**Need for Indian campuses to be more inclusive: Study by BCG, IIMA and Pride Circle Foundation**

**Mumbai, March 10th, 2021, 4PM:** A report published by Boston Consulting Group, Indian Institute of Management Ahmedabad and Pride Circle Foundation delves into the issues faced by LGBTQ+ students on Indian campuses. The report is a must-read for college administrations, faculty, and student representatives. Each of these stakeholders have a distinctive role to play in creating an inclusive environment on campus.

The study examines inclusivity issues around the LGBTQ+ community on Indian campuses through a survey of over 1700 students in colleges across India. It demonstrates how the establishment of a diversity and inclusion (D&I) student interest group can offer these students greater representation and improve the quality of their campus experience. It offers guidelines for the establishment of such a group.

The report presents statistics that prove how LGBTQ+ students can feel empowered when their institution has a D&I student interest group. It identifies key challenges and provides tips on how to address them.

‘Inclusivity’ for the LGBTQ+ community is taken as representation for members in an environment where they feel belonged, safe and comfortable to express their identity. The students were surveyed about forms of direct and indirect discrimination towards themselves or other community members. The awareness of students about LGBTQ+ issues was ascertained across campuses. They were asked to share their personal beliefs and biases about the LGBTQ+ community. Apprehensions and acceptance levels were examined. Case studies have been presented about the formation and relevance of support groups.

Explaining the rationale for the study, **Ms. Seema Bansal, Partner and Director, Social Impact, Boston Consulting Group**, said, "*We don't think of diversity and inclusion as a 'good-to-do' or a 'responsible corporate citizen' act; we think of it as a core strategic pillar that will make us stronger. It's only when campus pools are adequately diverse and attract the best talent that we will be able to access the talent.*" **Professor Errol D'Souza, Director, IIM Ahmedabad,** said, *" We are happy to note that our students have taken the initiative to be part of this study which we hope will be of help in encouraging talent, diversity and a culture of inclusion in educational institutions and the corporate world. It is unfortunate that the LGBTQ+ community is often missed out in important conversations.”*

A similar view was echoed by **Mr. Ramkrishna Sinha, Co-Founder, Pride Circle Foundation**. "*It is imperative that educational institutions provide a safe space for LGBTQ+ students, where they can focus on their growth and participate fully in campus life instead of spending energies trying to cover and hide*," he felt, adding, *"Support networks need to be adopted by colleges across the country so that no student is left behind*."

Speaking about the report, **Mr Parmesh Shahani**,author of **Queeristan: LGBTQ Inclusion in the Indian Workplace (2020) and Vice President, Godrej Industries Limited**, expressed happiness at the coalition between a company, an educational institution, and an LGBTQ+ change agent. "*These are exactly the kind of partnerships that are going to move the inclusion agenda forward in India. I firmly believe that along with legal change, one of the bastions of change will be the inclusive environment we can create in our workplaces and educational institutions*."

The report is available in electronic format and can be downloaded from <https://media-publications.bcg.com/India-fostering-pride-in-higher-education.pdf>.

**About Boston Consulting Group**

Boston Consulting Group partners with leaders in business and society to tackle their most important challenges and capture their greatest opportunities. BCG was the pioneer in business strategy when it was founded in 1963. Today, we help clients with total transformation - inspiring complex change, enabling organizations to grow, building competitive advantage, and driving bottom-line impact. To succeed, organizations must blend digital and human capabilities. Our diverse, global teams bring deep industry and functional expertise and a range of perspectives to spark change. BCG delivers solutions through leading-edge management consulting along with technology and design, corporate and digital ventures - and business purpose. We work in a uniquely collaborative model across the firm and throughout all levels of the client organization, generating results that allow our clients to thrive.

Success for every organization - including our own - hinges on the ability to elevate diversity of thought, to challenge established mindsets, and to unlock solutions that enable organizations to thrive. To reflect fully the world in which we work and to achieve sustainable impact, we recruit passionate, open-minded people of all gender identities, sexual orientations, ethnicities, physical abilities, and experience, and offer employees global affinity networks for gender and LGBTQ+ identity as well as regional networks addressing race, ethnicity, disability, military veterans, and other dimensions. We focus on intersectionality across these networks and provide affiliation, networking, education, sponsorship, mentorship, and access to senior leaders. Additionally, we offer diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) consulting and provide customized tools to guide decision making, as we work alongside our clients on their DEI strategies and partner with leading organizations across the globe to learn from those that are best in class and contribute to the evolving dialogue regarding DEI among other initiatives.

**About Pride Circle Foundation**

Pride Circle Foundation is a not-for-profit enterprise that addresses the needs of the LGBTQ+ community. The concept of a fair and equal society, where everyone can achieve their full potential, lies at the core of the Foundation’s ethos.

Pride Circle Foundation has four major streams of activity:

* Employability: The skills, knowledge and self-belief of the community are enhanced through youth and campus

engagement; skills development; and fellowship and leadership development.

* Organizational Inclusion: Design of interventions and measure of culture and practices through workplace equality

programs; inclusive best practices; and skill enhancement along with employment support.

* Institutions and Families: Working towards creating a welcoming, affirming and supportive environment. This is attempted through teacher training and parent support to create safe and caring homes
* Entrepreneurship: Enabling networking, economic opportunities and advancement by organizing or supporting financial literacy and inclusion programs; seed funding and incubation; and supplier diversity.

Pride Circle Foundation’s focus is on education, mental health, entrepreneurship, employment and allied activities which it delivers through the aforementioned objectives.

**About Indian Institute of Management Ahmedabad (IIMA)**

Indian Institute of Management Ahmedabad (IIMA) is a premier B-school in the Asia Pacific region. Globally, the Institute's programmes have earned high reputation and acclaim, becoming the first Indian institution to receive international accreditation EQUIS. Founded in 1961 as a unique public-private partnership for development through the application of knowledge, today it has an overseas presence in Dubai and associates with over 80 foreign B-schools to offer academically superior, market-driven and socially impactful programmes, research and consultancy services.

In 2018, IIMA made it to the number four position in the Financial Times (FT) Asia Pacific Top 25 Business School Rank, ahead of all Indian B-Schools. FT conducted the ranking after considering the quality and breadth of all the B-schools programmes.  Currently, the institute’s flagship MBA programme is ranked at 20th position in the FT Master in Management Ranking 2020. IIMA is at number one position in India Ranking 2020 NIRF (National Institutional Ranking Framework), released by the Ministry of Human Resource Development, Government of India.  
  
Over the years, IIMA has benefited more than 38,000 alumni who graduated from its various programmes. Currently, besides its renowned flagship Two-year Master in Business Administration (MBA), earlier known as Post Graduate Programme in Management (PGP); the Institute continues to draw top-quality students to its PhD Programme in Management, MBA in Food and Agri-Business Management (FABM), MBA-PGPX (One-Year Full-Time Post Graduate Programme in Management for Executives), Faculty Development Programme (FDP), Armed Forces Programme (AFP), e-Post Graduate Programme  (MMS), e-Post Graduate Diploma in Advanced Business Analytics (ePGD-ABA), and benefits industry professionals through its short duration Executive Education Programmes.

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