



Rs. 30.00
ISSN- 0566-2257

UNIVERSITY NEWS

A Weekly Journal of Higher Education

Association of Indian Universities

Vol. 58 • No. 18 • May 04-10, 2020

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*Celebrating
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Subscription is payable in advance by Bank
Draft/MO only in favour of Association of
Indian Universities, New Delhi.

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Trends in the 21st Century Education

S K Saidapur *

In nature living beings tend to evolve in response to many prevailing forces operating in the given environment. They essentially struggle, for resources like food, space, and mate. Additionally, it involves overcoming tussle with the neighbors (inter and intra-specific competition for food, space and mate), and also avoid parasites and predators. Thus, predators, parasites and neighbors are 3 major enemies of all forms of life. Who survive at the end? Obviously those that can overcome such challenges survive and/or reproduce. This defines the phrase 'survival of the fittest', a connotation that has no bearing to the physical fitness of an individual. It simply refers to the ability of organisms to leave behind fertile offspring. Such ability is largely due to (1) reshuffling of genes in each generation, (2) selection of useful (including harmless) genes, and (3) elimination of genes that are harmful particularly in early life. This is a very sketchy depiction of how in nature selection pressures work on living beings. Charles Darwin called it natural selection and proposed that through such a mechanism organisms evolve (Theory of Evolution-1958). It is a profound theory with ramifications even outside biological realms. For instance, market or socially driven forces, akin to selection forces in nature, affect evolution of human societies, trade and commerce, industrial production, political rise and fall of individuals, and behaviors like, nepotism, favoritism and corruption in public life. The Universities are also organic entities and they too are affected by the selection forces operating around them at a given point of time. Therefore, scenario of higher education at any given point of time in the history is a reflection of the quality of academicians and educational managers of that time; from faculty of colleges/universities, principals, Vice Chancellors, State Higher Education Ministers, State Councils of Higher Education, UGC, AICTE, IMA, ICAR, ICMR, Bar Council and other regulatory bodies. This prelude is merely to remind ourselves that we must own our responsibilities in addition to crying for our rights.

Evolution of Education System in India

India is indeed the mother of all civilizations as it represents one of oldest surviving of the 45 or so civilizations of the world. She will always be remembered for her many notable contributions in the fields of science and technology, medicine, yoga & meditation, metallurgy, architecture and engineering and more importantly universal message of spirituality to the whole world (Gautier 2013, 2019). India may well have been the world leader in promoting the pursuit of ultimate truth, knowledge, attainment of wisdom,

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man's role in the preservation of Mother Nature (biodiversity) and living in harmony with people of all faith, religion, culture and ethos, and citizenry. Literacy or attainment of various degrees, diplomas or certificates is not in itself the true indicator of education. The primary goal of education is to teach for 'life' rather than merely for living. Schooling should help instill self-esteem and national pride in the minds of the learners and promote embracing lingual, religious and ethnic diversities with reverence. Education is the operating system to help realize these goals. A clear understanding of the difference between literacy and education is vital before attempting to understand and undertake the management of higher education.

The origin of education system in India may be traced to the illustrious *Gurukul* system practiced from time immemorial. This may be regarded as Education 1.0 (E 1.0). Initially, a learned scholar, the Guru would go to the house of the pupil and impart knowledge gained by him over the years. As time elapsed, increase in the number of learners forced them to go to the homes of teachers seeking literacy, learning basic mathematics to enable maintenance of records and accounts. Make no mistake; India was beset with fund of knowledge in the form of Vedas, Upanishads, Puranas, Smritis (Smrutis and Shrutis), epics like Ramayana and Mahabharata, Panini's Ashtadyayi, Kautilya's Arthashastra, Bharata's Natyashastra, Medical treatises of Chakra and Sushruta, Dramas of Shudraka, Bhasa, Kalidasa, teachings of Buddha, Mahaveera and innumerable number sages from different parts of India. Apparently, prevailing wealth of knowledge was enough for establishment of Pathashalas, and even universities (e.g. Nalanda and Takshasila) during the early Christian era. Use of 'chalk and talk' and the blackboard was the main method used in teaching-learning process till the late 20th century. Education 2.0 (E 2.0) is a continuum of E 1.0 that began following the availability of teaching aids, like the over head projectors (OHP) and power point slides (PPTs) as additional tools of teaching during the last quarter of the past century. It did not differ much from the basic framework of education 1.0 except that it was more digitized. With the commencement of the 21st century, learning through newer ways became possible that include use of Smart Boards, Social Media, Emails, Wikis, Blogs, Facebook,

Twitters and WhatsApp. The new avenues facilitated production and publication of the contents (even by the learners) and sharing through social networking, as well as open access to educational and research materials, and inter-institutional collaborations. Progresses in digital technology also enabled e-governance of education system (administration, teaching, evaluation and declaration of results etc.). This integration of education with technology represents the onset of Education 3.0 (E 3.0). Digital technology is now playing a key role in educational reforms and their management.

India can boast of much technological advancements especially in the fields of Information Technology (IT), Space science, Agricultural sciences and Biotechnology. However, the indigenous education system is yet to produce breakthrough research in basic sciences, innovations and patents that will enhance socio-economical status of citizens, and institutions of international fame. Regrettably, poor governance coupled with poor leadership has hastened the downfall of most universities in the country. There are many other reasons too. For instance, poor funding, ban on the recruitment of faculty, lack of competitive/vibrant academic ambience and infrastructure of the educational institutions and so on to name a few. Rampant corruption in the management of education systems (schools to universities), political interferences, poor governance and leadership encountered in recent times are like cancer and therefore a matter of utmost concern. If these issues are not addressed effectively there is no hope of making India great once again.

Dissemination of National Pride

India's real strength lies in areas like: mathematical sciences, astronomy, metallurgy, architecture, Ayurveda, Yoga, Meditation and, Spirituality to name a few. In addition, India has made significant gains in the field of space science and IT. Ours is the oldest surviving civilization with huge cultural and linguistic diversity. Yet, a matter of great concern for the nation is the loss of self esteem, national pride, respect for country's culture and ethos, and patriotism in the minds of our learners as these aspects are grossly overlooked in our curriculum. It is time that we now embark rather seriously on teaching true history and culture

of India at all levels, from school to University education. For this our history books need to portray the truth, good and bad, but as it happened (Gautier, 2013, 2019) and that should be taught to future generations of students. There is so much to learn from history. West remembers mass killing of Jews under German Nazi regime between 1941-45 is remembered over and over through movies and social media. Likewise, India must remember the sad parts of history like the genocides during the Islamic invasions, destruction of temples, Goa inquisitions, forced religious conversions and Massacre of Sikhs in the year 1984, again and again through movies, and TV shows just as we remember Gandhi, Bhagat Singh, Veer Savarkar or other freedom fighters for their sacrifices and their trust with the nation. Future generation of learners can discover a lot from the historical mistakes on one hand and on the other get inspired by the accomplishment Indians in science & technology, social sciences and humanities, narratives of freedom fighters, social reformers, kings and philosophers, forgotten heroes like Subhash Chandra Bose, performance of past Prime Ministers and governments and their policies. In short, there is much to learn from the history of India (see Gautier 2013, 2019). Let the new generation of students know the truth. Let us accept the past mistakes if any and move on. It is utterly unwise to bury India's history and glory and at the same time hope to learn from it. Let me recall the statement of Prof. D. S. Kothari who said, "How can we lament lack of national pride in Indians without first acquainting them with the country's phenomenal scientific achievements in the dim distant past"? It is time that academicians and the policy makers devise ways, without wasting time, for instilling national pride in the minds of learners which is long due.

Impact of Industrial Revolutions on Education

Education and Industrial Revolutions (IRs) impact each other as they are closely interlinked. Unfortunately, India missed the first two industrial revolutions; IR 1.0 occurring in England and IR 2.0 in America; both occurred during the time of British colonial regime. Consequently, India remained unmindful of the importance of the linkage between industrial revolution and education. In any case, the advancements in education and research show the way to development of technology. Sometimes, technology may come first without any knowledge

of the underlying principles which get revealed afterwards. Briefly speaking, about IR 1.0 took place around the year 1780 in England and was characterized by mechanization of productions using water and steam power, and weaving looms. The IR 2.0 took place in America around the year 1870 which enabled mass production with assembly lines (division of labor) using electrical energy. The third, IR 3.0 took place around the year 1969 that enabled automation in the production of goods following advancements in the field of electronics and computer sciences. It was driven by simple digitization technology. Unlike the first three IRs there is little gap between 3rd and 4th IRs. In fact, the IR 4.0 commenced within a matter couple of decades after the onset of IR 3.0. The ongoing IR 4.0 has a massive impact on people, education, jobs, skill development and so on as it utilizes complex digitization technology (cyber physical systems). It is more powerful than the preceding IRs both in speed and impact due to great breakthroughs in internet related developments, robotics, driverless autonomous vehicles, 3-D printing, quantum computation, material science, nanotechnology, biotechnology, energy and data storage facilities, artificial intelligence (AI) and so on. A swift progress in IR 4.0 has made it possible for mass manufacture of products, rise in income levels and, improved quality of life. At the same time, a fallout of IR 4.0 is technology driven disruption in jobs. Several kinds of jobs and industries have succumbed to it. A classic example is the fall down of (leading) Kodak Eastman Company which unfortunately did not anticipate the impact of complex digitization technology. Seemingly simple and affordable devices like smart phones can now do innumerable types of jobs replacing the need for separate and multiple devices (ex: Telephone, TV, Radio, Computer, Calculator, Organizer, GPS, Dictionary & Thesaurus, Camera, Torch, Mobile banking, Online shopping, booking tours & hotels, accessing e-books, journals, content sharing, active participation in social media like the Facebook, Twitters, Blogs, Data storage and so on to name a few). As a result, many industries went out of business and were shut down and several types of jobs available hitherto have now disappeared. With specific apps in place, smart phones perform unimaginable number of tasks with ease and swiftness. Consequently, many transactional reforms, have also taken place which

are simple as well. The major drivers of the 4th IR are: increased use and application of computational technology, AI, rise of smart machines and systems, communication tools, new media literacy and media ecology, super-structured organizations, global connectivity, increase in human longevity etc. All these will greatly impact the labor market, income of workers, and displacement of workers by machine and AI. Technology driven disruption in jobs is indeed a serious issue but one need not become too gloomy because new technologies also create new jobs whose requirements will however change. For instance, maintenance of novel technologies and their up gradation will require new skills. Hence, there will be a growing demand for new skills like critical thinking, creativity, emotional intelligence, cognitive flexibilities, ability for co-working, co-creating with men and machine. In short, IR 4.0 calls for sustained creativity and eternal innovation. Expectedly, usage of 'Internet of Things' (network of physical devices, vehicles, home appliances, and other devices embedded with electronics, software, sensors, actuators, and connectivity which enables these objects to connect and exchange data) will become very common. In this process, many challenges will surface at the workplaces. So, the present and future generations of youth (Gen Z population) need to be prepared to meet these challenges. In reimagining education for 21st Century, Universities in India must address the issues of job disruptions and training the youth such that they shoulder the responsibilities courageously and also emerge successful as creative thinkers, innovators and entrepreneurs. Failing to do so, the prevailing demographic dividend in the form of soaring youth population can turn out to be catastrophic. Therefore, planning future education with great care is warranted to address the issues raised above as there is no escape from the impact of the ongoing industrial revolution. It calls for major changes in our education system, thinking, logistics and management if we have to stay relevant and sail through the global competition smoothly. Making innovations will remain focal point at all times to come.

Redesigning Future Education

In the beginning I emphasized that in nature living organisms evolve over time. Likewise, everything around us also changes over time, be it life styles, automobiles, music and dance, rules of

politics and so on. Education system is no exception to this rule and it has also changed from the *Gurukul* system (E 1.0) practiced over many centuries to the present model (E 3.0) around the last quarter of the 20th century. A major agent of this change is the ongoing industrial revolution. It is now imperative that the educationists and policy makers recognize the urgency and develop new education model to complement with the ongoing and foreseeable industrial revolutions, and their inexorable impacts. Following are some suggestions on reimagining future education.

Embracing New Education System

What are the major challenges posed by IR 4.0 on day to day life? First, it has caused disruptions in jobs. Second, it demands for new skills on a continuous basis. Hence, there is an exigency to redesign and develop a new education system - education 4.0 (E 4.0) with a clear *blueprint* for future teaching-learning processes. The new paradigm broadly includes blended learning, lifetime learning as well as learning to play a constructive role in the society. We need to foresee the future trends and needs and empower education system itself so as to promote innovations. This envisages a shift from 'brain as storage to brain as processor' model. Obviously, the new education system must focus on interactive learning with discussion and question & answer sessions, quizzes & seminars, problem solving, group learning, and project based learning. Such reforms will provide scope for customization and personalization of educational content and teaching-learning processes in relation to slow or advanced learners as well. The traditional classrooms will have to be transformed in to virtual and flipped classrooms to make them suitable for adoption of new pedagogies. This will promote conveying lectures (theoretical aspects) online and practical learning (hands-on experience) is done together in the labs not only with the guidance of the teacher but through interaction among the learners themselves.

The drivers of future education are mainly the future skills, digital networks and devices, personal data, shared content and resources, collaboration platforms, talent investment, 100 year life expectation, millennial mindset and social progress. A movement towards education 4.0 thus envisages a change in the *mind* and the *mindset* of teachers, learners and

the education managers. Of these, mind is no serious issue since it is as superior as that of say Anglo-Saxon, Caucasian or any other. However, mindset vis-à-vis our *attitude* can be a problem. Fixity in the attitude of the teachers can hamper implementation of future education policies. Anticipated hindrances may arise due to growing digital divide between the teachers and the taught in the future. Let me explain this briefly. Though at present one in thousand persons has a personal computer, the Gen-Z population of youth (those under 20 years of age) have access to smart phones and access to computers. They are also fast learners and more advanced in handling and using these devices compared to their teachers. Therefore, reluctance on the part of teachers to adopt digital mode of teaching though unfortunate is very much expected. Many teachers will continue to use ‘chalk and talk’ method and claim its superiority over the modern methods. True, teaching under the banyan tree or use of chalk and talk method when information was limited had their own merit. In this age of information explosion it is futile to evade modern methodology and swim against the current in vain. It is impossible to manage the information boom without the computers with large data storage and swift retrieval facilities. Undeniably, teaching is now largely aided by several modern /digital devices that help both teachers and the learners. Therefore, it is imperative to adopt more and more learner-centric teaching by meticulously planning to nurture creative thinking, group learning, blended learning, making innovations and so on. Obviously, to realize these goals teachers themselves have to be creative and continue to be lifetime learners. A teacher is no more a sage on the stage but only a guide on the side.

Future Trends in Teaching-Learning Processes

Education is a dynamic process and it shall remain so always. It is poised to undergo rapid changes in the 21st century in tune with the technical and academic advances, industrial revolutions, and more importantly to remain relevant to the contemporary requirements of the learners and the society at large. Reluctance to change and adapt to the novel requirements will harm future generation of students and stunt national growth. What does the future education envisage? The major components of the future education scheme would be the following. First main component could be learner-centric

teaching that is skill based and involves group learning (with due respect to aptitude and ability of learners). Second, teachers have to adopt new pedagogies to promote Self learning, Group learning, Blended learning (combination of offline and online learning: use of Learning Management Systems, the LMSs), using gadgets like the Smart Phones and Tablets, extensive use of Virtual class rooms (Flipped class rooms), and virtual labs, Problem solving and Monitoring progress of each learner, widespread use of Internet based technologies and so on. Expectedly, the time-honored class room teaching will be outdated. Third, new methodologies that involve teaching ‘creative thinking’ and making scientific ‘innovations’ will assume paramount importance in the future teaching processes. Fourth, learning through project mode and group learning will become vital. Consequently, a future teacher will become more of a facilitator, mentor, guide and confidence builder. Teachers have to be life-time learners so as to avoid widening the digital divide between them and the learners. Despite the limitation and affordability of digital devices, already half of the world population seems to be linked by the internet. So there is no escape from digital literacy and it’s endless up gradations with time. Therefore, teachers have to be creative themselves as well as keep enhancing their own professional competency so as to stay relevant as well as sustain their own importance in the society. Evidently, novel reforms in the curriculum and assessment of learning outcomes are needed as soon as possible. Continuous assessment is more desirable than the semester-end examinations. Massive reforms in examination and assessment are required in any case (Saidapur, 2019).

Need to Strengthen State Universities

The State Universities have a major role in providing collegiate education. However, over the years, the vigor of State Universities has faded perceptibly due to several reasons: inadequate funding, extensive use of contract teachers in place of tenure track faculty, recruitment of poor and inbred faculty, segregation of professional courses from the traditional universities and establishing mono-faculty varsities. Seemingly, such developments have taken place more out of political than academic logic. It is heartening to note that the New Education Policy (2019) recommends phasing out the mono-

faculty universities and transforming them into regular multi-faculty varsities. Of course, this is easier said than done. The State Universities also became poorer following creation of islands of so called excellence; the IITs, IIITs, R & D Labs and Central Universities and more recently the IISERs /NISERs with liberal funding, sylvan ambience, better service conditions (age of retirement, salary, Medicare facilities etc.), as well as greater academic and administrative flexibilities, and other incentives. Hence, these institutes attract better talent, both students & faculty. As a result, it has been possible for these institutes to impart good education and produce export worthy students for postdoctoral assignments or jobs in industries and academic institutions. The faculty could establish linkages with foreign collaborators and publish papers in good impact factor journals. Yet, time has come to ask what is the outcome of all this? When an institution has best possible and highly motivated faculty, and students selected following severe competition of all India level, and the best possible research and teaching labs, modern library facilities, adequate funding, and vibrant academic environment in place, people expect cutting edge research, breakthroughs and, notable technological advancements. Such premier institutions should have contributed significantly not only to science and technology but to country's all round growth, the trade and commerce, foreign policies, production of advanced defense equipments, medicine, literature, philosophy, public hygiene and so on. Has this happened? Some introspection is needed. At the same time, we need to introspect over the plight and productivity of the large number of State Universities that impart education to over 80 per cent of the youth population. With minimum academic, financial and administrative supports, it is State universities that have been providing raw material- students for doctoral and postdoctoral research programs run in the premier institutions. In addition to carrying out the primary responsibility of teaching, State universities also contributed significantly to research and publications despite poor support and encouragement they receive. If meritocracy were to prevail, if university/college governance were to be good, if these institutions were to be adequately supported and if they were to be protected from political interferences they would have made more significant contributions to education and all round development of the

country. Sadly this did not happen. Undermining the importance of State Universities and pitiable governmental support has resulted in a wider gap between State universities and the premier institutions. Many State universities are in reality in a rather precarious situation. Academicians have become mute spectators. It is therefore high time that the people in power and the policy makers ponder over seriously on the importance of strengthening the State Universities and improve their status to the same level as that of the Central Universities, IIMs and IITs in all respects (service conditions, academic and administrative flexibility etc.). However, this requires an academic mindset, clear vision, political will, concern and commitment to the cause of fast evolving higher education system globally.

Conclusion

Before I conclude, let me touch upon two more aspects; national pride and women's' education. Every country has its own unique historical legacies, contributions to society through innovations in science and technology, literature & philosophy and so on. Respect for country's culture & ethos, ancient scriptures & epics, and ethics needs to be instilled in the minds of learners from the very early stages of education (school to doctoral degree levels) so as to make them feel proud of the country. These attributes will also go a long way in building a humane society. Secondly, women constitute approximately 50 per cent of our population. Right education of women is therefore very important. In recent decades, many 'Women's Universities' are established. The logic behind creating such gender specific universities is neither clear nor convincing. Were they created to isolate women from co-education? If so, it is clearly a faulty decision. In no stage of her life a woman lives isolated from man or vice versa. Depriving the benefits of co-education can be harmful as it can affect one's psychological growth and customary ability to deal with members of the opposite gender. Nevertheless, these universities can play some meaningful role in empowering women by offering courses that help them get jobs, become entrepreneurs (e.g. Fashion Design, Interior Decoration, Nursing, Air Hostess, Consoling and Counseling, Corporate Secretary, Translation of foreign languages, Social Work, Beautician courses, Horticulture & Floriculture, Bee Keeping, Handicrafts, Bakery, Catering, Hotel management,

Hospital Management, Stress Management, Event Management, Tax Consultancy etc.). In addition, they can be trained in Indian Classical Music/Dance, Gymnastics, Athletics, Swimming, Boxing, Karate & Self Defense, Yoga & Meditation as add-on courses. Such courses can help earn national / international recognitions in specific fields. Such training can be provided through certificate, diploma, graduate or post-graduate courses and boost self-esteem and self-confidence as well as sculpt personality of women. Such skill development programs will go a long way in empowering women whose demographic eminence is no different from that of men.

In summary, the urgency of revamping the higher education system as a whole to nurture the aspirations of the growing youth population and foreseeable compulsions described above needs no added emphasis. While we are yet to fully accomplish education for all and ‘right to education’ we must plan for ‘right education’ as well as ‘right way of education’. The key feature of 21st century education is *education in innovation* and *innovation in education*. Failure to recognize this exigency is sure to demolish demographic dividend that we boast of. In a ruthless world that is witnessing rapid progresses in scientific technologies, industrial revolutions and job disruptions, the only way to be successful is by acquiring skills and competitiveness of global standards without further ado. Also, while we need to innovate for our own sake, we must keep track of the global trends while making innovations in order to stay competent and relevant, now and in

future. If our inventions, discoveries and scientific advancements become trend setters, they can enrich not only India but the whole world. There is no scope for reluctance in transforming our education system or being apologetic about it. Change or perish is the new norm. Universities being the ‘organic entities’ they can not afford to remain stagnant and become fossilized.

Let me end by recalling the four major pillars of learning: ‘Learning to know, Learning to do, Learning to live together and Learning to be’ (source: Learning: The Treasure Within: Report to UNESCO of the ‘International Commission on Education for 21st Century’). Alvin Toffler opined, “*The illiterates of the 21st century will not be those who can not read and write but those who can not learn, unlearn and relearn.*” Trends in the 21st century education call for a change in the mind and mindset of teachers, and inspired leadership of education policy makers.

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COVID-19 CONCERN

An Appeal to Readers

The outbreak of COVID-19 commonly known as Novel Corona Virus has engulfed the entire world. The pandemic has emerged as one of the biggest ever faced by the human race. With great concern, University News appeals to its subscribers and readers to stay alert and cooperate with the government in adhering to all the social and health advisories issued from time to time. By being careful and cautious, we can beat the virus by breaking the chain and prevent it from spreading further.

We wish all the citizens of India, our subscribers and readers the best of safety and health, and appeal to each one of us to show solidarity in this hour of adversity.

#LetsBeatCoronaTogether
Stay Alert, Stay Safe

EDITOR

Internationalization as an Important Dimension of Higher Education

Raju Chandrasekar*

Internationalization in the education sector is one factor that has enhanced many economies worldwide. It has taken different cultures to all nooks and corners of the world. It has brought high paying jobs in the host countries for those who took the risk. China is taking advantage of the Chinese students who chose to come back to China from other countries. India has never been in a position to attract foreign students in quantities. India should join the education super powers and that is needed as a country strategy.

History

Foreign students influx into India comes up in debates and intellectual forums in India. Indian government made it one of its key agenda by taking up the initiatives to create several committees to promote internationalization. It is like the old adage, every one knows about it and no one can do anything about it. The record of arrival of foreign students onto India is stagnant and something that is worth pondering about.

US policy of internationalizing education is the role model to that end. Several countries send their students to the US. Even with the total of over 1 Million students from overseas in the US, it is just 5.3 per cent of the total students in the US in higher education. There is still a huge capacity in the US to accommodate international students. The IIE Project Atlas mentions that the share of international students hosted by the U.S. decreased from 28 per cent to 24 per cent from 2001 in 2017. The student mobility is shaped by the interaction of complex factors, and is prone to fluctuation. The current decrease in international enrollment speaks to the need for institutions to develop strategies that are responsive and prepared for change. It has to be specific to that country.

The future status of many visa classes has had an especially chilling effect on prospective international students. Safety is a pronounced concern for Indian students. Steep declines are largely due to cuts to international scholarships in host countries.

India has over 1000 universities and over 45,000 colleges. Indian higher education system is one of the

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huge systems of higher education in the world. The total enrolment has crossed 33 Million.

Association Indian Universities in its paper says, "Going by the policy framework which enables universities and colleges to admit foreign/ NRI/ PIO/ OCI students up to 15 per cent of their sanctioned intake, India should have been having about 4.85 million foreign/NRI/PIO students studying in its campuses. As against this vast potential, the number of international students in the country has been only in thousands."

There were only 47427 international students in 2018 across all universities and higher educational institutions in India. In reality the students from India are leaving in droves, where as international students are coming in trickles.

Many advanced and attractive countries like Australia and others do depend on the income out of foreign students for their annual budgets. But even most of that paltry number of foreign students in India, have been given scholarships provided by Government of India to the friendly countries as a political measure rather they come to seek Indian education as a must for their development.

India is not a preferred destination for foreign students at all. While India spends a lot to send the Indian students abroad for educating, it does not earn even a dollar by getting the foreign students. On top of it, massive number of the seats are empty because of bad planning and execution of the policy relevant to the export of Indian education is a dead loss, amounting to USD 10 Billion at the lowest annual tuition fee of Rs.1 Lakh per year.

Every country concentrating on fostering growth in International education, benefits more than just economic benefits. The opportunities to build enhanced bilateral and multilateral relationships, which increase cultural awareness and social engagement are the collaterals. Education diplomacy is advanced through host country educated alumni who develop lasting connections at personal, organisational and government levels. All of this is fostering better relationships with the rest of the world. It indeed is a great soft diplomacy.

So what is a fresh start for India? The best policy would be to make internationalization policies that would bring an equal number of international students to those of Indian students who are going abroad.

China which has been, for long, the biggest contributor for international students flow, has embarked on an ambitious effort to become a major hub for international education. Already, China has surpassed hosting 600,000 international students and is now one of the big attractions for foreign students.

The top places of origin for international students studying in the United States were China, India, South Korea, Saudi Arabia, Canada, Vietnam, Taiwan, Japan, Mexico and Brazil as per the open doors document. Students from China and India now represent half of the total enrolment of international students in the US.

Australia Story

Australia has been continuously framing policies that would attract international students into that country for the past 25 years. The best example of a country that has thoroughly developed its international higher education infrastructure is Australia. A new strategy document titled "National strategy for international education 2025" has highlighted the importance of international education and provided resources and a roadmap to advance it. Unfortunately India has made every time a new strategy document.

One thing is to have a strategy but another is having to put it to good use and make things happen.

Australia is high on that score and those who are serious and responsible about the internationalization of education in India should make a serious attempt to study what Australia has done to grow the market and what the others like China have done to increase their share and suggest similar measures.

Australian Senator, the Hon Richard Col Beck the Minister for Tourism and International Education clearly spells out how Australia is doing it in his landmark document, 'National Strategy for International Education 2025' which states, "The development of Australia's first National Strategy for International Education 2025 highlights the importance of international education to Australia. Recognized as one of the five super growth sectors contributing to Australia's transition from a resources-based to a modern services economy, international education

offers an unprecedented opportunity for Australia to capitalise on increasing global demand for education services."

He further goes on to stress his point, "The intent of the strategy is to ensure that Australia remains a leader in the provision of education services to overseas students. Australia already has a well-deserved reputation for the quality of our education and research, however, to fully realise our potential we must be both strategic and ambitious."

India does not have this kind of commitment seen in the powers that decide about internationalization in India. India is inward looking and all other countries are outward looking. The culture of exports has lost its way from the heady days. The demographic dividend of India is attractive to all, but no one talks about the huge excess capacity of the higher education sector to admit millions of foreign students.

Countries like Australia are building on the existing education, training and research strengths, to deliver high quality, innovative products and services to international students that meet or exceed their expectations. Building a position in the market of international education is some what easy but maintaining or growing that needs huge efforts.

Can we Follow Denmark?

Sofie Carsten Nielsen, Denmark's Minister for higher education and science in 2014-15 and now a spokesperson for the radical left party, has proposed a grant order to encourage international students receiving Danish financing to stay and work in the country after graduating.

In a letter published in the major Danish Newspaper *Berlingske*, she wrote, "Too many Danish firms today have to turn down new orders because of the lack of heads and hands. Therefore, foreign students are sent from heaven. "We only have to get them to stay longer in Denmark. The challenge today is that too many of them go home after graduation," Nielsen argued.

"We in the Radical party therefore are proposing a new grant order – "foreign students can get Danish SU [student financing] and higher education in Denmark on condition upon them that they work in Denmark for at least four years after graduation."

Nielsen said, "the grant would be provided as a

loan that international students would have to pay back if they left Denmark within a four-year time limit. At the same time, we want to earmark these grants to those studies that have the lowest level of unemployment upon graduation."

A counter-argument was that foreign students were a drain on Danish government funds, she continued. But Danish universities had demonstrated that foreign students contribute on average DKK799,000 (US\$126,000) to the Danish economy. One can easily see the importance of the inflow of foreign students into many countries.

What is the Way forward?

The author was in several national and international committees including playing some part in the preparation of the first export promotion policy for the Australian Education. The author was also in the committee on Internationalization of technical education by AICTE and the NAFSA committee by the UGC that was to focus on the internationalization of Indian education. NAFSA and the PIHEAD were two important internationalization initiatives in UGC.

Some of the suggestions for improving the things in India are discussed here. All that it takes is, to copy our own examples that have succeeded well in the service export markets and also borrow the ideas from successful countries that have succeeded in export of education.

One of the most interesting things about British council or such similar agencies working is that many of their officers sit in the embassy of their countries and are given diplomatic passports to allow them to do education business without any difficulty in any country or region of the world. So India should place its best business development experts at the Indian Embassies to market and sell the idea of education India. Incidentally, in many of our embassies, many times the expensive brochures and the prospectus of colleges, straight away go to the *raddiwalahs* as no one wants them.

An empowered government committee should be formed to promote the export of Indian education which can meet regularly in different locations where there are foreign students and where the MHRD/UGC/AICTE /NAAC offices are located, and can submit its solutions to the problems of promoting

Indian education to the Government and other allied agencies for action. The regional directors/ officers should also be fully involved. In fact, this should become a permanent standing committee until the agreed goal of the number of foreign students admissions is achieved. This will enable the sector to have continued focus.

In the meanwhile, the committee, could ensure all the voices be heard of the stake holders, be it local or even foreign universities who want to open centers in India to bring their own global students into India because of the low cost structures.

We need some education parks like the software technology parks, where the foreign universities will be allowed to operate (under the same benefits that were given to Software units when they started like exemption from IT, customs duty, excise duty and others).

Experience of those who have been admitting foreign students in the past after a great struggle to abide by law, should be heard more for our understanding of the real issues in opening up this sector for a two way. We can also get the foreign students in India to talk to us telling about their problems. We can meet the Indian students (who have gone overseas) and seek their opinions as to what is so attractive to them there? Can we create better conditions not only for our own students but also the global students here? All over the world, the students enjoy a visa that enables them to stay for two more years in the country after finishing their study. Countries like UK use it for exporting their culture to the world. Can we do that?

Our aim could be to relax the entry of foreign students into India in a way how relaxation has been done in engaging foreign nationals for the software industry. We need to look at creating PPP models in this activity, like how the E Governance has been done so successfully in AICTE, how the AICTE promoted CMAT exams have become a roaring success.

We need to make the MHRD/UGC/NAAC/AICTE a real amalgamation of promotional agencies than the tool in the license permit raj. We are in the era of internet, twitter and social media. We need to use the capacities in this sector, rather than creating another super duper structure to subsume everything that has painfully been built over several decades.

We may also understand how the sector like software has reached dizzy heights within 25 years by removing the bottlenecks in licensing and permit Raj. If there are other notable successes in consumer, software, telecom and defense offset sectors, then why cannot we duplicate the successes on to the internationalization of our technical education?

Indian commodity export of sugar and onions have been a good example of internationalization. Indian Government has been doing the right thing at the right time, by stopping export, allowing imports or promoting exports as the situation demanded. Indian government has taken care of the lives of the farmers. Like that it is time that they take care of the owners of colleges who have been the arm of government policy in promoting technical and other education. As per the recent statistics, 60 per cent of the education in India is in private sector hands. Government needs to be active in promoting those items that became export surplus. If there are good and replicable lessons from liberalization, then we must take them into account. Traditional products into non traditional markets and non traditional products into traditional markets should be the strategy.

The 15 per cent supernumerary quota over and above the approved seats in technical institutions,

comes to a college after a lot of struggle and effort in running the colleges. This is was good when the national resources were being built. But now when there is over capacity of seats and colleges are closing down courses (is a daily news) that they have built at considerable expenses, and there is a need to fill all the seats wherever it is found to be empty by opening to foreign students, then we may scrap such rules that restrict the admissions.

Any proposed committee should immediately find several short term solutions that will enable all colleges that have been admitting foreign students in the past, to allow filling up all unfilled seats in this year. Nearly 5,00,000 seats are expected to be vacant this year and this if converted into cash even at Rs.1,00,000 per seat the economic loss to the country is Rs.5,000 crores. More practically, we may allow by the work of this committee at least a 50,000 seats to be filled up. This alone will bring Rs.500 Crores to the system.

Indian software sector has been organised by NASSCOM to have inroads into the most sophisticated markets like USA etc. We need to find out how this happened and what are the efforts taken by NASSCOM to get to this stage. NASSCOM strategy can be modified to help the edu exports.

Weekly E- Essay Series of Scholarly Articles on Reimagining Indian Universities

A 'Weekly E-Essay Series of Scholarly Articles on 'Reimagining Indian Universities' was launched on AIU Website on 15th May, 2020 as a part of the change which AIU seeks to bring about in the academics in this day and age of COVID-19. The essays scheduled for release in this series are in a broad range of fields covering a variety of topics pertinent to 'Reimagining Indian Universities' received from distinguished experts and authorities in the area of Indian higher education included in the Book 'Reimagining Indian Universities' edited by Dr. Ms.Pankaj Mittal and Dr Sistla Rama Devi Pani. In the series, every week one scholarly article written by an erudite scholar of Indian academia is being released on the AIU Website. The series was initiated with the essay of Prof Bhushan Patwardhan, Vice Chairman, University Grants Commission, India on 15th May, 2020.

The essays are unique, enlightening and inspirational. Those who are interested in reading these essays may browse AIU Website: www.aiu.ac.in.

Bridging Social Distancing through Online and Open Distance Learning: Scope and Conditions

Debal K SinghaRoy*

In the wake of countrywide lockdown caused by the COVID-19 pandemic outbreak and promulgation of social distancing by the state, there has been growing emphasis since last several weeks on the online learning and use of Open Distance Learning (ODL) mechanisms. Emphasis has been on the use of e-resources, weblinks and electronic media like radio, television, webcasting etc., and social media platforms like Face Book, Skype, WhatsApp, Zoom, Google-real etc., to keep the learning process operational by maintaining social distancing... the unavoidable need of the day. Importantly, teachers, students and educational administrators alike are prompted to use all resources available online through e-pathshala, SWAYAM, e-gyankosh, and interactive social media platforms to deliver lectures, interact with students and fellow teachers and organize meetings etc. Some political leaders and administrators have also come forward to issue directives to the teachers, students, college principals and the university vice chancellors to make extensive use of open distance methodology and programmes like Gyan Vani, Gyan Darshan etc to reach out to the learners. All the teachers are now busy with preparation of lectures for online presentation and delivery through social media and electronic media to serve learner's need on an emergency basis.

Reactive Response

Though these are very timely and welcome moves to maintain continuity of learning of the student without disturbing the academic schedule, to enrich the learning experiences, and to make full use of the technological and educational resources, these moves are only reactive, a response to the emergency situation, and not a proactive one. These are neither properly planned, nor perceptively integrated with the overall educational system as yet. There is a possibility that once the emergency situation is over, the importance which is momentarily attached to the online and distance

mode of learning may get misplaced again within the structured and conventional learning arrangement of the country. Hence, there is a need to put the online learning in proper perspective and not to consider them as provisional, temporary and beck and call arrangements to suffice the exigencies only.

Improved State of Online and ODL Learning in India

Over the last three and half decades, many of the Open Distance Learning (ODL) institutions of the country have acquired recognizable maturity for developing quality study materials by making full adherence to distance education pedagogy. However, its contribution to online course delivery has not been as extensive as has been in conventional ODL programmes mostly because of the strictness of the regulatory authorities of the country on the one hand and perceptive fear of devaluation of academic degrees earned by the learners on the other. Because of concerns for the quality and limited access to ICTs by the learners, most reputed educational institutions in India were not encouraged to offer structured online degree programmes. Despite such concerns however, the online educational resources were of extensive use by most educationists, learners and educational administrators for enriching their expertise and enhance the learning processes. Along the line since last one and half decades the government has encouraged the development of online educational material for SWAYAM (a repository of around 2000 courses), e-pathshala, e-gyankosh etc. platforms providing the opportunity for Massive Open Online Course (MOOC) to a large section of learners. Some institutions have also provided online education in limited areas and levels. Now the scope and conditions for online learning has improved in India and there has been a significant increase as well in the quantum of line learners therein.

In order to democratize education, to suffice growing educational and training needs of the society, and to fulfill the aspiration for further education through flexible arrangement the Open and Distance Learning (ODL) system has been

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put in place in the educational arrangement of the country by the government. This system has been capacitated to be flexible and open to reach out to the doorstep of the learners through effective distance mode. It imparts education by using the specially designed printed Self-Instructional Study Materials (SIM) for the learners. While SIM forms the backbone of this system, it also integrates advanced Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) technologies like, audio, videos, new media and face to face counseling for the delivery of the academic programmes. Significantly over the decades, this system has acquired the capacity to make online delivery of SIM course materials, to provide on line academic counseling through webcasting, FM radio and Swayamprabha television broadcasting, Facebook, WhatsApp, Google, Skype, Zooms etc. It is also making use of 'SAKSHAT'—one-stop education portal— EDUSAT network for two-way communication for 'anytime -anywhere' education etc. to facilitate lifelong learning of students, teachers, and those in employment or in pursuit of knowledge. From a mere one distance education institute in 1962, to one Open University, 33 distance education institutions in 1980-81, over the years the strength of the ODL institutes has increased to 256 with 14 Open Universities and 242 Directorates of Distance Education located in regular universities (UGC, 2018).

ICTs, Educational Infrastructure and Emerging Demographic Scenario

India has got a significantly high rate of penetration of ICTs with 56 per cent people getting access to Internet and 86 per cent to mobile phones, (40 per cent smart phones). An estimate suggests that there were 1.6 Million online learners in 2016, and it is expected to grow to about 9.6 Million by the end of 2021. Simultaneously, India now experiences the phenomenal proliferation of higher education institutions across the country with over 1000 universities, 4500 colleges and over 10,000 standalone higher educational institutions (UGC, 2020). Though India has experienced the fast proliferation of higher educational institutions in the post economic liberalisation, the campus facilities or resources would be inadequate even to accommodate even 50 per cent of the regular pass outs. Now over 63.4 per cent of Indian population belongs to working age group of 19-59 years and 65 per cent belongs to the age group of below 35 years

who form the critical mass of an aspiring community for new India.

Towards Proactive Response

The COVID-19 driven social distancing has thrown open new challenges to the education system in general and to the Open and Distance Learning (ODL) in particular and has unfolded new opportunities for both the systems. The significance of the online and distance mode has got reinforced in the crucial hours of human crisis in society. Now that there has been a serious urge for an application of online and electronic media-based learning at all levels, it is imperative that the infrastructure, methodology and content for online learning, modes of integration with conventional ODL and face to face learning, process of evaluation and certification be seriously examined and ensured.

We very often take the pride in the fact that over 56 per cent people in India have got access to internet and 40 per cent people have got access to smart phone. However, digital divide is a fact to be reckoned in India, especially for the rural areas and for the economically weaker sections of the society. Many rural and poor students walk many kilometres to get access to internet kiosks in rural India. Hence, as part of online teaching-learning initiative, it should be ensured first that all learners have access to internet and a personal computer; otherwise the whole motto of uninterrupted education would get misplaced. Provision for free distribution of computer, state subsidized computer and interest free educational loan to purchase computer for the economically vulnerable across the space should be the part of a holistic package of online learning strategy.

To suffice the immediate learning need, the learners are to be encouraged to avail the opportunities of free access to online open educational resources available with National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT), e-gyankosh of Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU), SWAYAM, State Open Universities, online library or e-resources arranged by University Grants Commission (UGC) or other bodies. However, to minimise the information overburden of the learners, these materials are to be classified by levels and programmes of studies. From a long run perspective, the study materials for online learning must be pre-

designed and developed into the SIM format; and these are to be of quality ensured by academic bodies. As there may not be simultaneous presence of teachers while studying online, the study materials must be self-contained, self-guided, self-motivated, self-evaluatory and self-motivating. These study materials are also to be made available in various regional languages to suffice the local learners' need in long run. Each lesson should have an audio or video link founded on well planned lectures or/ and presentations.

The regulatory bodies in India have always adopted stringent policies for recognition of open distance learning and online education programmes. These bodies have also identified several disciplines, like medicine, engineering, nursing, law, agriculture etc where laboratory and practical experiments are compulsory, for not offering educational degree either through ODL or online mode. Now that we are living in ICT driven age, and several innovations and sophisticated methods are developed to provide online simulated learning, these bodies should think of giving approval for at least some theoretical components of these subjects to be taught online.

During the normal course of time, the experience, credit, certificate etc earned through online by the learners very often were not given due recognition or weightage. Many of these online curricula have remained standalone packages, without being integrated with the mainstream learning. Now for the fitness of the things, Central Board of Secondary Education, Council for the Indian School Certificate Examinations, various State Boards of Secondary Education, University Grants Commission and universities should think of framing policies for giving choice to the learners to opt maximum of 25 per cent of the total learning online from various other sources, if the learners so desire.

The online learning and the ODL system are posited between the ICT enabled learning environment on the one hand and time-tested wisdom of the regular higher educational institutions on the other. There is a pressing need of mindful and planned integration of the SIM with the MOOCs and other platforms along with the regular academic programmes of conventional universities to enhance the process of quality of mass higher education.

However, such integration must guard against the possibility of devaluation of degrees earned by the distance learners against all odds. Hence, the process of blending be well articulated at the policy level and be recognized by the regulatory bodies in uncertain term.

Each online programme should have an online coordinator to facilitate the learning process of the learners. These coordinators along with other co-coordinators should interact with learners in live time. They should plan innovative and technology enabled the methodology of 'continuous' and 'term /semester/year end' examinations within the overall direction of the academic regulatory bodies of the institute/university. There may be online home-based examination for objective type questions, or even technology regulated open book examination for descriptive type questions.

COVID-19 has prescribed a social situation of distancing as panacea for this ailment. The post corona world is widely going to be a technology driven world. The ICT revolution has already brought India in the threshold of knowledge society augmenting the culture of distance mode of working, socialising, shopping, marketing and learning. Learning is a continuous and long-term human investment. Notwithstanding the threat of pandemic and induced social distancing formal learning process should be continued; and the ICTs enable environment which is available with us should be made use of to the optimum level. As against these backdrops online and ODL learning in its well-articulated form must be integrated with regular and traditional educational arrangements of the country where learning will continue with the barriers of time, space and disaster and social distancing.

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The Pandemonics of COVID-19: Behavioural Insights

Siddharth Singh *

It's going to be hard, but hard does not mean impossible

The COVID-19 began in December, 2019 from Wuhan, China (Zhou et al., 2020) has affected almost the entire world leading to innumerable deaths along with social and economic crises. The immediate solution to the problem lies in total to partial lockdown, promoting hand wash, reducing physical contact and wearing masks in public places (Van Bavel et al., 2020). As the pharmaceutical developments around the world are taking place, the COVID-19 has promoted and taught various behavioural changes which need to be followed for a long time in future. Analysis of behavioural responses in case of COVID-19 is still new. COVID-19 transmission is dictated by human behaviour.

In Economics the standard theory is that the consumers and businesses act with pure rationality. These theories have been suspended for some time now as Behavioural Economics has come into prominence. We know that people have limited ability to calculate the cost and benefit analysis, and individual choices are not made in isolation, rather choices are hugely affected by the social networks. Emotive rationality¹ often overtakes logic in decisions, people don't necessarily act in their own self interest rather they may be altruistic, community actions become prominent at times of social stress and our choices are default, they are hard to shift. The strategy adopted by most nations in the fight for COVID-19 is partial to total lockdown with measures like quarantine, isolation, promoting use of hand sanitizers, masks and social distancing. The other set of measures include contact tracing, travel restrictions and curfews (Kraus and Kitayama, 2019). In the present paper, we shall discuss the behavioural changes during a pandemic and how it can be a guiding tool in our fight against pandemic.

Culture Provides Herd Immunity

Culture has been defined in numerous ways. Marx defines it as the sum of social values. Culture

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in sum total is values, customs and traditions which are transferred from one generation to another. These traditions, customs and values are inherent, permanent and long lasting. Culture is also a customary belief and group beliefs of a society. Hofstede defines culture as, "the collective mental programming of the human mind which distinguishes one group of people from another". The Hofstede's model of national culture has six dimensions, namely, individualism, power distance, masculinity, uncertainty avoidance, long term orientation and indulgence (Hofstede, Hofstede and Minkov, 2010).

Some responses to the pandemic of COVID-19 can be described as cultural with linkages to the values of independence and interdependence (van Bavel et al., 2020). The Asian societies remain committed to social norms and suppress personal desire (Shinobu Kitayama et al., 2018). The cultures which value collectivism show greater willingness to vaccination which in turn provides 'herd immunity' (Betsch, Böhm, Korn, & Holtmann, 2017). The Asians are regarded to have better 'herd immunity' due to pro-social cultural background. In independent communities there are more chances of interpersonal transmission of virus than interdependent communities (Van Bavel et al., 2020).

The number of less deaths and slow rate of transmission despite being a densely populated country is a surprise for the entire world. The Indian way of living has been associated with nature since its beginning. Culture, values, beliefs, and emotions etc have been an integral part of Indian way of living. It has passed the 'Test of Time'. Black Swan events like World Wars, struggle for independence have brought an imbalance in society. COVID-19 pandemic is one such event.

COVID-19 has made people think about the Indian way of living. The world has started acknowledging the right practices of the Indian civilization in this situation of pandemic. Israel's Prime Minister has particularly applauded the Indian way of greeting with 'Namaste'. It's normal practice in India, especially in Indian villages to take off shoes/slippers outside home and at the places of worship.

Ayurveda had promoted the use of ‘*Tulsi Chai*’, ‘*Turmeric Milk*’, ‘*Giloy*’, ginger-garlic-onion paste for meals, water kept in copper utensils are just some of the examples. Yoga has the best of providing with mental and physical fitness in the confines of a room. Indians have been voluntarily practicing many practices suggested during COVID-19 outbreak. No Indian finds it ‘Unnatural’. The culture has helped the Indians to contain the spread of the deadly virus.

Herd Behaviour

Is it irrational to go to the supermarket during the stress times and hoard?

The decision to visit the market and hoard might be a rational behaviour because people don’t like risk and people don’t like uncertainty. A famous German government transport campaign was ‘You are not stuck in traffic. You are traffic’. All those stuck in traffic and posting on social media are not stuck in traffic rather they are part of the traffic. Similarly, it’s with ‘Panic Buying’. The tragedy of commons best explains the phenomenon of ‘Panic Buying’. Suppose there is a common land for livestock grazing. The meadow has enough grass for 100 livestock. So if 10 farmers each keep 10 livestock the meadow would remain healthy and sustainable. Now if one farmer adds 11th sheep then he is paying cost for 10 sheep but he is earning surplus in the form of 11th sheep. This will be followed by the other 9 farmers leading to overgrazing of the meadow. The farmers end poorer than before. In economic sense this is perfectly rational. Social influence can act as powerful nudge--- firstly, by providing information and secondly, through peer pressure (Singh, 2019).

The COVID-19 has posed before us situations in which coordination and cooperation would help us in achieving the best outcomes. ‘What if my kids get ill?’ But of course everyone is thinking the exact same thing; that’s why there is no Calpol” (Tom, 2020). It’s in everyone’s interest to buy the required amount of Calpol leaving the shelves full. But people don’t trust others. This behaviour is exhibited more in times of pandemic and several instances of it are recorded around the world.

Gains and Losses

The prospect theory (Kahneman and Tversky 1979) gives us the best insight how humans try to balance the gains and losses under risk. Individuals are loss averters and the utility derived depends not

on the wealth possessed but on gains or losses with some reference point. In situations like COVID-19, the people are willing to pay insurance premiums which cover losses due to the pandemic. Further the people also become myopic loss averters (Benartzi and Thaler, 1993). The people develop myopic view regarding the investment and neglect the prospects of long term gains.

Checking continuously to the COVID-19 statistics (rise in number of cases, spread, and deaths) results in ‘anchoring⁵’ to the losses. In the context of COVID-19, the Social Distancing strategy is considered successful to flatten the curve. The combinations of behavioural responses to losses like ‘availability bias⁶’ and overweighing the events⁷ may result in irrational decisions by the people. The losses due to these irrational decisions like anxiety, fear, depression etc may be more dangerous than the virus itself (Gaurav, 2020).

Zero Sum Bias

Your mask protect me, my mask protects you

The bias of Zero Sum judges a situation as a Zero Sum game when actually it is a non-zero sum game. Zero sum game is a term from Game Theory (von Neumann and Morgenstern, 1944) where a gain for one person is loss for another person. The Zero Sum Bias is explained by an example of two children fighting over a larger section of apple. The two children are given an equal number of sections still the two children fight over the complaints of unfairness of the larger section being given to the other sibling. The father is not reminded of the fact that there are many more apples in the kitchen. (Meegan, 2010).

The COVID-19 situation has provoked people to hoard materials (sanitizers, masks, food items, medicines etc) even when it is not really needed. It is in the interest of the society to teach people not to hoard items. Other people’s access to preventive measures is for the benefit of the entire society. The pandemic situation is a non zero sum game where threat for anyone is threat for oneself also. However, the health care resources are a Zero Sum bias. In case of scarcity of ventilators the health care officers have to trade off between lives (van Bavel et al., 2020; Zhou et al., 2020). In decisions of life and death, the youngsters are preferred over the old (Goodwin

and Landy, 2014). The older (Elderly Heroes) in countries are acting selflessly and willingly giving up the use of ventilators in favour of younger people (Shenoy, 2020). The case of Suzanne Hoylaerts (90 years old) from Belgium and Italian priest Don Giuseppe Berardelli (72 years) selflessly giving their lives for the younger people of their country are the acts of highest utilitarian values. The success of policies depends on how much they cater to the local norms.

Threat Perception and Decision Making

Perception of risk plays an important role in decision making (Damien J. Williams & Jan M. Noyes, 2007). Just like animals humans also have innate characteristics designed to face ecological threat perceptions (LeDoux, 2012). The risk perception depends on the individual's assessment of the risk based on the available information (Williams, 2007). Emotions when mixed with human biases lead to rash or illogical decisions especially in situations like pandemic (Chow, 2020). The existence of epidemic situations makes human decisions based on gut feelings. The decisions so taken are more immediate and based on intuition. Threat perception promotes people to take actions aimed at reducing their risks (Sadique *et al.*, 2007). The COVID-19 has led to severe shock for not only the governments but also for the ordinary people.

The common belief is that people resort to 'panic buying' in situations like pandemic (City, 2002). Certain instances of these have been reported from around the world. People resort to hoarding of necessary and in a few cases of unnecessary items leading to scarcity for others. The most vulnerable are forced to act in the self-interest. However when studies are conducted to reveal the people's actions in crowd during situations like COVID-19 revealed an altogether different picture. In dangerous situations people help other people next door (City, 2002). Instances of such behaviour have been recorded during the pandemics, terror attacks and natural disasters. People showed higher standards of civility, helping the people next door before they help themselves (City, 2002). Human nature fundamentally is social and pandemics like COVID-19 strengthen the social structure in the society. People display altruist behaviour governed by social

norms (Booth, 2020). They normally cooperate rather than compete in pandemic situations (Dunn, Hofmann, Waters, & Witchel, 2011). The shared notion of being in disaster promotes a sense of shared identity and concern for others.

Policy Actions from the Behavioural Perspective

Nudges in the Wild

The government, people, businesses are using behavioural nudges to help mitigate the effects of the crisis. Nudges are basically a change of the environment to alter how the choices are made. The impact of COVID-19 has forced the people around the world to 'reprogram' themselves. Nature is in hibernation and in response to the pandemic the society is forced to be in hibernation. The people around the world have widely accepted the behavioural change during the times of the pandemic.

Reframing from Social Distancing to 'Distance Socializing'

According to Psychologists, people should be connected with other fellow beings, else a long term mental crisis is going to follow the pandemic caused by the virus. The scholars are of the view that Social Distancing is the wrong term to use. Rather 'Physical Distancing' should be the buzzword to contain the spread of COVID-19. Why use digital platforms only for teaching, meetings, and office works only? In the times of physical distancing the use of digital platforms should be promoted for connecting with the people. Digital 'hanging out' (White, 2020) should be the new norm. Activities like cooking the same food together, playing the same games can help in socializing in the changed conditions. The sad part of the social distancing is that old people who are most affected are the least familiar with the use of technology. Videos of Italians singing together in the balconies and the radio stations broadcasting it have been inspirational.

Choice Architecture

The Choice Architecture is really very interesting. Choice architecture is simple nudges to change the sequencing of the choices. An example signs of circles are put on the floor in front of shops directing people where to stand. It's Simple, it works, it's clean, it's clear.

Clear Messaging

Efficient and powerful messaging can be a key to appeal to follow social norms. Powerful messages from the health care workers can appeal strongly to the social norms which get amplified through social media. These are strong Nudges. Most people do not fully understand how the physical contact can amplify the spread of any virus, in particular the COVID-19 virus. Clear messaging is crucial to improving the understanding of risk. So, clear and simple info-graphics can help people to make better decisions.

Social Influencers

The social influencers like the politicians, superstars and sports person's messages have an impact on the people. The actions they perform are followed by people. They can provide an important nudge in changing the behavioural action of individuals for the benefit of the society.

Conclusion

A deeper understanding of the behavioural insights can help the society in developing powerful nudges. Powerful behavioural designs can control the spread of the virus and help in 'flattening the curve'. Libertarian Paternalism⁸ can help in directing the actions of the people. The need is to become 'Vocal for Local'. The development, the policies, the behavioural insights have to be programmed according to the needs and aspirations of the local people. Social commitment devices guiding behaviour making people to take pledge regarding cleaning hands, covering mouth and keeping distance are new paradigms. Reducing the spread of a transmittable disease is a 'Collective Action' problem. It is amalgamation and aggregate of millions and millions of decisions that we all are taking individually every day. The behavioural mechanisms helpful in controlling the spread of the virus 'requires cooperation at many levels', 'requires altruism', 'requires trust (Social Capital)', 'requires degree of self-sacrifice', and 'requires enforcement for non-compliance'. Social norms of behaviour will change. Many people are conditional co-operators. They are willing to cooperate, they want to cooperate, they see the social good but they are more likely to cooperate if they see others also cooperating.

Endnotes

- ¹ *The decision making process which is guided by 'Emotions'*
- ² *Basil Tea*; ³ *Golden Milk*; ⁴ *Tinospora Cordifolia*
- ⁵ *Anchoring refers to the assumed initial value which is used to arrive at a final answer. Different initial values (anchors) results in different final values.*
- ⁶ *Availability Bias is the immediate example which comes to a person's mind when thinking of an event.*
- ⁷ *According to the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB), in 2018, there were 1,34,516 suicides and 29,000 murders in India. Still the act of murder is considered is considered more heinous and people tend to be more afraid of it.*
- ⁸ *Libertarian Paternalism refers to minimally invasive policies aimed at directing individuals to reach a particular decision*

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BOOK REVIEW

A Connected View of Virat Kohli

Suresh Kumar Lau*

Neeraj Jha and Vidhanshu Kumar (2019). Virat ---The Making of a Champion. Hachette Book Publishing, India 184 p, Price Rs. 250/-, ISBN 978-93-88322-25-6

From *gully* cricket junior team to the Ranji Trophy and Indian Team! – this book is an absorbing and action-packed story of the Cricketer who never gives up!. It is a well written non-fiction biographical wrap-up and honour to one of the finest cricketers, Virat Kohli. Narratives and quotes from innumerable people close to Virat which include his family members, mentors, close friends, colleagues and international cricket stars, makes it fascinating to read.

Neeraj and Vidhanshu have tried to view the story of Indian skipper unfolding in Virat. The book recounts Kohli's speedy rise from a kid who just desired to play cricket to the champion who broke many records and achieved glamorous awards such as Arjuna Award(2013), Rajiv Gandhi Khel Ratna Award (2018) and Padma Shri (2017) through his super fine performance.

Virat has made an extraordinary contribution to world of Cricket. According to Wisden India Almanac 2018, edited by Suresh Menon and published by Bloomsbury, London, the year 2018 has trended Virat Kohli and his team as 'Cricketer of the Year'. Cricket requires high fitness levels. He enforced fitness rules in the team in his captaincy and ensured strict implementation of them in the Yo-Yo Test in 2017 across all formats, a couple months after he took over as the captain. He made success of this test compulsory for each and every player to retain his place in the team. Virat Kohli, generally,

puts up social media videos of his workout session in the gym.

Captain Virat Kohli practices a kind of leadership founded on aggression and fitness. Under his leadership, Indian cricketers have taken serious fielding to a whole new level of achievement.

A majestic brand ambassador, Virat Kohli is the sole Indian in the Forbes List 2018 of the world's highest paid athletes. Moreover, he is ranked 100th with estimated annual earning of \$25 million (approximate Rs. 872 crores).

The book is thus an engaging in-depth biography of Indian favourite and shining cricket star from childhood to the present position. Presentation is lucid, language simple and information rich. Eighteen chapters make up the 184 page book, which most of the cricket fans will probably read in one spell.

The book is rich in facts and interesting stories. An indispensable book of immense value, it provides a fund of information. No sports lover can afford to miss this book. The book is strongly recommended for the libraries of schools, colleges and universities

Neeraj and Vidhanshu are two of the leading journalists in India covering on sports. Brought together in a single volume, their book offers a connected view of Virat Kohli which is beyond doubt an immensely important contribution to the sports. □

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Webinar on Access to Justice

A Webinar on 'Access to Justice' was organized by the School of Law, Sharda University, recently. Justice Dipak Misra, Former Chief Justice of India was the Chief Guest of the occasion. More than three hundred academicians, students and lawyers participated in the interaction with Justice Dipak Misra. In his address Justice Misra said, "Access to Justice is queen of all the virtues. Law and Courts in India have taken progressive steps to achieve access to justice as it remains a continuous challenge. Although justice delivery system exists but important additions are required to make it more effective. It is important that lawyers should be available to the common man in the police stations itself to have easy accessibility." Justice Misra further highlighted the need of technology in providing access to Justice. Delhi High Court is completely functional as e-court and justice is accessible to all with ease. In the wake of COVID-19 outbreak, the Supreme Court has directed all district courts across India to switch to video proceedings, he said. The Supreme Court and High Courts are already conducting proceedings via Video Conferencing. He also explained that people should write letters to Chief Justice and Courts to take *suo-moto* action, which only expands the scope of access to justice.

Mr Y K Gupta, Pro Chancellor, Sharda University highlighted the importance of such interactive webinars for the benefit of faculty and students. "We are ensuring seamless online classes during lockdown period and helping society in the war against Corona", he said. Mr Gupta further informed that, "Sharda Hospital has set up a 100-bed isolation ward to take care of corona patients and CSE Students have developed robots to help government hospital."

Prof. Sibaram Khara, Vice Chancellor appreciated the efforts of School of Law in organizing such contemporary Webinars. Dr. Pradeep Kulshrestha, Dean, School of Law, Sharda University said, "The Preamble of the Constitution declares Social, Economic and Political Justice as the essential feature of the Indian Constitution. Many Path breaking steps like Public Interest Litigation (PIL) have gone a long way in providing justice to all, but there is a lot more to be achieved and we need to fill the gaps

in the system." He further added, "eminent speakers like Justice Misra inspire students to face challenges by sharing their life experiences."

Workshop on Harmonization and Empowerment for Better Social Service

A five-day Workshop on 'Harmonization and Empowerment for Better Social Service' was organized by the National Service Scheme Unit, Maulana Azad National Institute of Technology, Bhopal to commemorate the Diamond Jubilee Celebrations, recently. The workshop was organized to awaken the spirit of communal harmony, social service, patriotism and universal brotherhood, among the students.

The NSS Unit Coordinator, Dr. Meena Agrawal said, "Work done for oneself gives happiness, but work done for others gives real happiness with contentment and everyone is uplifted in mutual cooperation." Dr. Agrawal called upon all present that existence has blessed us so much that we of course wish to distribute its offerings as a service to our society. Dr. H L Tiwari, Associate Professor, explained way to personality building through the wooden blocks examples. Dr. Surabhi Mehrotra also supported in organizing the workshop. An Extempore Speech Competition on 'Role of Students in Social Welfare: India of My Dreams' was also kept for brain storming and orientation of the students. A Paragraph Writing competition had been organized on topic leadership Qualities and Our Ideal Leaders. All 42 students participated in it.

Prof. Dr. Chaitanya Agrawal, Head, Department of Computer, Makhanlal Chaturvedi University, Bhopal taught the skills of Mind Management to the students through the specific technique of Neuro Linguistic Programming. Ms. Trisha Kaushik, Senior Engineer, BHEL, discussed the topic of how to develop one's own personality through Hypnotherapy. In his lecture, Dr. Ankush Sharma, Head, Management Department, Jagran Lakecity University, Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh gave a detailed dimension to the leadership, body language and ethics through the very beautiful examples of the cricket and corporate sector. Mr. Akshay Patra, Computer Engineers from Jaipur, Mr. Sundar Das and Mr. Anant Das gave

ways to guide the mind towards real happiness in life through universal and scientific approach. Dr. Meena Agarwal delivered lectures on IQ-EQ-SQ, Intelligence, Emotional and Spiritual Quotients and shared the mantra of Integral Life Skills for Success. The Chairman of the workshop was Dean, Student Welfare Doctor J L Bhagoria, and Co-chairman was Dr. R K Mandloi. Dr. N S Raghuvanshi, Director of the Institute graced the occasion. Workshop Chairman, Dr. J L Bhagoria said that more such empowerment programs should be organized from time to time to prepare students for social service and country service.

Webinar on Climate Action

A Webinar on 'Climate Action' was organized by the Consumer Unity and Trust Society (CUTS) International, Jaipur, Rajasthan to commemorate the 50th Anniversary of 'Earth Day' on April 22, 2020. Earth day is an annual event celebrated around the world to demonstrate the support for environmental protection. Around the world, its usual celebrations included activities such as the Great Global Cleanup, Citizen Science, Advocacy, Education, and Art. Due to the Corona Virus outbreak turned pandemic, many of the planned activities were moved online. Though 52 people registered for the Webinar, it was attended by 32 participants mainly representatives of civil society organisations across the country and CUTS staff from India, Lusaka, and Nairobi.

The Webinar commenced with the opening remarks by Mr. George Cheriyan, Director, CUTS International. He said that this year is the 50th Anniversary of Earth Day and the theme for 2020, is 'Climate Action'. The first Earth Day was held on April 22, 1970, to raise awareness about mankind's role in protecting our natural world. On that day, about 20 million Americans, which was about 10 per cent of the then population of the US, ventured outdoors and protested in favor of a more eco-conscious society. He said that many people were not even aware of some serious environmental issues, from air pollution to toxic dumps to pesticides to loss of wilderness. On-call from a few activists, Earth Day started as more of a political movement, though today it has become a popular day for many communities to gather together and discuss environmental issues, clean up litter, plant trees, or simply reflect on the beauty of nature, *etc.* He further said that in 2020, about one billion people are expected to observe the Earth Day, mainly sitting at home. Taking into consideration the enormous

challenges, and also the vast opportunities, action on climate change has been chosen as the theme for the 50th anniversary. Climate action represents the biggest challenge to the future of humanity and the life-support systems that make our world habitable. He highlighted Goal-13 of Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) which is Climate Action. He mentioned the targets of Goal 13, to be achieved by 2030 include: stepped up efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions; improved education, awareness, human and institutional capacity for mitigation, adaptation, impact reduction, and early warning; strengthen resilience and adaptive capability.

Mr. Cheriyan introduced the speakers. Ms. Sara Nilsson, Programme Manager, Swedish Society for Nature Conservation, Stockholm focused on the key lessons learnt in the context of Pandemic about Climate Change and how these experiences can be used to shape the future of the People and Plant. She started her speech by quoting the example of Greta Thunberg, a 16-year-old environmental activist. Greta at the age 15 started spending her school days outside the Swedish Parliament to call for stronger action on climate change by holding up a sign reading School strike for climate. Soon, other students engaged in similar protests in their communities.

Ms Sara further spoke about Green Action Week and its theme Sharing Community for 2020. Green Action Week is a global campaign to promote sustainable consumption and the theme since 2018 has been 'Sharing Community'. She also drew the linkage between sustainable consumption and the sharing economy. She highlighted the key learning about climate change and experiences shaping the future of humankind and the planet during the COVID-19 pandemic. Ms Naomi Scott-Mearns, Sustainable Consumption Manager, Consumers International, London, and Co-lead of One Planet Network spoke about the linkage between climate action and sustainable consumption. She highlighted the Oslo Symposium in 1994 which proposed a working definition of sustainable consumption as "the use of goods and services that respond to basic needs and bring a better quality of life while minimising the use of natural resources, toxic materials and emissions of waste and pollutants over the life cycle, so as not to jeopardize the needs of future generations." She further explained SDG-12 Sustainable Consumption and Production. Sustainable consumption is a systematic change which is delinked economic growth from environmental damages. She discussed

international rules and regulations regarding sustainable consumption and highlighted some of the global practices to reduce carbon footprints. Reducing meat consumption and air travel, increasing uses of energy-efficient products are some of the examples which will be very effective in addressing climate change.

Mr. Rashid S Kaukab, Executive Director, CUTS International, Geneva explained the role of trade and agreements about climate action. He highlighted CUTS Geneva intervention on agriculture, climate change in East African communities with help of CUTS Nairobi. He highlighted that trade and trade agreements can be part of both problem and problem-solving. Trade is an efficient allocation of resources. The transfer of technology should be further enhanced. He also emphasised the need for advocacy and research work on climate action for concrete action. There is a need among different stakeholders i.e. policymakers, civil society, and think tanks to work on the harmonious and synergetic way.

Mr. Clement Onyango, Director, CUTS International, Nairobi explained Initiatives,

challenges, and the need for budget allocation for climate action. He highlighted that there are large number of environmental laws and bodies in the history of earth but they are not sufficient to deal with climate change. There is a need for holistic approach towards climate change and action. Civil society should unbundle and demystify the greenhouse gases and climate change. There should be a curriculum on sustainable consumption in primary and secondary education.

Mr. Cheriyan summarized the session and the open floor for discussion. In the discussion, various queries were raised which were suitably answered. Mr. Ujjwal Kumar, Mr. Bipul Chatterjee, and Mr. Madhu Sudan Sharma asked various relevant questions. While responding to one of the questions about policies on sustainable consumption and practices (SCP), Naomi replied that the United Nations (UN) member states already have a policy on SCP. India is one of them where recently policy is made for single-use plastic. Mr Cheriyan summed up the discussions and concluded the webinar by thanking the speakers and the participants. □

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