

Building collective wisdom

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Patricia Mascarenhas

Education creates an open mind say experts at the round table on International Collaboration and Opportunities for Higher Education. Patricia Mascarenhas reports.



What is quality education and how to incorporate it? Was the question that kick started the discussion, organised by Association of Indian Management Schools (AIMS) and hosted by Mumbai Education Trust (MET). “Quality education would mean an education that creates a significant impact on the society, country and the world at large,” said Satish Ailawadi, director, KJ Somaiya Institute of Management and Research.

The demand for quality education is increasing as educational environment is getting more and more competitive with the emerging market. In order to sustain in this environment, educational institutes need to go global. They need to look at others to benchmark processes such as teaching, learning, examination etc. “We cannot confine ourselves to our boundaries.

We need to collaborate and reinvent our processes and expose ourselves to global trends and thus gradually improve and provide the best practices in our institutes,” advised Ailawadi.

However, internationalisation of education goes beyond just collaboration, the big theme is globalisation of education. “It’s not just having international students in your classroom, a curriculum also needs to be established by using international case studies to show the difference. This makes students ready for the globalised environment,” said Bruce Condie, director, International Marketing, Recruitment and Business Development, Vancouver Island University. He further added that the University has collaborations with a number of different countries. However, each offers different collaborations with respect to courses, student exchange and research programme etc. “Some of the challenges that India faces are in terms of regulations, currency fluctuations etc. Even the tuition fees of institutions are controlled by the government. We need to see through this before making international collaborations,” said Uday Salunkhe, director, Welingkar Institute of Management Development & Research adding that 93 per cent institutes in India are self financed so they need to look at the productivity aspect and the market scenario. “It is okay to send teachers for the faculty exchange programme but while doing so, it should not drain off our resources” he added.

At the end of the day collaborations won’t matter if they are not active. There are many partnerships that take place on paper but these are either inactive or eventually fall apart.

Collaborations and partnerships are the need of the hour. “It’s just the matter of how to make it happen. We need to take responsibility of how to make it happen no matter what the challenges are,” concluded Chaitanya Patil, MD, Trade and Invest British Columbia.