

## Early Career Academics Colloquium 2024: MDI Gurgaon Explores Sustainable Solutions for Business and Society

India 19<sup>th</sup> December, 2024: [Management Development Institute \(MDI\) Gurgaon](#), in collaboration with The **Teaching Learning Centre (TLC)** and the **Indian Academy of Management (INDAM)**, successfully inaugurated their highly anticipated **Doctoral and Early Career Academics (ECA) Colloquium & Conference** on December 19, 2024. The theme of the event was "**Sustainability in Emerging Economies: Integrating Business Excellence in Management Education.**" This invited scholars, researchers, and educators nationwide to seek innovative approaches for embedding sustainability in management education. With 140 registrations, the conference demonstrated high interest and engagement with participation from high reputed Institutes/Universities like IIT Delhi, IIT Roorkee, IIFT, IIM Indore, IIM Lucknow, IIT Patna, MDI Gurgaon, University of Auckland (Australia), University of Leeds (England), BITS Pilani (Dubai), Skyline University College (Sharjah), École des Dirigeants et des Créateurs d'entreprise (Paris), Universidad de Los Andes (Colombia), Durham University (England), Wrexham University (England), GE Energy (Vernova), XLRI (Jamshedpur).

The first day of the *Doctoral and Early Career Academics (ECA) Colloquium & Conference* commenced with a warm welcome and registration as participants from across India and beyond gathered at the Athena Banquet Hall, The Pillazio Hotel. The ceremonial lamp lighting marked the official inauguration of the event, followed by inspiring speeches from distinguished dignitaries, including **Prof. Arvind Sahay**, Director, MDI Gurgaon; **Prof. Sumit Kundu**, President-INDAM and Professor of International Business, Florida International University; **Prof. Pawan S. Budhwar**, Associate Deputy Vice Chancellor, Aston University, UK; and **Prof. Jyotsna Bhatnagar**, Dean Research, MDI Gurgaon.

During his keynote address, Prof. Arvind Sahay, Director of MDI Gurgaon, emphasised the importance of impactful research. He remarked, *"Prioritise your passion in research while ensuring its relevance and impact, particularly regarding sustainability in emerging economies, where enhancing quality of life must accompany environmental initiatives. Engage with practitioners and communities to address real-world challenges effectively."*

**Prof. Sumit Kundu**, president of INDAM and Professor of International Business at Florida International University, emphasised the need for innovative research and teaching in global strategy. He said, *"To address today's challenges, we must adopt proactive methods in research and teaching, focusing on creating market leaders. Equally important is prioritising students' mental wellness, a global concern transcending regions from Asia to Latin America. Integrating climate change and evolving business models into our strategies is critical as we navigate these complexities."*

**Prof. Pawan S. Budhwar**, Associate Deputy Vice Chancellor, Aston University, UK, urged doctoral students to pursue meaningful research, saying, *"Your PhD years are a chance to address significant global challenges like sustainability. Go beyond short-term goals and embrace interdisciplinary collaboration to create real impact. Environmental issues demand urgent attention, and researchers in India are uniquely positioned to lead solutions."*

**Prof. Jyotsna Bhatnagar**, Dean of Research, MDI Gurgaon, highlighted the importance of involving early-career academics in sustainability. She said, *"Involving young researchers in the sustainability dialogue is essential, particularly in emerging economies where the effects of climate change are deeply felt. Through interdisciplinary collaboration and diverse perspectives, we can create well-rounded strategies to tackle the urgent challenges of sustainability effectively."*

The morning progressed with an expert panel discussion on the theme, *"Sustainability—SDG Goals: Discoveries and Challenges—Way Forward."* Moderated by **Prof. Prajapati Trivedi**, Commonwealth Secretary General's Special Envoy for SDG Implementation and Distinguished Professor at MDI Gurgaon, the panel featured eminent speakers such as **Ms. Shubhi Kesarwani**, CEO, Gurujal and **Mr. Ankit Agarwal**, Founder-CEO, Phool.co. The discussion explored

innovative strategies for implementing the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in governance, business, and education.

Prof. Prajapati Trivedi emphasised the importance of aligning research with real-world impact. He stated, *"A good idea attracts financial backing, as funding reflects its relevance and potential for implementation. Researchers should focus on areas with market demand and financial support rather than pursuing academic interests without practical applications."*

A key highlight of the day was the **Interactive CESIM Simulation Workshop**, moderated by **Prof. Ritu Srivastava**, Faculty Member, MDI Gurgaon, along with **Rohan Jugran**, Head of Customer Success, CESIM, and **Abdul Baji**, Growth & Product Head, CESIM. This engaging session provided participants with hands-on experience in fostering critical thinking and practical application of sustainability principles through advanced learning simulations, offering valuable insights into achieving excellence in classroom instruction.

Speaking at the **Industry Panel on Risk Management and Sustainability**, **Mr. Mayank Bansal**, Senior Investment Professional (IFC), **Mr. Sunder Krishnan** (Ex-CRO, LIC), and **Mr. Baran Guntupalli** (CRO & Head of Risk, NaBFID), moderated by **Prof. Ruchi Agarwal**, Faculty Member, MDI Gurgaon emphasised the strategic importance of integrating sustainability into risk management frameworks. They noted, *"In today's uncertain world, aligning risk management with sustainability is vital for building resilient and future-ready organisations."*

In the **Master Class on Case Methods for Active Learning**, **Prof. David Wood**, Professor & Executive Director, Ivey Publishing, Ivey School of Business, Canada highlighted the power of experiential learning. *"The case method equips participants with critical thinking and decision-making skills to address real-world challenges, particularly in dynamic sectors like banking and finance,"* he stated, underscoring its role in shaping adaptive and innovative leaders.

Participants enjoyed networking and engagement opportunities during tea breaks and a networking lunch, facilitating meaningful interactions and collaboration. The afternoon was dedicated to **conference paper presentations**, where scholars and early-career academics showcased their research across parallel tracks. Key topics included green finance, sustainability-driven digital transformation, and the intersection of technology and sustainability, providing fresh perspectives on advancing sustainable practices in business and academia.

**About MDI Gurgaon:** Management Development Institute (MDI), Gurgaon, established in 1972, has been a pioneer in management education, consulting, high-quality research, and executive development. It holds the distinction of being the first Indian business school to receive international accreditation from the Association of MBAs (AMBA), London, in 2005. In 2021, MDI further enhanced its global standing by earning accreditation from AACSB International, the world's largest business education alliance. Demonstrating its commitment to excellence, MDI Gurgaon secured the 11th position in the National Institutional Ranking Framework (NIRF) 2024 among management institutions and was ranked 5th among top B-Schools by Business World. These accolades reflect MDI's unwavering dedication to providing world-class management education and its significant impact on the academic and professional spheres.

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