Fall 2014

Devkamal Dutta Associate Professor of Strategic Management and Entrepreneurship, PAUL, travels to India & Hong Kong

Dev Dutta

University of New Hampshire - Main Campus, dev.dutta@unh.edu

Follow this and additional works at: https://scholars.unh.edu/international_travel

Recommended Citation

Dutta, Dev, "Devkamal Dutta Associate Professor of Strategic Management and Entrepreneurship, PAUL, travels to India & Hong Kong" (2014). Faculty Travel Reports. 92.

https://scholars.unh.edu/international_travel/92

This Report is brought to you for free and open access by the Global Education Center at University of New Hampshire Scholars' Repository. It has been accepted for inclusion in Faculty Travel Reports by an authorized administrator of University of New Hampshire Scholars' Repository. For more information, please contact nicole.hentz@unh.edu.
Devkamal Dutta Associate Professor of Strategic Management and Entrepreneurship, PAUL, travels to India & Hong Kong
Devkamal Dutta

Associate Professor of Strategic Management and Entrepreneurship, PAUL ~ India & Hong Kong

Thanks in part to the support of a CIE International Grant for Development and Engagement, I was able to travel to India and Hong Kong earlier this summer for my research and international outreach activities.

Currently, I am working on a research project that explores the challenges faced by social ventures in India. Social ventures are entrepreneurial firms that arise from a range of social challenges. These ventures are often thought of as innovative solutions to societal issues such as poverty, health, education, and sanitation. They are typically founded by social entrepreneurs who are motivated by a desire to address specific social problems.

In order to get close to the phenomenon, I decided to commence this research by immersing myself in fieldwork through intensive study of a social organization that seems to have been effective at managing the tension between the social-oriented mission and the desire for expansion. India has a thriving sector of social ventures involved in alleviating poverty, empowering women, and ensuring water supply, sanitation, immunization, and healthcare at the grassroots level. From anecdotal evidence, I came to know that Basix India might be just the social venture appropriate for my study. Basix is a livelihood promotion institution that works with over 3.5 million customers in India, over 90% of them being rural poor households. I established contact with Basix senior management in April and they kindly agreed to be a host institution for my study. In July and August, I travelled through India, meeting Basix top management team, project officers, field operations staff and beneficiaries in Kolkata, Jamshedpur, and Shillong. Among several insights that emerged from the field research, the most critical finding was that social ventures that are able to juggle the tensions of mission versus market have it in their mission itself to balance social and economic objectives. In other words, it is in their organizational DNA to give equal emphasis to both economic and social goals even though they are set up as social ventures. In the case of Basix, at the heart of their mission and strategy is the Basix Livelihood Triad. The Triad lays equal emphasis on three ways to ensure economic and social uplift of beneficiaries through (i) livelihood financial services or lending micro-credit to beneficiaries, (ii) agricultural/business development services or creating economic assets by beneficiaries, and (iii) institutional development services or skill and personality development of beneficiaries. Using and balancing through this three-pronged approach, it has been possible for Basix to ensure significant uplift of beneficiary quality of life.

Separate from this research project, I visited the Hong Kong Polytechnic University (HK PolyU) in July to attend a conference on Renewing Business Education in Asia, where I was an invited participant. This was an exciting platform where educationists from across the world deliberated over two days on the emerging challenges of business education and how to reposition business education in Asia, and more generally, across Asia, to take advantage of the 21st century which people suggest is going to be the ‘Asian Century.’ I met with a wide range of academics, among them Professor Edwin Cheng, Dean Faculty of Business HK PolyU, Dr. Eric Ngai, Professor of Management & Marketing Dept., HK PolyU, Dr. Israr Qureshi, Asst., Professor of Management & Marketing Dept., HK PolyU, Dr. Doo-hee Lee, Dean of Korea University Business School, and Dr. Katrin Muff, Dean of Business School Lausanne. I also participated in a focus group collaboratory for agenda formulation and strategizing for the future. Several learning that came out of these deliberations will be important to consider as I engage in my teaching activities at UNH and work as a member of UNH’s University Panel on Teaching and Learning.

I am grateful to have received a CIE grant to support my research and international outreach initiatives and I felt honored to represent UNH in Asia.