be issues even today): low school enrolment and high drop outs, poor enrolment of girls, location and up gradation of schools, teacher transfers and transfer policies, quality of teachers and teaching, supervision and guidance to schools by educational administrators etc. After studying the report we identified the major areas as: the school drop outs and quality of education. The three of us chose Ajmer and Jaipur districts of Rajasthan to understand the situation. We interviewed the top level Administrators and also visited many schools and villages. We concluded that the educational administrators had little time to guide the teachers as they were mostly busy in administration and particularly teacher transfers and appointments and rarely visited the schools to see what was happening. We also discovered that the schools were not seen as places of relevance and villagers questioned the kind of education given to the children. In fact they said that school education the way it was being given was responsible for the unemployment as their wards, who went to school stopped working in the farms and also could not get any jobs. We concluded that if school enrolment had to be improved as desired by the High Power Committee, the education and especially what was being taught had to be made more relevant.

We worked out a three pronged strategy to help the implementation of the High Power Committee recommendations.

The first step was to release the administrative burden of the Educational administrators by forming right policies and the use of Technology. Prof. T. P. Rama Rao and I worked on developing a computer model for teacher transfers and also for location of schools. The
Dharampur Project experience came in handy for location of schools. The Minister of Education, Rajasthan even visited IIMA to see the Dharampur model and understand how teacher transfers through computers could ease the administrative burden. Of course, the government may not have been convinced as perhaps using computerised (MIS) system for teacher transfers was not desirable as it was losing control over teacher transfers. We in fact explained that every teacher transfer was accompanied by three to four unnecessary transfers due to limited and faulty MIS. This remained only as an experience and the reports of the two projects are still available in IIMA.

We were set out to tour and study three districts of Rajasthan but we got a clear picture after a tour of Ajmer district and Jaipur City. We did not even get to tour the other districts.

Ravi mentioned that education had become irrelevant for the villagers. Our work should be to demonstrate how to make education more relevant to people in rural areas. It was this issue that led to a series of other questions. Ravi also felt that to make it relevant we had to identify local resources and create value addition in ways that the people could experience the same. It had to be done by and through the Education Department. We felt that this could not be done by mere recommendations to the Government but through demonstration as they already had plenty of them. We should demonstrate to them how to identify local resources, how to add value and how to make education linked to economic activity. Ajmer was chosen to demonstrate this. I still remember Ravi making a comment: We will demonstrate this in Ajmer District in six months and extend it to the remaining three districts in three years and leave it for the Government to extend it to the rest of the state. I was too young to have any views on this plan. It was an experience to work with Ravi and I used to hear him and watch with admiration what he was trying to do.

After touring around Ajmer district we chose the Jawaja block for the following reasons: it was backward and at the same time had some resources like agriculture (tomatoes used to be sold at Rs. 2.5 a basket of some 5 to 10 kgs), sheep, tendu leaves, etc. which were amenable for economic activity. Local occupations like weaving, leather work were on traditional methods and were amenable for modernisation. These and other details are documented in some of the case studies (See for example the case study on Educational Innovations for Rural development by T V Rao) and the book on “The Rural University” by Ravi Matthai. When we presented our ideas to the ICSSR Committee in the District Collector’s office in Ajmer (R. S. Kumat was the District Collector), the Committee including Anil Bordia were not convinced however they said that Ravi and his team should go ahead and do whatever they felt right but this may not help the High Power Committee much. Ravi argued that there was no easy solution to implement the committee report unless the basic issues were settled. I think that it was at this time the ICSSR committee started losing their interest except for J. P. Naik who worked all his life on education issues. I remember JP visiting IIMA a few years later and my taking him out to Vishala for a dinner and having a long chat on these issues.

We were set out to use Jawaja as an experimental Block to demonstrate how education (primary and basic) can be made relevant to masses. We tried many experiments including forming farmers cooperative in Agriculture Produce, Dairying, Beedi making with tendu leaves, teaching new weaving skills to a group of defunct weavers form cooperative society in Beawar Khas, and training a group of leather workers in leather processing using modern methods and making new types of products etc. In all these experiments, the Education Department including the teachers and Deputy Education Inspector of Schools from Beawar
used to accompany us. Many workshops were conducted to motivate school teachers to participate in the economic activity mobilisation and curriculum development. For example, a number of them participated in conducting night classes in villages for mobilising farmers producing tomatoes to form a Society and to sell their produce directly to city markets. Of all these, what stayed on was only skill building of a group of weavers and leather workers. These are the products which get exhibited even today by AAJ (Artisans Alliance, Jawaja).

Ravi suffered a heart attack during one of the exhibitions of the Jawaja products in Mumbai. Subsequently the need for developing the marketing skills of the NID developed artisans to market their products, teaching them accounting, managing their accounts, helping them take loans from banks, working out repayment schedules, etc. became main tasks. Both Udai and I dropped out from active involvement in the project and Tushar Moulik and Ranjit Gupta started participating actively in it and working with AAJ. Finally, only Ranjit stayed on and from NID it was Ashok Chatterjee who continued to his involvement in Jawaja passionately.

I think Jawaja was an experiment. It was an experience worth going over, again and again to learn lessons. Years later, Anil Bordia after retiring from Civil Service started a project called Lok Jumbish trying to mass replicate some of the aspects of what Ravi experimented.

I have personally learnt many lessons from this. Many may not know that Ravi was Chairman of SWRC (The Social Work and Research Centre) Tilonia which was being managed by Bunker and Aruna Roy at that time. We visited them in 1975 and it was their continued effort and continued presence that had led to the current status. Jawaja did not have any presence of its experimenters in the place like Tilonia had Bunker and Aruna. It was because Jawaja was not an experiment in rural development but an experiment in Educational Innovations and solving educational issues by making education more relevant to masses using local resources. Recently even Inderjit Khanna tried out with the help of Mittal Foundation to do similar things with college students. I understand that it could not be extended the way it was planned. This is because we live in a complex world. We need to learn a lot. Experiments should not be treated as successes or failures merely on the basis of some prejudged outcomes expected and the learning should in any case never be undermined. Jawaja produced many people who learnt a lot from it and are helping others. Mehmood Khan, Brian Pinto, Subramaniam (MIDS), Arvind Khare, and several others associated with Jawaja have contributed in their own ways to the society from their earnings. NID continues to get involved in the same.

Perhaps, if Ravi was set out to do rural development he would have definitely done it in a different way. He was struggling to give a new meaning to education for the masses and for the poorest of the poor and make education more relevant through economic activity. He did not have much of an idea when he set out and what it meant to make education more relevant to masses. For that matter, even those like me who were born and brought up in rural areas and even the government does not have much of an idea of how to design and manage education to make it more relevant to masses and how to create economic activity at local level. There are only experiments and thoughts. If any government or any NGO or any agency had a workable solution to this issue they would have done it long ago. There are experiments and experiments and no comprehensive and quick solutions to this issue.

The concept of self-reliance was at the heart of the Jawaja experiment: education that could help those whose lives were directed by others to take greater charge and make choices. The article “The Rural University” written by Ravi at that time explained very succinctly the
education system he had in mind. This article was circulated by many Vice Chancellors in those days to their entire faculty. The fact that there was no one based in Jawaja unlike Tilonia was deliberate, and the fact that the artisans managed for many years without IIMA and NID support was also significant. The fact that those Ravi chose to work with were at the very bottom of a highly discriminatory social structure is noteworthy.

Jawaja experiment had a lot of influence on so many others - The ‘bottom of the pyramid’ thinking is said to have begun with Jawaja. Vijay Mahajan was deeply influenced by Jawaja experiment in the starting and is now managing Pradan. The project learning had a ripple effect beyond the IIMA family into so many institutions that altered the course of development thinking in the country including Pradan, Uttan, NID, Crafts Council of India and so many others through the demonstration as well as ‘Jawaja alumni’. As Ashok Chatterjee former Director NID puts it, “the impact on NID was profound, influencing the way design education has been structured ever since. Ravi’s involvement with NID is another whole story. It might not have existed today but for him, and his contribution is scarcely remembered beyond the Jawaja connection. In Jawaja, he gave NID a chance to test the relevance of design at the gut level of Indian poverty-the single most important demonstration ever, to date. The demonstration came at a time of institutional crisis where the self-worth of an institution was at stake. And that of course was one of the intentions of The Rural University idea: to test the relevance of new disciplines emerging in the country and of young professionals from management and design to serve India’s most basic needs of livelihoods and dignity”.
Exhibit 3: Eventful Years
(Biographic details as shared by T V Rao)

Completed B.Sc. at Loyola College Vijayawada, Joined the Regional College of Education Mysore started by NCERT with collaboration from Ohio State University in those days. Influenced greatly by teachers like Dr. P N Dave, C. L. Anand and Nair. Dave guides him to do M. A. Psychology rather than M. Sc. Chemistry and sees special aptitude in me for Psychology as he was always topping in psychology courses among so many students who are elder and experienced than him. Topped in B.Ed. in Science stream. Took up MA Psychology where he was admitted by EGP due to REC background. 1966-68. Topped in the University and created a new record.

Starting of the psychology department in Andhra University. Ordered for equipment and set up the psychology lab in the new A.U. Convocation hall which housed the psychology department. Registered for Ph. D. with A. U. on dreams. Corresponded with Rensis Likert (courtesy UdaiPareek at North Carolina) for admission to Michigan U but wrongly applied to Michigan State University.

Going to Delhi and Joining NIHAE and Udai Pareek as Assistant Research Officer, Starting the project on Motivation Training for Mental Health.

Got married on 16th August, at PedaAvutapally. Hard work and my work day used to begin at 7.00 am in NIHAE and end late in the night.

Interviewed for Assistant Professor at NIHAE as contact candidate.

Appointment as Assistant Professor of Education and Training at a young age of 24 years- perhaps youngest Assistant Professor in Medical system.

Certificate course in Programmed Instruction NCERT, met Prof. SS Kulkarni & CHK Mishra.

Starting of the Indian Behavioural Sciences Abstracts (IBSA). Collected most abstracts by visiting all libraries in Delhi to bring out the first volume. Appointed Assistant editor of IBSA which later became Indian Psychological Abstracts.

Registering for Ph. D. with SPU

Training of trainers in SBI Staff College on programmed Instruction

Data collection from Medical colleges

Completing of the Project on Motivation Training for Mental Health which was published latter as Changing Teacher Behaviour through Feedback by ICFAI.

Joining the University of Udaipur to start department of Psychology, October.

Handbook of Psychological Instruments
First major sickness-para-typhoid
Completing the thesis
1973
Visiting IIMA, Ph. D. result declared, Project on entrepreneurship
Status study of Behavioural Science Research in Population (latter published by Tata McGraw-Hill)
Visit to Kappadvanj to evaluate the achievement motivation program by Anil Trivedi.
Second significant sickness. Jaundice after returning from Kappadvanj. Udaipur students took great care. Shift to IIMA December 3rd

1974
Completion of the project on Entrepreneurship Development: an Evaluation Report made and papers prepared
Professionalization of medical student’s project- IIMA seminar
Completion and registration of case studies of entrepreneurs
Course on Laboratory in Entrepreneurial Motivation
Starting of consultancy project on Performance appraisal in L&T
Doctors in Making published in Ahmedabad (Ph d Thesis)
Managing Change in Academic Institutions- participants taken to Vishala
Teaching of the course on Consumer Behaviour
Development of “Sales Styles Diagnosis Exercises” and publication by Learning Systems
Gujarat Agriculture University project on Decision making strategies and organizational environment in GAU latter lead to a book on Management Processes in Universities. Taught course on “Consumer Behaviour “along with Prof.SasiMisra.
ISABS first phase at Bangalore and stress management at Mahabalipuram with Udai, Indira and Pulin.

1975
Starting of Jawaja Project
Invitation from McClelland and Visit to Harvard, first visit to USA
Invitation from East West centre to be a part of the workshop on Entrepreneurship development Programs
Work with Abigail Stewart (Currently at the University of Michigan Psychology Department) and preparation of Stewart maturity scale
Attempts to meet B. F. Skinner did not work out in William James Hall as he was rarely coming to office.
Initiation of the project with McClelland. Starting of the HRD department in L&T
Second Book: Handbook of Psychological and Social Instruments published by Samashti
Stewart Maturity Scale with Abigail Stewart and a Foreword by David McClelland.

1976
Visit to Malaysia for the entrepreneurship development program
ENDEVOR an International Association launched, NERDA launched with Tajuddin jail, Ahmed Bereck etc. in Malaysia
Project on Identification and selection of entrepreneurs

**MDP on Laboratory in management of Motivation**

International seminar on identification and selection of entrepreneurs offered at IIMA

Book on *Identification and Selection of Entrepreneurs* along with T K Moulick published by IIMA

**1977**

Invitation to BEML for establishing the HRD department

Offer to join as General Manager HR

First experiments in two departments to introduce open systems of appraisal

Joining BEML as general Manager with highest salary among the GMs and preferring to be designated as Advisor in general Manager’s capacity

Interactions with CMD- Gen. Mani and struggle to push open systems of appraisal

**Performance Appraisal and Counselling manuals** prepared for BEML

**1979**

Workshop on HRD and testing of the manuscript on Designing and managing HR systems, Work with Sate Bank of Indore

Visit to Egypt: Population and development project with Egypt: ICOMP project

**1980**

UNIDO Consultant to MIDF in Malaysia

Training of entrepreneurs in Institute of Technology Mara

Draft chapters on Developing Motivation through Experience with Udai

**1981**

**Handbook of Trainers in Education**

Publication of the book on *Designing and Managing HR systems, oxford & IBH*

**Behaviour Processes in Organizations with Udai and Pestonjee**

**1982**

Appointment with IBU, NERDA Malaysia

Struggle to be a consultant

**UNESCO work on Planning in Education management**

Short term consultancy with ICOMP

**1983**

Return to IIMA to teach first year courses

Offer to join as L&T professor in XLRI

**Starting of the centre for HRD at XLRI**

Visit to Indonesia for a month and doing of task analysis in Central Jawa

**Developing Motivation through Experiencing:** Oxford & IBH

**1984**

USAID consultancy in Indonesia. Visit to Indonesia- torturous time to be away from family. Work with Rolf Lynton and UdaiPareek along with Michael Merril, Ronie Lynton and Alexandra Merrill.

Ravi Matthai dies-decision to return back to IIMA

**Performance Appraisal: theory and Practice Book. Business World write up on Center for HRD and TVR.**
First L&T seminar- starting of Learning by Sharing
Conceptualizing of the HRD Network
Starting of the first Newsletter from XLRI
Registering of the NHRDN

Self-appointed President HRD Network. First formal conference of the National HRD Network. PGP review and PGP Chairman Ship
Commonwealth secretariat project on developing entrepreneurship in Technical education. Hena Mukherjee
Review of education Policy active participation and assistance to the Ministry of HRD.
Design of the Program on Leadership Styles and Organizational Effectiveness which later became the famous 360 Degree Feedback program

PGP Chair, President HRD Network continued
President ISABS

President ISABS- efforts to offer low cost BHPs, work in police Academy and 200 people in the event. Creativity workshop had to be held outside NPA. Involved Pradip Khandwalla in ISABS for Training Trainers in Creativity.
Starting three phased HRD Facilitators Program in HRD on behalf of NHRDN and making it a great success.

Fellow Program Chair
President ISABS – Efforts to build ISABS Institute and initiation of dialogue with NTL.
Leave to work on NIEPA review
Visit to Seoul, Korea as UNESCO consultant, Readings in HRD Book.
Passing on National HRD Network President Position to Mr. M R R Nair as the second President. Working closely with him to build NHRDN.

Fellow program Chair
Visit to Mexico to represent India in Education Management conference
Starting of the Academy of HRD

HRD Missionary

Fellow Program chair
Honorary Director AHRD

Ravi Matthaicenter Chair
Honorary Director AHRD

Award of 20 year service medal by IIMA
1994
Leaving the institute – August
Doctoral level Fellow program launched with AHRD and XLRI.

1995
Honorary Director AHRD
First contact program of Fellow program of XLRI and AHRD at IIMA.
Shifting of AHRD to Hyderabad
**Human Resources Development: Concepts, Experiences and Interventions** - The Real HRD BOOK

1996
Reddy does not give the land as promised. Search for ways out as AHRD already shifted.
**Staring of TVRLS**

1997
Starting of 360 degree programs in a big way. First 360 for CEOs launched in Chennai with 8 faculty and 14 participants
Family holiday in Indonesia
Swiss Development Agency for Cooperation- SDC project Impact on Innovations in Higher Education

1998
**Readings in OD** with Ramnarayan and Kuldeep Singh
Work with KewalramChanrai group
**Institutionalization of Innovations in Higher Education** published by TVRLS for SDC out. Highlighting the need for institutionalization of innovations

1999
**HRD Audit Book**
Alexandria Carbon black audit. Chanrai group work continued
Work with Aditya Birla Group begins

2000
Attending ASTD Conference at Texas with Raju
360 degree feedback and PMS Conference by TVRLS
First book on **360 Degree feedback and PMS**
Bringing AHRD back to Ahmedabad at the instance of the Board which could not strengthen AHRD.

2001
Development of **360 Workbooks and manuals**
**Starting of Bangalore office of TVRLS** with Gopal Mahapatra joining as MD.
Earth quake in Ahmedabad

2002
Second volume on **360 DF and PMS book**
Mother passes away

2003
**Future of HRD** is out and meets with the real Future when a price was demanded for it to be released in the Conference of NHRDN started by Dr. Rao.
Inspires to develop economics of HR.
Third volume on 360 DF and Assessment centres

The Power of 360 Degree feedback with Raju
Handbook of Education Management with Dr Pareek published by Macmillan.

A Revisit to the Past - Udai’s Greatness in bringing out
“Changing Teacher Behavior through Feedback”
Invest 20 Direct 2000 to 20000 a new way of looking at Performance planning.

Manuscripts completed on HRD Score Card 2500-my dream book measuring the
effectiveness of HRD and giving it 2500 points. Hope this will turn HRD around and
make it more useful.
HURCONOMICS another dream book assigning economic value to softer dimensions
of life getting ready. Invitation to join IIMA full time. Appointment as Adjunct
Professor. Starting a new course called Talent Management.

Both the books out. HRD Score Card well received. Hurconomics filled with printer’s
devil and many composing errors partly reflecting a wrong choice of publisher, hurried
publication and lack of care on my part as well as that of the publishers.
Decide to close writing books. Only dream books left are on Leadership and also on
IIMA.
Losing interest in administration of TVRLS. Rationalizing staff at TVRLS by taking
out all the administrative and managerial transactions with people as I do not seem to
enjoy transactions of monitoring and supervising staff any more. Self-regulation does
not seem to work in commercialized world. Life after 360 and ADCs successfully
completed. Complete withdrawal from NHRDN and AHRD. It has been a mistake to
continue to be associated. Current office bearers should take charge and give it new
direction. They seem to use it for commercial purposes but that may be the cost it has
to pay. Offered a 360 Degree Feedback course for IIMA PGP-PMP.

TVRLS gets a big project from LIC. First time used outsourcing models successfully.
TVRLS team lead worked very hard.
Designed a new course on Entrepreneurial Personality for IIMA students. Repeat of
the 360 Degree Feedback course for IIMA PGP-PMP.

Udai is no more. Visited him thrice in the ICU in Jaipur and again at Delhi. Saw him
struggle. CKP is also no more. Shocking deaths. We lost so many good friends: DMS
at a young age, Ranjit, Moulik, Vora, Anil Bhat, Maru even earlier, EGP, Ramaiah-the
list is going up. May be we are all at a vulnerable age.
Performance Management system design and implementation in LIC
Design of a new Course on Intellectual Capital and HRD Score card.
IIMA PGP 2 elective. 20 students including five exchange students from other countries


Appointed to Chair Planning Committee of IIMA Golden Jubilee Celebrations along with Atanu Ghosh, A Koshy and Ranghuram. Complete the plan in record time and faculty discusses and approves the plan in a large part and celebrations begin.

Working to complete the “100 Managers” book. Completed on behalf of IIMA the book on “Managers who make a Difference” being published by Random House.

Started work with Vijaya Sherry Chand on Institution Building Experience at IIMA for RMCEI.

Revising the book on OD with Ram. Ram is doing most of the work. Looks that I am more of a moral support besides contacting a few authors and revising my own chapters.

Invitation to teach course on Performance Management to Ph. D. students in NIDA, Thailand by Chira Tan, Director School of HRD. Invitation to speak at SGHC 2010 Taipei, Taiwan. Met Dave Ulrich at Taipei which I consider as a significant event as we seem to think so much alike.

Guru Yatra launched by Random House with ET at Taj Hotel. Subsequent events planned.

2011

**Nurturing Excellence: Indian Institute of Management Ahmadabad** co-edited with Vijaya Sherry Chand out. Royalties to go to IIMA.

**Managers who make a Difference** gets to Best Seller List.

Hurconomics New edition by Pearson Education out.

Jubilee-Hills house sold by some impersonation and forgery by some people and message comes when in Malaysia. Rushed to Hyderabad and police ADG Ramana Murthy and team very helpful in filing FIR and arresting some of the miscreants.

Spent most time in Hyderabad to protect the house. IIMA, Hyderabad Golden Jubilee Celebrations.

Launch of Certified HRD Auditor in Malaysia and discussion begin for South Africa 100 Managers in Action Proofs ready from Tata McGraw-Hill

2012

**Launch of Perfect Professional of TVRLS**


Life Time Achievement Award “Gyan Vihar University”, Jaipur

Also completed the book on Entrepreneurship along with Koratko

2013

Elected by the IIMA Society to be on the Board of Governors of IIMA

Life Time Achievement Award by the Institute of HRD: Bangalore HR Forum

Starts a new course at IIMA called “High Performing Teams”

Addressed NIPM at Goa, Bangalore and Mysore

Becomes a keynote speaker at many forums.