

**STRATEGIC OPPORTUNITIES FOR QUALITY IN  
HIGHER EDUCATION IN INDIA**

***Krishna K. Ladha***<sup>1</sup>

*This paper's main concern is with the quality of education. It offers two games that highlight the proactive role the government could play for quality in higher education. It is a role that is different from what the government seems to be doing now. In the first game, the government plays against a University. If the government were stern, the University would credibly commit to delivering quality education. At equilibrium, the government trusts the University, and the latter reciprocates the trust by offering quality education. In the second game, two universities (it could be many more) are trapped in a Prisoner's Dilemma (PD) game in which cooperation means offering quality education. The outcome of the PD game is bad for the Universities, they want an external agency (possibly the government) to enforce cooperation. With enforcement, both Universities provide quality education. The commitment of the government to enforce suitable laws, however, is doubtful in the modern world of give and take; the government is better off finding the Universities in violation but not enforcing the law. With the Universities anticipating that the government would not enforce the law, the Universities are unlikely to cooperate. What can be done? Probably some day the electorate will demand quality education with great vigor. The government may then dissociate itself from the temptation of give and take, and install a Standing Education Commission, with powers matching those of the Election Commission of India. It will then be the task of this Commission to implement laws that induce quality education. The paper thus provides a theoretical justification for the National Knowledge Commission's recommendation for the installation of "Independent Regulatory Authority for Higher Education (IRAHE)."*

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*Research, Conference & Publications Office,  
IIM Kozhikode, IIMK Campus PO, Kozhikode 673 570, Kerala, India*

***Phone: (91)0495 2809238***

***Email: [rcp@iimk.ac.in](mailto:rcp@iimk.ac.in)***

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<sup>1</sup> Professor of Economics, Indian Institute of Management Kozhikode, IIMK Campus PO, Kozhikode- 673570, email: [kkladha@iimk.ac.in](mailto:kkladha@iimk.ac.in)