

INDO-JAPAN RESEARCH CENTER

THE VISION DOCUMENT

INDIAN INSTITUTE OF MANAGEMENT NAGPUR

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*Vision —*

*To become the leading center for impactful knowledge creation, dissemination, and practice, in management sciences, based on Indo-Japanese philosophies, principles, and values.*

*Mission —*

*To foster and support research in management sciences that augment, or supplant existing management thought by creating new knowledge, management principles and philosophies based on Indo-Japanese philosophies, principles, and values.*

*To conduct research at the confluence of the management sciences, technology, and the arts and aesthetics, as relevant to Indo-Japanese thought, with critical openness.*

*To support our partner universities and institutions in facilitating collaborative research relevant in the Indo-Japan cross-cultural context.*

*To work closely with Indian and Japanese industries, including small and medium-sized enterprises and startups, in creating new knowledge and knowhow, and also to help these enterprises imbibe the new knowledge and knowhow thus created.*

*To act as a knowledge gateway providing contextually relevant advisory services to Indian (Japanese) enterprises interested in introducing or expanding operations in Japan (India).*

*Overall, to promote and nurture deep and integrative cross-cultural exchanges, and to further deepen the existing friendship between India and Japan, in our endeavor to create, and disseminate new knowledge, and to impact practice.*

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## PART A

### RAISON D'ÊTRE, OBJECTIVES, AND GUIDING PHILOSOPHY

The Indo-Japan Research Center (IJRC) was founded on the XX day of XXXX, 2020 at the Indian Institute of Management Nagpur (IIM Nagpur) with the aim of strengthening and furthering collaborative research and to further the internationalization efforts of IIM Nagpur. The establishment of the center addresses the broader objectives laid out by the Government of India in this regard (refer the Indian Institutes of Management Act, 2017).

Primarily, IJRC will aim at creating new knowledge at the cross-cultural (Indo-Japan) context, and thereby contribute to both academia and industry.

Philosophically, IJRC will adopt, imbibe, and promote the spirit of *universal humanism* propounded and practiced by doyens like Swami Vivekananda, Rabindranath Tagore, and Tenshin Okakura, among other notables, in the Indo-Japanese context, through its activities.

## PART B

### STRUCTURE, PROCESS, AND GOVERNANCE

#### STRUCTURE

The guiding structure of IJRC (please refer Fig. B below) reflects the objectives and deliverables of the center, as detailed subsequently in this section. The structure, identifies four major stakeholders or agents and lays out the interactions among them. The stakeholders are: (a) academia (India/ Japan) and (b) industry (India/ Japan). IJRC is positioned to act as a platform that facilitates the interactions in serving the main objective of creating new knowledge.

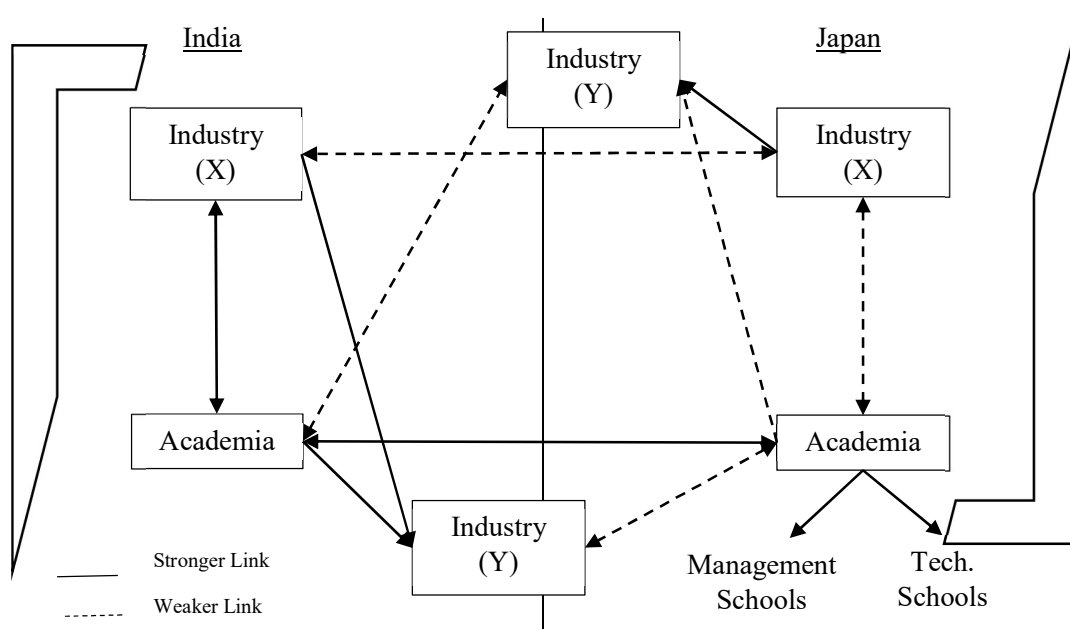


Figure B IJRC Structure

In Fig. B, the academia from both countries appear as distinct (primarily non-integrated) entities, given the limited academic exchanges (mainly restricted to student exchanges) that exist between them. A distinction is made for industries pertaining to each country, however, highlighting those that are integrated and those that are not. Firms belonging to industry type X (see Fig. B) have limited exposure to the markets of their corresponding foreign country. While firms of type Y (see Fig. B) are primarily those that have made some inroads into their corresponding foreign country. As mentioned in Fig. B, bold arrows indicate stronger associations or connections, while dotted ones represent weaker associations across entities the arrows connect. For instance, in Fig. B, the connection between the Indian academia and industry is stronger as compared to that between the corresponding Japanese counterparts as far as research and education in the management sciences in concerned. Fig. B is a fair, qualitative representation of the current state of affairs as far as the Indian and Japanese academia and industries are concerned, in the context of management research and education.

The basic idea is to strategically (i.e., in line with the vision and mission of IJRC) strengthen the connections that exist between the stakeholders (e.g., IIM Nagpur and Chuo University, GSOSM), and subsequently, leverage these connections to strike close relationships with Japanese firms that have closer ties with Japanese schools. The overall aim of IJRC is to bring closer Indian and Japanese industries, and academia in a way that the interactions result in providing the basic raw material and stimulus for creating new knowledge. The nature and form of these interactions, thus envisioned, are explicated in Part C of this document.

Given the stage IIM Nagpur (estd. 2015) is in currently (in 2020), IJRC needs to garner support from the diplomatic mission of India in Japan, and also the diplomatic mission of Japan in India, in order to cement these initial connections or relationships, thus envisioned. Also, top representatives (e.g., at the General Secretary level) from trade bodies (e.g., Japan Chamber of Commerce and Industries, or the Indian Chamber of Commerce and Industries), maybe recruited as part of the Advisory Board (please see the section: Governance, later in this part of the vision and mission document), in building the strong ties thus envisioned.

## PROCESS

The primary aim of IJRC is to create new knowledge, a process that comes under the purview of the field of epistemology, a branch of philosophy that deals with the nature, origin, and the limits of human knowledge<sup>1</sup>. The present cross-cultural (Indo-Japanese) context, makes it imperative to pursue knowledge creation at the confluence of Indo-Japanese thought or philosophies, principles, and values, exploring differences, distinctions, and commonalities, while assimilating all that helps in creating new knowledge that is distinct and contextually relevant. In this regard, the arts, and aesthetics, unique to each culture, becomes the very grist to the mill of knowledge creation at the Indo-Japanese cross-cultural context. Furthermore, apart from imparting the very identity to IJRC, exploration of ideas from the arts and aesthetics in creating new knowledge remains in line with the contention that art is the avenue to the highest knowledge available to humans, a kind of

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.britannica.com/topic/epistemology> [Retrieved on the 8th of April, 2020.]

knowledge that remains unattainable through other means<sup>2</sup>. IJRC intends to imbibe this philosophy with *critical openness* (discussed subsequently).

*Critical Openness.* The criteria of critical openness, refers to one's ability to embrace and absorb all that is foreign (or new), without losing one's identity, acknowledging all the while that there may be something to learn from things (herein, culture, philosophies, principles, and values) that are foreign or new<sup>3</sup>. Critical openness, however, needs to be complemented with the wherewithal to assimilate different (sometimes divergent) perspectives. That mechanism is provided by *dialectics*, as discussed below.

*Dialectics.* Dialectics, a philosophical perspective or a method of philosophical argument, or a method of intellectual investigation that deals with contradictions or opposites in ultimately finding the truth (through knowledge<sup>4</sup>). In this context, particularly, Hegel's (see G. W. F. Hegel) *Aufhebung* (the simultaneous destruction and creation of valid structures, resulting in the creation of new ideas<sup>5</sup>)<sup>6</sup> will help in the aforementioned process of new knowledge creation. In this way, IJRC will foster, nurture, and uphold the spirit of debate and constructive deliberations in all its activities, with critical openness (discussed above). The incorporation of the arts and aesthetics in characterizing IJRC underscores this very spirit, given that the instrumentality of the arts and aesthetics in knowledge creation, in itself, has been long been debated.

## GOVERNANCE

IJRC will function and conduct its activities under the aegis of IIM Nagpur. Its activities will be administered by the Chairperson IJRC, who will be selected through a competitive process going forward. The Chairperson IJRC will be assisted by a core committee of full-time faculty members of IIM Nagpur. The decision pertaining to membership of the core committee will rest with the Chairperson IJRC; however, the selection process will be conducted in close consultation with the Director, IIM Nagpur. The Chairperson and the core committee members will be advised by a board of advisors comprising of individuals of eminence from both Indian and Japan, and from across (but not restricted to) academia, and industry. Membership to the advisory board of IJRC will be upon invitation. The members of the Board of Governors of IIM Nagpur, and the faculty members may extend their suggestion(s) (of prospective IJRC Board Members) to the Chairperson IJRC, who after due consultation and deliberation with other IJRC core committee members, may decide on inducting the proposed individual(s) to the advisory board of IJRC. At any time, the minimum, and maximum number of members to the advisory board of IJRC will be restricted to XX and XX, respectively. Members will be inducted to the advisory board as either *ex-officio* members, or based on their personal and professional background and experience. *Ex-officio*

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<sup>2</sup> <https://www.britannica.com/topic/philosophy-of-art/Art-as-a-means-to-truth-or-knowledge> [Retrieved on the 8th of April, 2020.]

<sup>3</sup> Please refer, 'The Argumentative Indian' by Amartya Sen. Sen, discusses critical openness in discussing the works of Satyajit Ray, in this book.

<sup>4</sup> <https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/knowledge-analysis/> [Retrieved on the 8th of April, 2020.]

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.lexico.com/definition/aufhebung> [Retrieved on the 8th of April, 2020.]

<sup>6</sup> <https://www2.bc.edu/severyn-bruyn/Critique.html> [Retrieved on the 8th of April, 2020.]

membership to IJRC will be based on the current structure of IJRC (see the corresponding section on structure). The details pertaining to advisory board membership is provided as follows.

*Advisory Board: Structure and Membership.* Given the current structure the following membership structure is drawn as follows:

#### *Individuals of Eminence*

1. The Arts and Culture: Danseuses, writers, film makers, painters or other artists with a history of experimentation in forms and structures, specifically, an inclination toward cross-cultural experimentation.
2. Academics specializing in: Management Sciences, Economics, Business History, History, Art, Liberal Arts, Philosophy, other (related and contextually relevant) disciplines of the Social Sciences
3. Cultural Ambassadors

#### *Ex-officio Membership to the Advisory Board*

1. Industry Representatives
  - a. All encompassing: The highest office bearers (e.g., at the Secretary-General level) at:
    - i. Indian trade organizations in India (e.g., ASSOCHAM, CII, and FICCI)
    - ii. Indian trade organizations in Japan (e.g., Indian Chamber of Commerce in Japan (ICCJ))
    - iii. Japan Chamber of Commerce and Industries in India (JCCI)
    - iv. Japan External Trade Organization (JETRO), Government of Japan
    - v. India Trade Promotion Organization (ITPO), Government of India
  - b. Specific industry focused appointments may be done depending on current circumstances and future plans.
2. Diplomatic Representatives:
  - a. Foreign Secretary, Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India/ Ambassador of India to Japan<sup>7</sup>
  - b. Ambassador of India (Japan) to Japan (India)
3. Cultural Representatives
  - a. The highest office bearers of important cultural centers in India, specializing in comparative and cross-cultural (specific to India and Japan) initiatives:
    - i. Ramakrishna Mission Institute of Culture, Calcutta
    - ii. Rabindra-Okakura Bhavan, Calcutta, Department of Information and Cultural Affairs, Government of West Bengal
    - iii. Japan Foundation, New Delhi

*Staff Requirements.* The IJRC may recruit support or administrative staff (from within IIM Nagpur, or externally), through competitive processes when required. The recruitment process will be conducted by the administrative body of IIM Nagpur as per institutional norms. IJRC may also

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<sup>7</sup> Foreign secretary ranks higher as compared to Ambassador.

recruit staff members, or avail the services of individual with such specialized skills (e.g., bilingual translators) with specialized skills (as relevant to the activities pertaining to IJRC) in order to conduct its activities.

## PART C

### ACTIVITIES, AND DELIVERABLES

IJRC will conduct the following activities, in line with its vision and mission:

#### 1. Research:

- a. Cross-cultural and comparative papers and projects: Specific research agendas, as relevant to IJRC will be driven by faculty members of IIM Nagpur. Faculty members of IIM Nagpur will be free (and also encouraged) to work with Japanese collaborators (including other international collaborators) in this regard. IJRC will actively engage with faculty members of IIM Nagpur to develop and promote the research agenda thus mentioned.
- b. IJRC will actively seek research projects from Indian and Japanese industries. Based on their motivation and interest, IIM Nagpur faculty members will be able to coordinate, conduct, or participate in such projects.
- c. IJRC will assist faculty members in seeking funding from the industry for research projects that are in line with the broader vision and mission of IJRC. IJRC will identify these funding sources and nurture its relationship with prospective funding agencies, corporation, or other entities as such, in creating funding opportunities for IIM Nagpur faculty members.
- d. The research agenda at IJRC will be ramped up in the following steps:
  - i. First, IJRC will aim at developing comparative cases in the Indo-Japanese business and cultural context. Special emphasis will be given to cases based on traditional know-how and craft, and obscure businesses specific to each country. The structural forms of these cases will be inspired by the philosophies, principles, and thoughts unique to each country, while actively endeavoring to seek synergies, and integration, with critical openness.
  - ii. Working paper series based on original research, and technical notes on topical issues
  - iii. Papers targeted specifically towards practitioners: Harvard Business Review, MIT Sloan Management Review, California Management Review
  - iv. Publication in the mainstream, international academic journals positioned at the cross-cultural context (e.g., Journal of International Marketing)
  - v. A journal will be started out of IJRC, in the future, once the research agenda matures and reaches critical mass.

#### 2. Teaching:

- a. IJRC will introduce cross-disciplinary courses in the cross-cultural context and contribute to the main academic discourse at IIM Nagpur.



- i. A course on comparative business, trade, and socio-cultural issues will be introduced by IJRC at IIM Nagpur to begin with
  - b. International Immersion Programs (IIPs): IJRC will conduct the annual International Immersion Program in Japan for the students of IIM Nagpur. IJRC will support partnering Japanese universities in conducting similar programs in India.
3. International Collaborations:
  - a. IJRC will spearhead collaborations with Japanese universities and companies in driving its central agenda, as discussed in the previous section.
  - b. IJRC will aim at establishing faculty and student exchanges with partnering Japanese universities.
4. Conference: A conference will be conducted by IJRC every two years in India bringing together all the stakeholders thus envisioned in the structure (refer Fig. B, in the previous section). The conference may be conducted annually, alternating between India, and Japan, as the country and venue of choice, given the willingness of a participating Japanese university to do so.
5. Advisory Services: IJRC will offer advisory services to Indian (Japanese) companies intending to venture into Japan (India). IJRC will aim at creating contextually relevant material out of such services thus rendered in building up its intellectual capital. This reinforcing feedback loop will be actively nurtured by IJRC.
6. Training: IJRC will conduct customized executive training programs in India and in Japan, thereby addressing the needs for such training of interested Indian and Japanese corporations. IJRC will conduct both in-company as well as open executive training programs.
7. Annual Report: IJRC will publish an annual report on its activities thus conducted. Contributions from all stakeholders will be solicited in this regard.
8. Funding: IJRC will be funded by IIM Nagpur for the first 5 years. However, IJRC will strive to become financially self-sufficient from the very beginning. The Chairperson IJRC will provide a route map regarding this.
  - a. IJRC will seek funding from both Indian and Japanese industries as well as government and semi-government organizations.
  - b. IJRC will identify and nurture relationships with such corporations, or entities, in this regard.

## PART D

### CONTRIBUTION AND FUTURE THOUGHTS

Through its activities, IJRC will aim at addressing the mandate that the Government of India has entrusted the Indian Institutes of Management with (refer section 6 of the Indian Institutes of Management Act, 2017), with special emphasis on subsections: 6b, 6c, 6g, and 6i).

By aiming at creating new knowledge, IJRC intends to contribute to both academia and industry. IJRC aims at conducting inclusive and collaborative research not only with other academic institutions, but also with other centers of excellence, based on joint interest, and feasibility.

Further, IJRC intends to contribute by continuously testing, augmenting, and supplanting existing management thought through experimentation, and collective discourse, with critical openness. Specifically, IJRC intends to work closely with the industry in creating new knowledge and knowhow of practical and contextual relevance, and also to learn from the industry, thereby bringing closer academia and industry in creating a seamless whole. IJRC will strive to become a platform for exchange of ideas, interaction, and collaboration across the academia and the industry from both India and Japan, and a knowledge gateway between both countries.

At its core, IJRC will aim at producing new knowledge based on a creative destructive process (refer *Aufhebung*, above), challenging conventions in doing so, and continuously experimenting with new forms and structures, seeking influence from the arts and aesthetics from both India and Japan. IJRC will imbibe this principle of creative destruction in its own affairs, and in doing so remain imperfect by design, in line with the ancient Japanese way of the Tea (*Chado*)<sup>8</sup>.

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<sup>8</sup> Okakura, K., 2012. *The book of tea*. Jazzybee Verlag.