

# Showcase

- AN IIMCCRC BI-ANNUAL NEWSLETTER



## ✓ Editorial

IIMCCRC welcomes you to the 9th edition of IIMCCRC's newsletter "Showcase" in its pursuit of connecting with its stakeholders, primarily the faculty, case writers, and our alumni.

We are happy to have completed the following two thought-provoking cases :

1. IITIIMSHAADI.COM: Can positioning support market expansion? - A case set in the context of marketing in Startups
2. Repositioning for Success: The Llyod's Acquisition by Havells India - A case on brand acquisition and positioning

While we understand Covid-19 has thrown in unprecedented and still-unfolding challenges, particularly for India, we must use this crisis as a learning opportunity. Therefore, we encourage the alumni to connect with us with stimulating case leads from their industry experience. We are confident that with our faculty expertise, case writers, and case grant support, we can create helpful knowledge for making managers future-ready to ride the waves of the post-covid world.

For more information, you can visit our website at:

<https://www.iimcal.ac.in/faculty/centers-of-excellence/case-research-center-iimccrc/overview>

The previous newsletter can be accessed at : <https://www.iimcal.ac.in/issue-8-dec-2020>

You can also email us @ IIM Calcutta Case Research Center <[iimccrc@iimcal.ac.in](mailto:iimccrc@iimcal.ac.in)> and let us know what you think.

Happy reading!

## ✓ Upcoming Cases of 2021-22

- *SAI International School*
- *Feed My Chennai: An Achievement and A Puzzle*
- *Reliance Nippon life insurance: marketing strategy in regulated & fragmented markets*
- *The Transformation of CPWD*
- *Himang Infrastructure Solutions Pvt. Ltd.*



## ✓ Faculty Shares: An Incremental Approach to Case and Teaching Note Writing

Thank you for inviting me to share my experiences of writing cases with IIMCCRC. As a case author and case teacher, I have often been faced with the question: “what is the central issue in the story or a case?” The presumption in asking such a question is that there is a singular central issue or perspective of relevance for any particular organizational episode, decision, and/or managerial action, based upon which one writes/teaches a case. And as case authors, we need to correctly identify this central issue and discuss this in the teaching note and only then can we write the case. We err in subscribing to this presumption, because we often do not acknowledge the effects of our own perception, including our disciplinary training.



A famous experiment in perception asked managers from various functional areas to analyse a case and identify the central problem. Each manager articulated the central issue from the perspective of his/her respective function, and argued persuasively about the same.

I believe this experiment, while focused on case analysis, also has implications for case authors. It tells us that for any phenomenon upon which we seek to write a teaching case, there are, and can be multiple theoretical perspectives from which the case, more specifically the teaching note can be written. What perspective one writes from is often a choice of the case author, based upon his/her theoretical and disciplinary predispositions, market acceptance, availability of reading and reference material and so on.

In my research, I have been examining innovation. While my personal theoretical preference has been for decolonial approaches to innovation, in writing the teaching case I could not explicitly focus on decolonial perspective in the teaching note. This is because, there are limited readily understandable reading materials that can be provided to students or even interested case teachers as references on this topic. Thus, I began developing the teaching case by writing the teaching note from the perspective of design thinking.

I would like to think of this approach where the actual teaching note can in some ways, be de-linked from the writing of the teaching case as an incremental approach to case development. This incremental approach optimises between producing new classroom pedagogic material, and utilising existing learning resources. It is ‘incremental’ because, it allows us as instructors, to still use the new case we have written and introduce atleast partially a novel perspective, decolonial in my case in a class discussion, allowing innovation within a classroom, even while we may still be working on developing other associated reading materials. Over time, one is then able to revise both the case and teaching note with newer perspectives.

Additionally, this incremental approach and the practice of de-linking a case from the teaching note, does provide other types of facilities even to the case authors. Often, case authors are faced with the problem of being compelled to be a critical or appeasing, in the writing of cases in order to get the relevant permissions from organisations. At other times, there are aspects of confidentiality that involve case facts that cannot be disclosed in a case. Under these circumstances, the teaching note offers case authors a means to stimulate a discussion on various issues, including decisions that possibly have not been made, and/or paths that may not have been taken, which can go on to contribute to critical thinking amongst students.



## ✓ Faculty Speaks



I decided to write the case on DMart as I saw a void in the cases on retailing in the Indian context. The case is situated at the interface of marketing, finance, strategy, and operations management and brings out the interlinkages of various business functions. The case has been developed with the help of a very enthusiastic MBA alumnus, Radhika Sriram. I have used this case in MBA and executive classes, and it generates high energy discussion amongst the participants as many of them leverage their own experience of shopping at DMart.

I take this opportunity to thank IIMCCRC for providing amazing support for case writing initiatives at IIM Calcutta.

**Prof. Ritu Mehta**  
Professor, Marketing Group, IIMC

## ✓ Case Writer Reflects



I have been associated with IIMCCRC since 2014. I have got the opportunity to write cases on diverse topics under the expert supervision of Prof. Indranil Bose and Prof. Ramendra Singh. Received immense support from them and also from IIMCCRC. The cases are on varied topics that ranged from novel business models to some technological disruptions in the industry.

Prior to my association with IIMCCRC, I use to follow a particular model (SAPADAPPA - Situation Analysis - Problem Analysis - Decision Analysis - Potential Problem Analysis) for case writing and analysis. My thought process changed post my connection with IIMCCRC. Now, I understand that each case has its own unique structure that analyse situations, develop options and spur debate on possible plan of actions. Business scenarios are amenable to case analysis that illustrates some typical learning objectives.

My latest case study with IIMCCRC is on IITIIMShaadi, a start-up that explores matrimonial alliance business for the alumni of premier educational institutes. Can niche positioning support market expansion strategy, is the debatable question of the case.

It has really been a wonderful and invigorating experience with IIMCCRC. I hope this journey will be enriching over the years.

**Mr. Siddhartha Paul**  
Case Writer for IIMCCRC

## ✓ EDITORIAL TEAM



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For any suggestions about the newsletter please reach us at [iimccrc@iimcal.ac.in](mailto:iimccrc@iimcal.ac.in)

## ✓ Doctoral Student Connects

As a budding researcher with a keen interest in studying the role of information technology in addressing social



issues, I was looking to explore how social enterprises working with marginalized communities are addressing problems, especially in the semi-urban and rural regions. IIMCCRC provided a great platform with excellent supporting infrastructure throughout the different stages of case writing including travel, accommodation, case writing, case review, copy editing and more. With IIMCCRC's and the associated professors' guidance, I, along with other co-authors were able to write cases on rural agriculture, rural artisans and rural education. The cases unravelled the nuances associated with technology design, implementation and monitoring and the associated social fabric into which it was woven by the social enterprises. Students in the classroom were pleasantly surprised at how small organizations with limited resources were able to make substantial impact in their regions of operation. Some of the students were inspired by the work by done by the case organizations and even offered to conduct volunteering activities for the social enterprises.

**Mr. Rishikesan Parthiban**  
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