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IMPACT OF NATIONAL EDUCATION POLICY 2020 ON OPEN & DISTANCE EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS - A HOLISTIC VIEW

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ABSTRACT

The National Education Policy 2020 aims to transform India into vibrant knowledge society and global knowledge superpower by making both school and college education more holistic, flexible multidisciplinary, suited to 21st Century needs and aimed at bringing out the unique capabilities of each student. The NEP 2020 aims to increase to Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) in higher education from 26.3% (2018) to 50% by 2035. Growth will be in both public and private institutions, with a strong emphasis on developing a large number of outstanding public institutions. The main aim is enhancing the quality of higher education institutions to make at par with the global standards by providing flexible education system with multidisciplinary approach, improving the student's entrepreneurial skills, improving faculty skills etc.,

The present study is focussed on the impact of NEP 2020 on open & distance education in India. The opportunities and challenges faced by these institutions are discussed in this paper.

Keywords: National Education Policy 2020, Higher Education Institutions, Open & Distance Education, Online & Digital Learning

INTRODUCTION

The open and distance education system is a modern system of non-formal education. Open and distance education system provides autonomy to learn at will, choose the subjects of one's choice, economically viable mode, appear examinations without the stress and in a flexible environment. The success of distance education system is based on a three way affiliation between the Schools, Regional Centres and Study Centres in the University. At the same time, the success of distance education learning is based on a three way affiliation between the student, academic counsellors and technology.

The main aim of NEP 2020 is enhancing the quality of higher education institutions to make at par with the global standards by providing flexible education system with multidisciplinary approach, improving the student's entrepreneurial skills, improving faculty skills etc., The impact of National Education Policy 2020 on status of open & distance education / online education is discussed below.

RESEARCH PROBLEM

To implement the NEP 2020, Higher Education Institutions need to work on major challenges. Whether open & distance education institutions are able to implement NEP 2020 successfully? What are the pros & cons of these reforms?

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study is analytical and comprises secondary data which is collected from books and periodicals, journals, Websites of DEC, IGNOU, UCG, newspapers, personal interviews with the learners and academic counsellors of ODL system and interaction amongst intellectuals.

OBJECTIVES

1. To study the key features of NEP 2020 with respect to Higher Education Institutions
2. To discuss the status & opportunities available to Open & Distance education institutions
3. To discuss the challenges to be faced by Open & Distance education institutions

EVOLUTION OF NEP

On May 2016, "Committee for Evolution of the New Education Policy" under the Chairmanship of Late Shri TSR Subramanian, Former Cabinet Secretary, submitted its report. Based on this, the Ministry prepared 'Some Inputs for the Draft National Education Policy 2016'. In June 2017 a 'Committee for the Draft National Education Policy' was constituted under the Chairmanship of eminent scientist Padma Vibhushan, Dr K Kasturirangan, which submitted the Draft National Educational Policy, 2019 to the Honorable Human Resource Development Minister on 31st May 2019. The draft National Education Policy 2019 was uploaded on MHRD's website and at 'MyGov Innovate' portal eliciting view / suggestions / comments of stakeholders including public.

KEY FEATURES OF NEP 2020

Some of the key features / major reforms of NEP 2020 with regards to higher education are discussed below.

1. The Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD) is renamed as Ministry of Education (MOE), which is a original name of Ministry.
2. The distinct functions of regulation, accreditation, funding, and academic standard setting will be monitored by Higher Education Commission of India (HECI) through National Higher Education Regulatory Council (NHERC), National Accreditation Council (NAC), Higher Education Grants Council (HEGC), General Education Council (GEC).
3. Establishment of National Research Foundation (NRF) to catalyse and expand research and innovation across the country , to enable a culture of research to permeate through our Universities.
4. The professional councils, such as the Indian Council for Agricultural Research (ICAR), Veterinary Council of India (VCI) National Council for Teacher Education (NCTE) , Council of Architecture (CoA), National Council for Vocational Education and Training (NCVT) etc., will act as Professional Standard Setting Bodies (PSSBs).
5. The National Educational Technology Forum (NETF) will be created to provide a platform for the free exchange of virtual knowledge.
6. An Academic Bank of Credit (ABC) shall be established which would digitally store the academic credits earned from various recognised HEIs so that the degrees from an HEI can be awarded taking into account credits earned.
7. Open and distance learning will be expanded, there by playing a significant role in increasing the Gross Enrolment Ratio to 50%. Measure such as online courses and digital repositories, funding for research, improved student services, credit-based recognition of MOOCs etc., will be taken to ensure it is at par with the highest quality in-class programmes.
8. A dedicated unit for the purpose of orchestrating the building of digital infrastructure, digital content and capacity building will be created in the MHRD to look after the e-education needs of both school and higher education.
9. The higher education institutions will offer vocational education either on their own or in partnership with industry and NGOs. The possibility of offering vocational courses through ODL mode will also be explored. MHRD will constitute a National Committee for the Integration of Vocational Education (NCIVE) consisting of experts in vocational education and representatives from across Ministries, in collaboration with Industry, to oversee this effort. By 2025, at least 50% of learners through the school and higher education system shall have exposure to vocational education.
10. Stand-alone agricultural universities, legal universities, health science universities, technical universities and stand-alone institutions in other fields, shall aim to become multidisciplinary institutions offering holistic and multidisciplinary education. By 2040, all higher education institutions (HEIs) shall aim to become multidisciplinary institutions, each of which will aim to have 3,000 or more students.
11. More HEIs and more programmes in higher education, will use the mother tongue / local language as a medium of instruction , and/or offer programmes bilingually.
12. Indian Institute of Translation and Interpretation (IITI) will be established. The IITI shall also make extensive use of technology to aid in its translation and interpretation efforts.
13. The HEIs will focus on research and innovation by setting up start-up incubation centres, technology development centres, greater industry academic linkages and interdisciplinary research including humanities and social sciences.
14. Institutions will have the option to run Open Distance Learning (ODL) and online Programmes, provided they are accredited to do so.
15. Opportunities for private HEIs to obtain research funding through peer reviewed funding process.
16. The undergraduate degree will be of either 3 or 4-year duration, with multiple exit options within this period, with appropriate certifications- a certificate after completing 1 year in a discipline or field including

vocational and professional areas, or a diploma after 2 years of study, or a Bachelor's degree after a 3-year programme.

17. A Teacher need to excel in teaching, research, academic administration & Management. Quality of Teacher is paramount importance in higher education.
18. There will be a shift from summative assessment to regular and formative assessment, which is more competency-based, promotes learning and development, and tests higher-order skills, such as analysis, critical thinking, and conceptual clarity.
19. All institutions and faculty will have the autonomy to innovate on matters of curriculum, pedagogy, and assessment within a broad framework of higher education qualifications that ensures consistency across institutions and programmes and across the ODL, online, and the traditional 'in-class' modes. This will facilitate the launch of skill-oriented / job-oriented Programmes as per the requirement of industry.
20. All fees and charges set by private HEIs will be transparently and fully disclosed and there shall be no arbitrary increases in these fees/charges during the period of enrolment of any student. The fees determining mechanism will ensure reasonable recovery of cost while ensuring that HEIs discharge their social obligations.

In this context, the present status & opportunities of open & distance education institutions in the light of NEP 2020 are discussed below.

Status & Opportunities for Open & Distance Education Institutions:

As per AISHE 2018 report, "In addition to 1 Central Open University, 14 State Open Universities and 1 State Private Open University, there are 110 Dual mode Universities, which offer education through distance mode". "Distance enrolment constitutes about 10.62% of the total enrolment in higher education".

IGNOU is only one Central University at national level offering distance education in India and remaining are the State level Open Universities namely, Dr BR Ambedkar Open university, Vardhaman Mahaveer Open University, Nalanda Open University, Yashwantrao Chavan Maharashtra Open University, Madhya Pradesh Bhoj Open University, Dr Babasaheb Ambedkar Open University, Karnataka State Open University, Netaji Subhas Open University, UP Rajarshi Tandon Open University, Tamil Nadu Open University, Pt. Sudar Lal Sharma Open University, Uttarakhand Open University, Krishna Kanta Handiqui State Open University are offering distance education in India.

As per the UGC Territorial Jurisdiction 2013, all the activities of Higher Education Institutions including admission, counselling sessions, contact programmes, programme delivery and examinations are strictly conducted within the territorial jurisdiction. Hence, State Open Universities are restricted to establish study centre at State Level and the Central University is permitted to establish the study centers at national level.

As per 'NSS Report 585, Household Social Consumption on Education in India', Higher Education Students spends good amount (18.96%) on buying the text books. Rural students are spending more than Urban students in buying the text Books. The Central & other State Open Universities are providing the standard study material (both digital & hard copy) free of cost to the learners.

In general, the study material is well designed as per the requirements of both ODL system and learner and contains more of self-study and activity based learning. The learners may choose either printed version or digital version of study material as per their convenience.

Distance education offers modular course structure, learner can choose subject in each term as per qualifying credits. Even the study material is available by online, the learner can choose the Courses (subjects) after going through the contents carefully.

Under distance education, attending the counselling sessions are not mandatory for theoretical courses, hence the learner may continue studies by engaging other works as per their convenience. Distance education facilitates the earning while learning.

The Open Universities offers distance education at affordable fees, which is accessible to backward area, middle class and below middle-class categories.

So, both the Distance Education Learners & Online learners have academic freedom & autonomy under ODL system. A learner can manage the time in most efficient way, through distance education/ online learning.

The implementation of NEP facilitates the following additional features,

As per NEP 2020, technology is an integral part of teaching & learning. The University need to invest on digital learning management systems, blended learning system, mobile reading applications, tools for teachers to create digital content, self-directed learning content for effective teaching, assessment, monitoring and other support services by online.

The quality of teacher is paramount importance in higher education. To meet the system requirements, a Teacher need to excel in teaching, research, academic administration & Management.

The Academic Bank of Credit (ABC) facilitate the learner to migrate from one HEI to another HEI by carrying the digitally stored academic credits and may complete the Programme in traditional education system or ODL system etc.,

All the higher education institutions will offer vocational education either on their own or in partnership with industry and NGOs, hence open universities have to develop new vocational Programmes with academic collaboration of Ministry of Labour & Employment, Government of India, other Government sectors & other corporate sector.

As per NEP 2020, all programmes, courses, curricula, and pedagogy across subjects, including those in-class, online, and in ODL modes as well as student support will aim to achieve global standards of quality. So, accreditation facilitates value to the open & distance education institution's reputation.

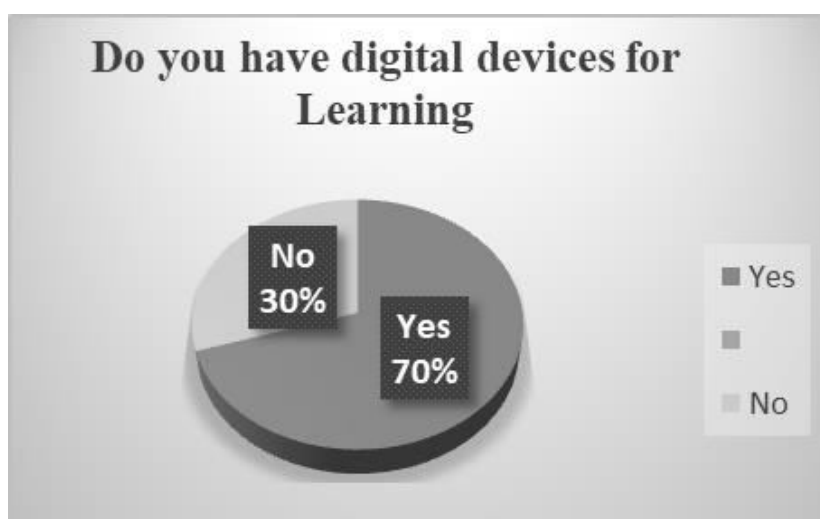
SURVEY

An online survey was conducted from 31st March 2020 to 16th May 2020 through Google form's to assess the online learning attitude of the distance education learners of bachelor degree and master degree programmes admitted for January 2020 session. The survey is also focussed on feedback /suggestions to provide the effective learner support services during lockdown period. The survey form is sent by email to 1412 learners. Among them around 10% emails are bounced. Total 214 learners are responded for the survey. Hence, out of 1271 (1412 – 141), only 16.83% students have responded for online survey. Few of the findings are stated below.

1. Among the total respondants,70% are having digital devices and 30% are not having

Learners having the digital devices

Having the Computers/ laptop/ smart phone etc.,	No of responses
Yes	150
No	64
Total	214



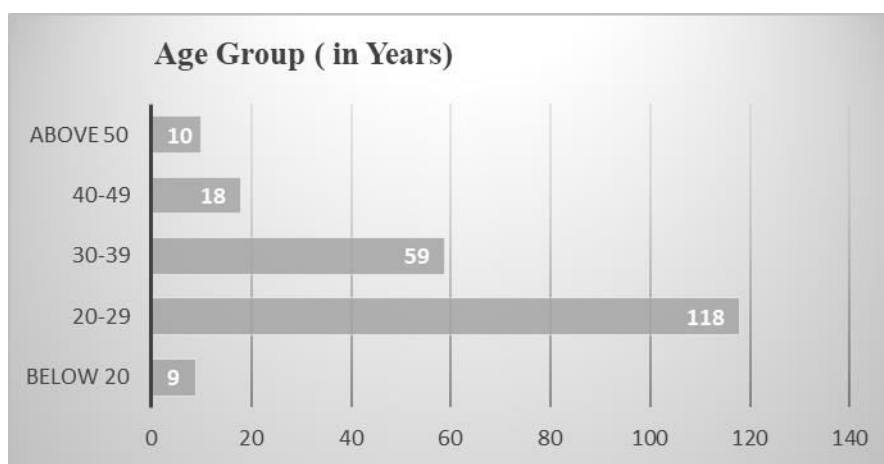
2. Among the total respondants,65.89% are working and 34.11% are not working

Are you working	No of responses
Yes	141
No	73
Total	214



3. Among the total respondents, the distance education learners are from all the age groups i.e. below 20 - above 50years.

Age Group	Total No.
Below 20	09
20-29	118
30-39	59
40-49	18
Above 50	10
Total	214



CHALLENGES

Most of the learners of Central & State Open Universities belongs to middle class / below middle class/ rural areas. Learning skills differs based on geographical background and learning disabilities. How far they adoptable to digital changes in the present education system is the biggest challenge of open universities. The following challenges are to be faced by open & distance education universities to implement many aspects of NEP 2020.

1. Open Universities need to invest huge amount to build up digital infrastructure to strengthen the educational applications, platforms and resources based on distance learning needs.
2. The cost of capacity building /training the teachers/ academics / academic counsellors at study centres will also require time, energy, and resources for which the University has to allocate proper resources and infrastructure.
3. It is also noticed that, the learners of rural and backward areas are not well connected with digital services. Without the support of digital infrastructure, the learner cannot access the online student support services of University.

4. The Modular Course system is confusing for rural/ backward area learners. It is observed that, the students are not opting the correct course or opting the same course in both semesters.
5. The ODL learner you need to develop the qualities namely, positive thinking, self-motivation, Self-learning and self-evaluation, planning of academic activities, art of drafting emails and timely homework etc. Unless the learner is determined, difficult to cope up due to lack of mentoring.
6. Learners of the age group of 35+ rural and backward area are non-adoptive to technological changes in their distance learning. The learner can access online counselling from any place through any device. But effective participation is depending on the quality of the device, strong internet connection and bandwidth etc., Due to lack of internet connectivity/ poor connectivity, they may not be able to attend the required online counselling sessions. At the same time, the faculty / academic counsellors also requires the above mentioned facilities for effective online teaching.
7. The dual mode Higher Education Institutions are permitted to offer Programmes in Open and Distance Learning mode and/or Online mode, hence Central & State Open Universities may face severe competition from the dual mode universities, who are imparting ODL/Online learning in regional language and offering ODL/online certificate / diploma programmes as an add-on programme for their regular students along with their bachelor/master degree.
8. As restriction of territorial jurisdiction is not applicable for Online learning, hence open & distance learning institutions may face high competitions from HEIs from both public and private sector
9. The State Open Universities offer the distance, education programmes in regional language. In case of Central University IGNOU, the University offers distance education programmes in English & Hindi languages. This is the big challenge for IGNOU to enhance enrolments in rural /backward areas of different States, where people are well-versed in regional languages etc.,

CONCLUSION

So, the implementation of National Education Policy 2020 enhances the overall quality of Open & distance higher education institutions and which may lead to develop the younger generation as job creators and job seekers both. At the same time, implementation of NEP 2020 is big challenge for higher education institutions, which requires huge investment on digital infrastructure, revamping of curriculum and training & development of faculty & mentors in a cost effective way. Hence, review and strategic planning of present education system is the need of the hour.

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EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT-A KEY FACTOR FOR EMPLOYEE RETENTION IN MODERN MANAGEMENT

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ABSTRACT

Success stories of flourishing business organizations have been scripted on contributions made by engaged employees. Engaged employees profoundly express themselves physically, cognitively and emotionally during their role performances in the organization. They act as drivers of financial and market success. They give stellar performances by trying to stretch themselves and continuously striving to outperform and set new standards of excellence. Owing to this, enhancing employee engagement has gained momentum in business organizations across the globe. Employees are engaged when organizations have healthy work culture and communication practices, where they can get platforms to express their concerns and opportunities to grow and develop their potential. Today competitors can emulate the performance of the service provided but they cannot replicate the vigor, dedication and absorption of their employees at the place of work.

Employee retention refers to the various policies and practices which let the employees stick to an organization for a longer period of time. Every organization invests time and money to groom a new joiner, make him a corporate ready material and bring him at par with the existing employees. The organization is completely at loss when the employees leave their job once they are fully trained. Employee retention takes into account the various measures taken so that an individual stays in an organization for the maximum period of time.

Keywords: Employee Engagement, Employee Retention, Organizational culture, Productivity, Employee safety, Employee Psychology

1. INTRODUCTION

An engaged employee is a person who is fully involved in, and enthusiastic about, his or her work. In his book, *Getting Engaged: The New Workplace Loyalty*, author Tim Rutledge explains that truly engaged employees are attracted to, and inspired by, their work (“I want to do this”), committed (“I am dedicated to the success of what I am doing”), and fascinated (“I love what I am doing”). Engaged employees care about the future of the company and are willing to invest the discretionary effort – exceeding duty’s call – to see that the organization succeeds. In his book, Rutledge urged managers to implement retention plans so that they could keep their top talent. The need to do so is supported by a 1998 McKinsey & Co. study entitled *The War for Talent* that reported that a shortage of skilled employees was an emerging trend. Today, there is widespread agreement among academics and practitioners that engaged employees are those who are emotionally connected to the organization and cognitively vigilant.

Employee engagement is a workplace approach designed to ensure that employees are committed to their organization’s goals and values, motivated to contribute to organizational success, and are able at the same time to enhance their own sense of well-being.

“This is about how we create the conditions in which employees offer more of their capability and potential.” – David Macleod

There are differences between attitude, behavior and outcomes in terms of engagement. An employee might feel pride and loyalty (attitude); be a great advocate of their company to clients, or go the extra mile to finish a piece of work (behavior). Outcomes may include lower accident rates, higher productivity, fewer conflicts, more innovation, lower numbers leaving and reduced sickness rates. But we believe all three – attitudes, behaviors and outcomes – are part of the engagement story. There is a virtuous circle when the pre-conditions of engagement are met when these three aspects of engagement trigger and reinforce one another.

Engaged organizations have strong and authentic values, with clear evidence of trust and fairness based on mutual respect, where two way promises and commitments between employers and staff – are understood, and are fulfilled.

Although improved performance and productivity is at the heart of engagement, it cannot be achieved by a mechanistic approach which tries to extract discretionary effort by manipulating employees’ commitment and emotions. Employees see through such attempts very quickly; they lead instead to cynicism and disillusionment. By contrast, engaged employees freely and willingly give discretionary effort, not as an ‘add on’, but as an integral part of their daily activity at work. But is employee engagement something new, or simply old wine

(long-standing management approaches) in new (fashionable management-speak) bottles? Is it just the latest management fad? We believe that while it does have clear overlaps with analytical antecedents such as commitment, 'organizational citizenship behavior', job involvement and job satisfaction, there are also crucial differences.

In particular, engagement is two way: organizations must work to engage the employee, who in turn has a choice about the level of engagement to offer the employer. Each reinforces the other.

An engaged employee experiences a blend of job satisfaction, organizational commitment, job involvement and feelings of empowerment. It is a concept that is greater than the sum of its parts. Despite there being some debate about the precise meaning of employee engagement there are three things we know about it: it is measurable; it can be correlated with performance; and it varies from poor to great. Most importantly employers can do a great deal to impact on people's level of engagement. That is what makes it so important, as a tool for business success.

1.1. The Four Enablers of Engagement

Although there is no 'one size fits all' approach and no master model for successful employee engagement there were four common themes that emerged from the extensive research captured in the Engaging for Success report to government (also known as the MacLeod Report). Taken together, they include many of the key elements that go to make successful employee engagement.

These four enablers of engagement have proved to be useful lenses which can help organizations assess the effectiveness of their approaches.

- Visible, empowering leadership providing a **strong strategic narrative** about the organization, where it's come from and where it's going.
- **Engaging managers** who focus their people and give them scope, treat their people as individuals and coach and stretch their people.
- There is **employee voice** throughout the organizations, for reinforcing and challenging views, between functions and externally, employees are seen as central to the solution.

2. THE TEN C'S OF EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT

How can leaders engage employees' heads, hearts, and hands? The literature offers several avenues for action; we summarize these as the Ten C's of employee engagement.

2.1. Connect:

Leaders must show that they value employees. In *First, Break All the Rules*, Marcus Buckingham and Curt Coffman argue that managers trump companies. Employee-focused initiatives such as profit sharing and implementing work-life balance initiatives are important. However, if employees' relationship with their managers is fractured, then no amount of perks will persuade employees to perform at top levels. Employee engagement is a direct reflection of how employees feel about their relationship with the boss. Employees look at whether organizations and their leader walk the talk when they proclaim that, "Our employees are our most valuable asset."

One anecdote illustrates the Connect dimension well. In November 2003, the CEO of WestJet Airlines, Clive Beddoe, was invited to give a presentation to the Canadian Club of London. Beddoe showed up late, a few minutes before he was to deliver his speech. He had met with WestJet employees at the London Airport and had taken a few minutes to explain the corporate strategy and some new initiatives to them. He also answered employees' questions. To paraphrase Beddoe, "We had a great discussion that took a bit longer than I had anticipated." Beddoe's actions showed that he cares about the employees. The employees, sensing that he is sincere, care about Beddoe and the organization; they "reward" his behavior with engagement.

2.2. Career: Leaders should provide challenging and meaningful work with opportunities for career advancement. Most people want to do new things in their job. For example, do organizations provide job rotation for their top talent? Are people assigned stretch goals? Do leaders hold people accountable for progress? Are jobs enriched in duties and responsibilities? Good leaders challenge employees; but at the same time, they must instill the confidence that the challenges can be met. Not giving people the knowledge and tools to be successful is unethical and de-motivating; it is also likely to lead to stress, frustration, and, ultimately, lack of engagement. In her book *Confidence: How Winning Streaks and Losing Streaks Begin and End*, Rosabeth Moss Kanter explains that confidence is based on three cornerstones: accountability, collaboration, and initiative.

2.3. Clarity: Leaders must communicate a clear vision. People want to understand the vision that senior leadership has for the organization, and the goals that leaders or departmental heads have for the division, unit, or team. Success in life and organizations is, to a great extent, determined by how clear individuals are about their goals and what they really want to achieve. In sum, employees need to understand what the organization's goals are, why they are important, and how the goals can best be attained. Clarity about what the organization stands for, what it wants to achieve, and how people can contribute to the organization's success is not always evident. Consider, for example, what Jack Stack, CEO of SRC Holdings Corp., wrote about the importance of teaching the basics of business: The most crippling problem in American business is sheer ignorance about how business works. What we see is a whole mess of people going to a baseball game and nobody is telling them what the rules are. That baseball game is business. People try to steal from first base to second base, but they don't even know how that fits into the big picture. What we try to do is break down business in such a way that employees realize that in order to win the World Series, you've got to steal x number of bases, hit y number of RBIs and have the pitchers pitch z number of innings. And if you put all these variables together, you can really attain your hopes and dreams ... don't use information to intimidate, control or manipulate people. Use it to teach people how to work together to achieve common goals and thereby gain control over their lives.

2.4. Convey: Leaders clarify their expectations about employees and provide feedback on their functioning in the organization. Good leaders establish processes and procedures that help people master important tasks and facilitate goal achievement. There is a great anecdote about the legendary UCLA basketball coach, John Wooden. He showed how important feedback – positive and constructive – is in the pursuit of greatness. Among the secrets of his phenomenal success was that he kept detailed diaries on each of his players. He kept track of small improvements he felt the players could make and did make.

At the end of each practice, he would share his thoughts with the players. The lesson here is that good leader works daily to improve the skills of their people and create small wins that help the team, unit, or organization perform at its best.

2.5. Congratulate: Business leaders can learn a great deal from Wooden's approach. Surveys show that, over and over, employees feel that they receive immediate feedback when their performance is poor, or below expectations. These same employees also report that praise and recognition for strong performance is much less common. Exceptional leaders give recognition, and they do so a lot; they coach and convey.

2.6. Contribute: People want to know that their input matters and that they are contributing to the organization's success in a meaningful way. This might be easy to articulate in settings such as hospitals and educational institutions. But what about, say the retail industry? Sears Roebuck & Co. started a turnaround in 1992. Part of the turnaround plan was the development of a set of measures – known as Total Performance Indicators – which gauged how well Sears was doing with its employees, customers, and investors. The implementation of the measurement system led to three startling conclusions. First, an employee understands of the connection between her work – as operationalized by specific job-relevant behaviors – and the strategic objectives of the company had a positive impact on job performance. Second, an employee's attitude towards the job and the company had the greatest impact on loyalty and customer service than all the other employee factors combined. Third, improvements in employee attitude led to improvements in job-relevant behavior; this, in turn, increased customer satisfaction and an improvement in revenue growth. In sum, good leaders help people see and feel how they are contributing to the organization's success and future.

2.7. Control: Employees value control over the flow and pace of their jobs and leaders can create opportunities for employees to exercise this control. Do leaders consult with their employees with regard to their needs? For example, is it possible to accommodate the needs of a mother or an employee infected with HIV so that they can attend to childcare concerns or a medical appointment? Are leaders flexible and attuned to the needs of the employees as well as the organization? Do leaders involve employees in decision-making, particularly when employees will be directly affected by the decision? Do employees have a say in setting goals or milestones that are deemed important? Are employees able to voice their ideas, and does leadership show that contributions are valued? H. Norman Schwarzkopf retired U.S. Army General, once remarked:

I have seen competent leaders who stood in front of a platoon and all they saw was a platoon. But great leaders stand in front of a platoon and see it as 44 individuals, each of whom has aspirations, each of whom wants to live, each of whom wants to do well.

A feeling of "being in on things," and of being given opportunities to participate in decision making often reduces stress; it also creates trust and a culture where people want to take ownership of problems and their solutions. There are numerous examples of organizations whose implementation of an open-book management

style and creating room for employees to contribute to making decisions had a positive effect on engagement and organizational performance. The success of Microsoft, for example, stems in part from Bill Gates' belief that smart people anywhere in the company should have the power to drive an initiative. Initiatives such as Six Sigma are dependent, in part, on the active participation of employees on the shop floor.

2.8. Collaborate: Studies show that, when employees work in teams and have the trust and cooperation of their team members, they outperform individuals and teams which lack good relationships. Great leaders are team builders; they create an environment that fosters trust and collaboration. Surveys indicate that being cared about by colleagues is a strong predictor of employee engagement. Thus, a continuous challenge for leaders is to rally individuals to collaborate on organizational, departmental, and group goals, while excluding individuals pursuing their self-interest.

2.9. Credibility: Leaders should strive to maintain company's reputation and demonstrate high ethical standards. People want to be proud of their jobs, their performance, and their organization. WestJet Airlines is among the most admired organizations in Canada. The company has achieved numerous awards. For example, in 2005, it earned the number one spot for best corporate culture in Canada.

On September 26, 2005, WestJet launched the "Because we're Owners!" campaign. Why do WestJet employees care so much about their organization? Why do over 85 percent of them own shares in the company? Employees believe so strongly in what WestJet is trying to do and are so excited about its strong performance record that they commit their own money into shares.

2.10. Confidence: Good leaders help create confidence in a company by being exemplars of high ethical and performance standards. To illustrate, consider what happened to Harry Stonecipher, the former CEO of Boeing. He made the restoration of corporate ethics in the organization a top priority but was soon after embarrassed by the disclosure of an extramarital affair with a female employee. His poor judgment impaired his ability to lead and he lost a key ingredient for success – credibility. Thus the board asked him to resign. Employees working at Qwest and Continental Airlines were so embarrassed about working for their organizations that they would not wear their company's uniform on their way to and from work. At WorldCom, most employees were shocked, horrified, and embarrassed when the accounting scandal broke at the company. New leadership was faced with the major challenges of regaining public trust and fostering employee engagement.

Practitioners and academics have argued that competitive advantage can be gained by creating an engaged workforce. The data and argument that we present above are a compelling case why leaders need to make employee engagement one of their priorities. Leaders should actively try to identify the level of engagement in their organization, find the reasons behind the lack of full engagement, strive to eliminate those reasons, and implement behavioral strategies that will facilitate full engagement. These efforts should be ongoing. Employee engagement is hard to achieve and if not sustained by leaders it can wither with relative ease.

3. EMPLOYEE RETENTION:

An effort by a business to maintain a working environment which supports current staff in remaining with the company. Many employee retention policies are aimed at addressing the various needs of employees to enhance their job satisfaction and reduce the substantial costs involved in hiring and training new staff. Employee Retention refers to the techniques employed by the management to help the employees stay with the organization for a longer period of time. Employee retention strategies go a long way in motivating the employees so that they stick to the organization for the maximum time and contribute effectively. Sincere efforts must be taken to ensure growth and learning for the employees in their current assignments and for them to enjoy their work.

Employee retention has become a major concern for corporate in the current scenario. Individuals once being trained have a tendency to move to other organizations for better prospects. Lucrative salary, comfortable timings, better ambience, growth prospects are some of the factors which prompt an employee to look for a change. Whenever a talented employee expresses his willingness to move on, it is the responsibility of the management and the human resource team to intervene immediately and find out the exact reasons leading to the decision.

4. Need & Importance of Employee Retention:

4.1. Hiring is not an easy process:

The HR Professional shortlists few individuals from a large pool of talent, conducts preliminary interviews and eventually forwards it to the respective line managers who further grill them to judge whether they are fit for the organization or not. Recruiting the right candidate is a time consuming process.

4.2. An organization invests time and money in grooming an individual and makes him ready to work and understand the corporate culture:

A new joiner is completely raw and the management really has to work hard to train him for his overall development. It is a complete wastage of time and money when an individual leaves an organization all of a sudden. The HR has to start the recruitment process all over again for the same vacancy; a mere duplication of work. Finding a right employee for an organization is a tedious job and all efforts simply go waste when the employee leaves.

4.3. When an individual resigns from his present organization, it is more likely that he would join the competitors:

In such cases, employees tend to take all the strategies, policies from the current organization to the new one. Individuals take all the important data, information and statistics to their new organization and in some cases even leak the secrets of the previous organization. To avoid such cases, it is essential that the new joiner is made to sign a document which stops him from passing on any information even if he leaves the organization. Strict policy should be made which prevents the employees to join the competitors. This is an effective way to retain the employees.

4.4. The employees working for a longer period of time are more familiar with the company's policies, guidelines and thus they adjust better:

They perform better than individuals who change jobs frequently. Employees who spend a considerable time in an organization know the organization in and out and thus are in a position to contribute effectively.

4.5. Every individual needs time to adjust with others:

One needs time to know his team members well, be friendly with them and eventually trust them. Organizations are always benefited when the employees are compatible with each other and discuss things among themselves to come out with something beneficial for all. When a new individual replaces an existing employee, adjustment problems crop up. Individuals find it really difficult to establish a comfort level with the other person. After striking a rapport with an existing employee, it is a challenge for the employees to adjust with someone new and most importantly trust him. It is a human tendency to compare a new joiner with the previous employees and always find faults in him.

4.6. It has been observed that individuals sticking to an organization for a longer span are more loyal towards the management and the organization:

They enjoy all kinds of benefits from the organization and as a result are more attached to it. They hardly badmouth their organization and always think in favor of the management. For them the organization comes first and all other things later.

4.7. It is essential for the organization to retain the valuable employees showing potential:

Every organization needs hardworking and talented employees who can really come out with something creative and different. No organization can survive if all the top performers quit. It is essential for the organization to retain those employees who really work hard and are indispensable for the system.

The management must understand the difference between a valuable employee and an employee who doesn't contribute much to the organization. Sincere efforts must be made to encourage the employees so that they stay happy in the current organization and do not look for a change.

5. Challenges in Employee Retention:

In the current scenario, a major challenge for an organization is to retain its valuable and talented employees. The management can control the problem of employees quitting the organization within no time to a great extent but can't put a complete full stop to it. There are several challenges to it.

5.1. Monetary dissatisfaction is one of the major reasons for an employee to look for a change:

Every organization has a salary budget for every employee which can be raised to some extent but not beyond a certain limit. Retention becomes a problem when an employee quotes an exceptionally high figure beyond the budget of the organization and is just not willing to compromise. The organization needs to take care of the interests of the other employees as well and can't afford to make them angry. The salaries of the individuals working at the same level should be more or less similar to avoid major disputes amongst employees. A high potential employee is always the center of attention at every workplace but one should not take any undue advantage. One should understand the limitation of the management and quote something which matches the budget of the organization. An individual should not be adamant on a particular figure, otherwise it becomes difficult for the organization to retain him. Remember there is a room for negotiation everywhere.

5.2. In the current scenario, where there is no dearth of opportunities, stopping people to look for a change is a big challenge:

Every organization tries its level best to hire employees from the competitors and thus provide lucrative opportunities to attract them. Employees become greedy for money and position and thus look forward to changing the present job and join the competitors. No amount of counseling helps in such cases and retaining employees becomes a nightmare.

5.3. Individuals speak all kind of lies during interviews to get a job:

They might not be proficient in branding but would simply say a yes to impress the recruiter and grab the job. It is only later do people realize that there has been a mismatch and thus look for a change. Problems arise whenever a right person is into a wrong profile. An individual loses interest in work whenever he does something out of compulsion. The human resource department should be very careful while recruiting new employees. It is really important to get the reference check done for better reliability and avoid confusions later.

5.4. Some individuals have a tendency to get bored in a short span of time:

They might find a job really interesting in the beginning but soon find it monotonous and look for a change. The management finds it difficult to convince the employees in such cases. Individuals must also understand that every organization has some or the other problem and adjustment is required everywhere, so why not in the present organization? It becomes really difficult for the HR Department to find out what exactly is going on in the minds of the individual. An individual should voice his opinions clearly to make things easier for the management.

5.5. Unrealistic expectations from the job also lead to employees looking for a change:

There is actually no solution to unrealistic expectations. An individual must be mature enough to understand that one can't get all the comforts at the workplace just like his home. Individuals from different backgrounds come together in an organization and minor misunderstandings might arise but one should not make an issue out of it. An individual must not look for a change due to small issues. One needs time to make his presence feel at the organization and must try his level best to stick to it for a good amount of time and ignore petty issues.

6. Does engagement really make a difference?

Should executives be concerned about these findings? Perhaps a more interesting question to executives is: "Is there a strong relationship between, say, high scores on employee engagement indices and organizational performance?" It seems obvious that engaged employees are more productive than their disengaged counterparts. For example, a recent meta-analysis published in the Journal of Applied Psychology concluded that, "... employee satisfaction and engagement are related to meaningful business outcomes at a magnitude that is important to many organizations." A compelling question is this: How much more productive is an engaged workforce compared to a non-engaged workforce?

Several case studies shine some light on the practical significance of an engaged workforce. For example, New Century Financial Corporation, a U.S. specialty mortgage banking company, found that account executives in the wholesale division who were actively disengaged produced 28 percent less revenue than their colleagues who were engaged. Furthermore, those not engaged generated 23 percent less revenue than their engaged counterparts. Engaged employees also outperformed the not engaged and actively disengaged employees in other divisions. New Century Financial Corporation statistics also showed that employee engagement does not merely correlate with bottom line results – it **drives** results.

Employee engagement also affects the mindset of people. Engaged employees believe that they can make a difference in the organizations they work for. Confidence in the knowledge, skills, and abilities that people possess – in both themselves and others – is a powerful predictor of behavior and subsequent performance. Thus, consider some of the results of the Towers Perrin survey cited earlier:

- Eighty-four percent of highly engaged employees believe they can positively impact the quality of their organization's products, compared with only 31 percent of the disengaged.
- Seventy-two percent of highly engaged employees believe they can positively affect customer service, versus 27 percent of the disengaged.
- Sixty-eight percent of highly engaged employees believe they can positively impact costs in their job or unit, compared with just 19 percent of the disengaged.

Given these data, it is not difficult to understand that companies that do a better job of engaging their employees do outperform their competition. Employee engagement can not only make a real difference, it can set the great organizations apart from the merely good ones.

7. Is there a crisis in employee engagement?

We believe that executives must be concerned about the level of engagement in the workplace. For example, the Gallup Management Journal publishes a semi-annual Employment Engagement Index. The most recent U.S. results indicate that:

Only 29 percent of employees are actively engaged in their jobs. These employees work with passion and feel a profound connection to their company. People that are actively engaged help move the organization forward.

Fifty-four percent of employees are not engaged. These employees have essentially “checked out,” sleepwalking through their workday and putting time – but not passion – into their work. These people embody what Jack Welch said several years ago. To paraphrase him: “Never mistake activity for accomplishment.”

Seventeen percent of employees are actively disengaged. These employees are busy acting out their unhappiness, undermining what their engaged co-workers are trying to accomplish.

A Towers Perrin 2005 Global Workforce Survey involving about 85,000 people working full-time for large and mid-sized firms found similarly disturbing findings. Only 14 percent of all employees worldwide were highly engaged in their job. The number of Canadians that reported being highly engaged was 17 percent. Sixty-two percent of the employees surveyed indicated they were moderately engaged at best; 66 percent of employees in Canada were moderately engaged. And 24 percent reported that they are actively disengaged; the corresponding number in Canada was 17 percent. (See article by Towers Perrin authors elsewhere in this issue.)

The survey also indicated that on a country-by-country basis, the percentages of highly engaged, moderately engaged, and actively disengaged employees varied considerably. And the results showed some interesting, perhaps counter-intuitive, results. For example, Mexico and Brazil have the highest percentages of engaged employees, while Japan and Italy have the largest percentages of disengaged employees.

8.1. Impact of employee engagement on productivity



Employees who are engaged with their job and employer are more productive because they are motivated beyond personal factors. They are more focused and more motivated than their disengaged counterparts. This means they work more efficiently and with the success of the organization in mind.

In 2009, Harter et al. conducted a meta-analysis encompassing 199 research studies across 152 organizations in 44 industries and 26 countries. They statistically calculated the available data on business/work unit level relationship between employee engagement and performance outcomes within in each study. The studies covered 32,394 business/work units and 955,905 employees (Harter et al. 2009). Their findings quantified significant differences between business units ranking in the top and bottom 25% on engagement. They found an 18% drop in productivity between the top and bottom performers. Additionally, there was a 60% drop in quality (measured by defects in products).

In a similar study into Fortune 100 companies, it was found that there was a dramatic 1,000 percent increase in errors among disengaged versus engaged employee populations (Gonring, 2008). Research consistently shows that low levels of employee engagement are detrimental to performance. In fact, it has been found that employees that are highly engaged are twice as likely to be top performers (Taleo Research, 2009).

Absenteeism

Not only does high employee engagement increase focus and efficiency, it decreases rates of absenteeism. Because engaged employees care about what they do, they recognise the importance of their effort in contributing to the success of their employer. This means that employees consistently turn up to work and work well while they are there (Nahrgang, Morgeson & Hofman, 2011; Harter, et al. 2009; Gonring, 2008).

Looking at the numbers, it is clear that engagement plays a significant role in determining rates of absenteeism. Harter et al. (2009) found that absenteeism was 37% higher in organizations scoring in the bottom 25% on engagement. This has wide reaching practical implications for businesses' bottom lines and productivity overall.

8.2. Impact of employee engagement on profitability

Employee engagement has a number of implications for an organization's profitability. This impact of is largely indirect. Through improving retention, customer loyalty, productivity, and safety; organizations are able to keep their bottom line healthy while engagement strengthens all of these factors. The diagram below illustrates this relationship.



It has been found that organizations enjoy 26 percent higher revenue per employee when employees are highly engaged (Taleo Research, 2009). Furthermore, it was found that organizations with highly engaged employees earned 13 percent greater total returns to shareholders (Taleo Research, 2009). Furthermore, a meta-analysis (Harter et al, 2002) showed that businesses in the top 25% for employee engagement (of those studied) produced up to four percentage points in profitability. Repeating the study in 2009, it was found that the top 25% increased their profitability by 16%.

Research by Towers Perrin (2003) indicates that the more engaged employees at an organization are, the more likely it is to exceed the industry average in one-year revenue growth. Specifically, there is a trend showing that highly engaged employees work for organizations that had revenue growth at least one percentage point above the average for their industry, while the organizations of the most disengaged employees work for companies where revenue growth falls one or two percentage points below the average (Towers Perrin, 2003). However, it should be noted that there is probably another factor at work here, in that organizations that are performing better may be more likely to attract more engaged people.

The growing body of research into employee engagement also yields information on how engagement impacts specific aspects of organizations, as outlined below.

8.2.1. Shrinkage

The amount of profit lost to shrinkage (theft) is also lower when engagement is increased. Harter et al. (2009) showed that there is a 27% drop in shrinkage when comparing business units scoring in the top and bottom 25% on engagement. This represents a significant amount of money.

8.2.2. Productivity

SHRM Foundation's research found a significant difference between performances related costs in the sales team of one organization in 2005. Low engagement teams fell behind high engagement teams so much that the difference in performance-related costs was in excess of \$2,000,000 (Lockwood, 2007).

However it is not just in sales teams that the productivity of engaged employees can affect revenue growth. They can have a significant indirect affect by breaking new ground in terms of innovations to boost sales, or simply through supporting other employees (Towers Perrin, 2003). Furthermore, cost of production is lowered when engagement is increased due to more focused and efficient workers (Towers Perrin, 2003)

8.2.3. Safety

As discussed, there are both human and financial costs of safety incidents in the workplace. The organization at the centre of SHRM Foundation's research saved in excess of \$1,700,000 in safety costs in one year by improving employee engagement (Lockwood, 2007).

8.2.4. Retention

Retention has a twofold impact on profitability. Firstly, replacing an employee can cost one and a half times their salary. Secondly, once an employee has been replaced, it takes the new employee a period of time to adjust to the role and start being productive. The impact of this on profitability is especially evident in sales, where it can take years for a new employee to generate the same amount of revenue as an established one.

8.2.5. Customer loyalty

It is common sense that having loyal customers who promote a business helps grow and maintain revenue. Cultivating the employee-customer relationship will enable any organisation to be a low-cost provider and achieve superior results (Heskett, Sasser & Schlesinger, 2003). The key to this is having engaged employees.

8.3. Impact of employee engagement on safety



Employees who are engaged are more likely to be highly involved and absorbed in their work. If an employee is not engaged, they are less focused on their work and more likely to make mistakes. This has significant implications for industries in which safety is an important factor.

There has been extensive research into the link between employee engagement and safety outcomes. A meta-analysis undertaken by Harter et al. (2009) found that the top 25% of business units (in terms of engagement) have 49% less safety incidents than the bottom 25%. Similarly, the same study found that in health settings, the most engaged organisations have 41% less patient safety incidents (i.e. falls, medical errors, infection rates, and risk-adjusted mortality rates).

Furthermore, engaged employees are more likely to use their initiative to suggest and implement improvements to safety systems. Their engagement gives them a greater sense of ownership in their role, and increases the chance of them taking on the responsibility to act on potential problems. Attitudes drive performance and behaviors, and it has been estimated that unsafe behaviors cause up to 70% of workplace accidents (Ronald, 1999; Health and Safety Executive, 1995).

Research has shown that "engaged employees are motivated to work safely" and non-engaged employees are more susceptible to "burnout" (Nahrgang, Morgeson & Hofman, 2011; Gonzalez-Roma et al. 2006). This decreases employees focus and motivation to do the right thing. It has been shown that employees who say they almost always enjoy their tasks were two and a half times less likely to report a back injury than those who said they hardly ever enjoyed their tasks (Ronald, 1999).

There are both human and financial costs when safety incidents occur. While the human costs are more difficult to measure, it is possible to put a price on safety. For example, research by the SHRM Foundation found in one manufacturing company engaged employees were five times less likely to have a safety incident and seven times less likely to have a safety incident involving lost-time. This had a significant impact on cost. The average cost of a safety incident for a non-engaged employee was \$392, compared with an average of \$63 for an engaged employee (Lockwood, 2007). It is clear that in terms of safety, engagement matters.

8.4. Impact of employee engagement on customer loyalty



A link between having engaged employees and increased customer loyalty and satisfaction has been established (Haid & Sims, 2009; Harter et al., 2009; Gonring, 2008). Giving employees the drive to enhance the customers experience is as important as the reputations and bottom lines of businesses that rely on the ability to inspire customer loyalty. Customers are more likely to recommend a business to others if they have had a positive experience and that positive experience is most often formed by interactions with frontline staff. The attitudes of frontline staff are a product of their engagement, and to a lesser extent, the engagement of those around them.

Employees are more customer focused when engaged (Harter, 2009) as they are motivated to increase their discretionary effort to achieve the success of the business, rather than simply for personal gain.

Research provides credence to this idea. In their 2009 meta-analysis, Harter et al. found that business units that scored in the top 25% on engagement had customer ratings 12% higher than business units scoring in the bottom 25% of engagement. This improvement is due to the fact that engaged employees care more about meeting customer needs. They believe their organisation has a strong customer focus, whereas less engaged employees "have far more misgivings about their organisation in terms of these measures and are likely to have little personal investment in a strong customer focus" (Towers Perrin, 2003).

Engagement impacts on customer loyalty in more ways than simply interactions with frontline staff. The quality of products produced by engaged employees is better, as previously reported and more productive staff make less mistakes that could impact on customer.

Additionally, engaged staff have a positive impact on an organisation's reputation in the wider world by being brand ambassadors. Conversely, disengaged employees can become a public relations nightmare. In the new world of social media, employees and customers can interact outside the traditional boundaries. For instance, when it was widely reported that Walmart started treating its employees badly, customers and employees were able to discuss and spread this news. This dissemination resulted in a drop in reputation and financial performance for Walmart.

8.5. Impact of employee engagement on retention



Simply stated, engaged employees are less likely to leave their job. If an employee has no emotional commitment to their job, there is a greater chance that they will leave to pursue a job that offers, for example, higher remuneration or more flexible work conditions (Haid & Sims, 2009; Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004).

Research confirms that engagement lowers employees' intention to leave. The Corporate Leadership Council (2004) found that the most engaged employees are 87% less likely to leave their organisation. The same study found that the 100 best places to work (according to their research) had an average voluntary turnover rate of 13% as compared with the average of 28.5% of other businesses in the same industries. What's more, other large scale research has found that 12% of disengaged employees have no intention to leave, while that proportion rises to 66% in engaged employees. Similarly, over half of disengaged employees would consider leaving their current job for another opportunity, while only 25% of highly engaged employees would consider leaving. (Towers Perrin, 2003).

Considering that replacing an employee can cost one and a half times their salary, retention has a significant impact on an organization's bottom line. Not only can the costs of replacing employees be a drain on resources, but once new employees are in place they can take several years to generate the same revenue.

9. FINDINGS

From the detailed study of Employee Engagement phenomenon and researches on the topic, following outcomes can be taken,

- Employee Engagement activities help in creating employee satisfaction.
- Employee Engagement initiatives taken by the organization promotes employee loyalty and helps in building sense of belongingness in employees.
- Engaged employees perform better than the disengaged employees and tend to contribute in the growth of organization.
- Employee retention can be reduced adequately by implementing engagement activities in the organization.
- Engaged employees prove to be valuable assets for the organization.
- Employee engagement helps the organization to grow and develop the healthy relation with its human resource.
- Employee retention is the crucial issue faced by organizations in modern management, which can be conquered using Engagement practices.

- Employee Engagement is necessary for every organization.

10. CONCLUSION

Acquiring skilled workforce is just not enough in today's changing economy like ours; instead a lot needs to be done to retain, involve and make them committed to the organization and its goals. Thus, engagement is a state where an individual is not only intellectually committed but has great emotional attachment with his/her job that goes above and beyond the call of duty so as to further the interest of the company.

Employee engagement serves to the organization as a tool to accomplish employee satisfaction and it helps in development of sound relation between employer and employee.

Employee engagement thus serves as a key factor in employee retention in modern Management.

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INDIA NEEDS BANK-LESS, AND CASH-LESS ECONOMY!**Prof. (Dr.) Vivek Mishra¹ and Dr. Amit M. Bhattacharya²**Dean¹, Sri Sharda Group of Institutions, LKODirector², Research, Innovation & Development Associates, N.D.

‘Baking is important, banks are not.’- Bill Gates, 1994**ABSTRACT**

Like many an institution, slowly but surely, the banks have become ‘necessary evil’ in India. The word ‘Banking’ which is synonymous to ‘Trust’ or ‘faith for security’ of assets has become contradictory. The standard of physical banking has eroded so rapidly in the last three decades that it has become almost irrelevant for its stake-holders such as, the government, the share-holders and the account holders. It has become a ‘white elephant’ and virtually, a gargantuan vanity than utility. Rapid erosion of profit margin, ever-increasing stressed accounts, internal politics at all levels, highly unfavorable cost-benefit ratio, employee sponsored frauds, undue pressure of the trade unions, inefficiency, defective policies, misreporting of the business activities, fudged data at all levels for saving the skin for the time-being, mismatched demand-supply equations between the RBI, the government and the banking authorities have continuously impacted the health of the traditional banking to the extent.

Sudden acquiescence of net-banking and other hi-tech operational activities have generated more volatility, uncertainty, complexity and ambiguity in the traditional as well as modern banking system and the perplexed stake-holders are almost forced to think whether the banks should be restructured en-mass or be made to perform only at a primary level having very limited scope with low cost and lowest risk activities at the ground level.

This paper tries to evaluate, in the light of various data and information, whether the traditional banks and banking system should continue or be mitigated to safeguard the interest of the stake-holders, the tax-payers and the national economy at large. As well as, it tries to suggest the ways and means to minimize cash transactions mode in the system.

Keywords: Necessary evil, faith for security, volatility, uncertainty, complexity and ambiguity

INTRODUCTION

Undertaking any serious effort for carrying out a study into India’s banking sector, an investigator finds stark contrasts: while it is regarded to be the backbone of the world’s sixth largest economy; simultaneously it is found to be grappling with the challenges that puts its strength and resilience in unending ordeal.

In the 1960s, The Indian banking industry had emerged as a powerful tool for facilitating the process of development of Indian economy. At the same time, its appearance as a large employer, and an effective source of capital mobilization, capital allocation and re-allocation, largely motivated the then prime minister of India Mrs. Indira Gandhi, to nationalize the 14 largest commercial banks. Her swift and sudden move in this direction in the midnight of 19 July 1969 stunned everyone and even her political *bête noire* Jayaprakash Narayan, had to accept the step as a “*masterstroke of political sagacity.*”

The second dose of nationalization came in with the same suddenness in 1980 when 6 more commercial banks were taken over by the government. Though the apparent reason for this nationalization was expressed as ensuring better credit delivery system but in disguise, it was an acute political move to have control over 91% of the banking business by the Government of India. In the year 1993, the New Bank of India was merged with Punjab National Bank; following the former’s precarious financial conditions, thereby resulting in the number of nationalized banks finally to 19. Since the ‘90s, the banks grew at a pace of around 4% per annum that was closer to the growth rate of GDP.

In the early ‘90s, the Indian government embarked on a policy of liberalization, privatization and globalization and thus, allowed the tech-savvy new generation banks like Global Trust Bank, UTI Bank, HDFC Bank, ICICI Bank etc. to become players in the free market economy. All the foreign investors were given voting rights exceeding the then cap of 10% which gradually gone up to 74% to date, of course, with some restrictions. However, the new policy overhauled the banking sector in India almost completely and the banks were thrown open to fierce competition with the private and foreign banks in the strict statutory environment complying with the Basel Norms, for their growth and sustenance. The volte-face change in the financial environment and the people’s expectations from their respective banks not only grew exponentially but also the banks were almost

compelled to meet their justified/unjustified needs rapidly. The PSBs, which were nationalized with the prime objective of 'social banking,' were compelled to resort to 'commercial banking with sole objective of 'profit maximization 'in the entirely changed financial eco-system. However, with the continuous change in the country's socio-economic, political and technological environment since 1990s, validity of physical banking and cash-centered transaction system appeared questionable by all quarters of the stake holders.

OVERVIEW OF LITERATURE

A good number of thought provoking studies and research have been done in the area of branchless banking and cashless economy in India, by various academicians and researchers. The literature studied by investigator, in the form of the research studies, articles of researchers, the comments of experts economic analysts and news reports, reports of the working groups established by the Union Government, Reserve Bank of India, various committee reports, , is briefly reviewed hereunder:

Ms. V. Kokila and Dr. R. Ushadevi in their study titled 'A Study on Consumer Behavior on Cashless Transaction in U.T of Puducherry' found that the demonetization activity positively impacted by a decrease in liquidity, alternative payment methods such as e-wallets, online transactions using e-banking, debit and credit card usage increased significantly.

In the 'Study on Introduction of Cashless Economy in India 2016: Benefits & Challenges': Ms. Preeti Garg, and Ms Manvi Panchal studied the views of people that shows cashless economy would help in curbing black money, helps in improving economic growth of our country.

In their research paper on 'A STUDY ON BRANCHLESS BANKING IN INDIA'; Anand, M. B. and Dr. Sreenivas, D. L. inferred branch-banking is unlikely to die completely, despite the ATMs, laptops and smart phones. Branches will continue even after the new modes spread to rural areas.

According to a study conducted by Sukanta Sarkar (2010) on the 'Parallel Economy in India: Causes, Impacts & Government Initiatives', the researcher found the cause behind generation of black money is the country's political system.

Lalit Mohan Aggarwal (CA) edited a 'White Paper on Black Money'(2012)) also cited the reason that intentional violation of laws by the government officials lead to criminal acts and help in generating black money.

Complete absence of cash is not the cashless economy, it is an economic set-up in which goods and services are bought and paid electronically.. International Journal of Current Trends in Engineering & Research (IJCTER) Volume 03, Issue 04; April – 2017 [Online ISSN 2455–1392] @IJCTER-2017,

Alvares, & Clifford (2009) in their reports titled "The problem regarding fake currency in India." found that the country's battle against fake currency is getting tougher as most of the fake notes go undetected.

Jain, P.M (2006) in his article 'E-payments and e-banking', opined that e- payments would be able to check black money provided fullest advantage of technology, quick payments and remittances might ensure optimal use of available funds in the banks, financial institutions, business houses and common citizen of India.

Zahoor Ahmed and Prof. Jagadeeshwaran. M. (2013) in their research study concluded that NPA is a major problem and hurdle faced by banking industry. And also assessed the various causes for accounts for becoming NPAs are willful defaults, improper processing of loan proposals, poor monitoring and so on.

- **Research Objectives:** Evaluation of the utility of traditional branch banking system, and to assess the process of phased mitigation of branch banking and minimization of cash transactions in the financial eco-system.

- **Research Questions or Hypotheses (if any):** Given the present economic condition, physical banking and cash transactions can be minimized by the year 2020.

- **Research Methodology:** The study is based on secondary sources of data, research papers, interviews, journals, newspapers and relevant websites consulted in order to justify the research question. The study attempts to evaluate the possibility of bank-less, branch-less and less-cash transaction in India. The study is descriptive, analytical and to some extent empirical.

Limitation of the study: Best of efforts has been made to consult data from Indian sources; however, in case of unavailability of data and information, such are collected from international sources, without prejudice.

DISCUSSIONS AND RESULTS**Long Era of Political Banking**

The theories and rules and regulations of Economics are straight-jacketed and any amount of mix lead to immediate distortions and final devastation of any economy. The rules of Economics have no compatibility with the theories and rules of Politics as such. The irony is that the politicians continuously fiddle with the untamable powers of Economics and try to bend them to favor their 'populist politics' in pursuit of precipitate power in their clutches. The recent devastations in the economies of Greece, Spain, Portugal, Cyprus, Italy, Mexico and Venezuela are the burning examples of such political games that conform the proposition.

Mrs. Indira Gandhi's political farsightedness led her to nationalize the banks first and then to formulate such populist economic programs which had far reaching positive impact on her politics. Implementation of Integrated Rural Development Pogram, Special Component Plan, Kanya Samriddhi Yojna, Old-age Pension and Widow Pension Scheme, Scholarships scheme etc. were such attractive and all-engulfing schemes that brought surge of money in the pockets of almost everyone; right from the destitute to middlemen to millionaires in either form and obviously, they paved the way for such leadership to stay in power for long. The rampant political use of the financial institutions, especially banks, through directed and forced lending to the urban and rural people alike; of course, ensured the ruling party to be in the power, despite high inflationary pressure and economic slowdown following sudden waves of money supply. The banks remained unusually overcrowded with the cattle-class clientele and bankers remained over-stressed, committed series of serious mistakes almost every day and largely deviated from their original business developmental activities.

In the year 1975, an ordinance was passed overnight and since 2nd October, Regional Rural Bank was initiated to exclusively cater banking services to the marginalized rural people and for generating rural employment. After 43 years of pan-India relentless working; this district-based nation-wide network of rural banks partially succeeded only because, the rural banks worked mostly as political instrument rather than financial institution. Continuously supporting weaker and marginalized clientele, with weak financial and infrastructural base, the RRBs soon became 'sick bank', though; it was never declared so; till date. The bank was kept on ventilator by frequent infusion of capital and was kept it artificially functioning for credit delivery by cleaning its huge loss, following provisioning for NPA, through frequent loan waivers, interest waivers subsidies and continuous interest subventions. The RRBs, of late, were re-shaped for commercial banking and on date, it is in the process of re-structuring as National Rural Bank of India. However, the potential of the regional rural banks is still being used for long-run political gains by either of the parties having power in the Center or in the States and the sponsoring banks.

By FY 2018, the Indian banking industry employed around 1,205,449 employees and had total number of 111,789 branches in the country and 171 branches abroad and it manages an aggregate deposit of ₹88,504.34 billion (US\$1180 billion) and advances of ₹77,654.78 billion (US\$970 billion). The cumulative net profit of the banks operating in India remained ₹2,981.74 billion (US\$19 billion) against a turnover of ₹19,671.66 billion (US\$180 billion) for the financial year 2017–18. In other words, the net profit stood around 11.23% as against the turnover. Prima facie, the growth of banking and business both seem to be quite impressive. However, the real health of the public sector banks is precarious as on date, and most of the banks are either facing RBI's PCA (Prompt Corrective Action) based limited scope of activities or merger at a large scale to safeguard their entities and competitiveness.

Besides external factors, continuous political intervention with the business functioning of the banks, the PSBs lost its authority to deal with the complex situations and decision making power in volatile conditions. Right from the top level executives to the rank and file workers in the banks was forced to just work mechanically within the four corners of circulars. Prudential Norms were implemented by the government in June 1988 without any preparation and deliberations with the top level economists and the executives of the banks. In the country with more than 1.2 billion inhabitants, three-quarters of whom live on less than \$2 per day as yet, sudden implementation of Basel Norms by the government was a purely suicidal step. Such step was taken just to please the G-10 for gaining some commercial benefits and concessions for international trade.

The consequences of such political intervention were obvious. Most of the bankers learnt to please their respective authorities with pleasing words, false respect and with a plethora of statements highlighting fudged data. The bankers at all levels kept on misleading each other, the RBI and the governments constantly, just to save their skin. By the turn of year 2000, the situation worsened so much that only 5-10% of honest employees kept on trying to improve the situation with their heart and soul but, they were soon intimidated and silenced with the fear of punishment. While on the one hand, automation of banking system was going on in full swing; the stressed accounts were piling up and leading to rapid erosion of the banks' capital. Despite all measures of

improving the banks' health, situations went out of control and again the Economics gave way before the Politics and the politicians.

Vices like bribery, nepotism, corruption, criminal conspiracy, embezzlement, and internal politics were institutionalized within the banking system having a substantial patronage by local to national politicians. Not, that the Central government's vigilance agencies were not aware of such nexus and vicious circles; but due to the same pressure, they too, conditioned themselves to stay inactive. Even on date, the central leadership cannot justify its permission given to the 'Bank of China' to operate in India whereas its own banking system is lurching on ventilator.

Mr. Tamal Bandyopadhyay, a prolific journalist and the writer of a new book 'From Lehman to Demonetisation -- A Decade of Disruptions, Reforms and Misadventures' which is a collection of his columns published over almost a decade since 2008, said during an interview*¹ that 'Today, even the RBI is under political pressure' and that "There is no difference between the earlier government and the present government. They are all following the economic policy based on the Chicago School of thought and this school of thought says the government should have very little role in governing the country and the majority of work should be handed over to the private sector. This has not succeeded in the US. Yet, it is being tried here by people like Arvind Subramaniam, Arvind Panagariya, Urjit Patel and Raghuram Rajan' and these economists want to reduce interest rates so that they can help the corporates. They want to give loans to corporates at a lesser rate of interest' whereas, 'these corporates are the one who are hitting the banks.' However, the bankers' lives are under constant threat of the three 'C's -- the CBI (Central Bureau of Investigation), the CAG (Comptroller and Auditor General) and the CVC (Central Vigilance Commission).

Banks' branches –the epicenter of scams

The epicenter of all sorts of frauds, embezzlement, misappropriations, money laundering, collusion, criminal conspiracy or any economic offence-you name it and you get it-as part and parcel of banking activities in India. In 1956; the then P.M. Pt. Nehru had rebuked the opposition leaders in the open parliament saying "it is itself a corruption to talk about corruption in India." However, it was just keeping eyes shut from the brewing reality. A parallel economy was regularly and systematically flourishing in the country. The Global Financial Integrity (GFI) in its report in December 2012 revealed that "India is among the top 10 developing countries in the world with a black money outflow of \$1.6 billion (Rs. 8,720 crore) in 2010. Total outflow of black money from India since independence until 2010 was \$232 billion, generally in the form of corruption, bribery and kickbacks. The cumulative value of illicit assets held by Indians during the same period is estimated to be \$487 billion. The BJP, in a 2011 report, had estimated India's black economy being worth around \$500 billion and \$1.4 trillion or about between Rs. 27.5 lakh crore and Rs. 74 lakh crore, while US think-tank Global Financial Integrity had estimated India had lost \$123 billion (Rs. 6.76 lakh crore) in "black money" in 2001-10. This is money that is earned and transferred illegally abroad in tax havens, such as the Cayman Islands, typically to avoid taxes. In the post-reform period of 1991-2008, deregulation and liberalization accelerated the outflow of illicit money from the Indian economy." If hidden incomes of Rs. 25 lakh crore were to be disclosed and taxed at 30%, it would generate Rs. 8.5 lakh crore, enough to build a 2,000-bed super-specialty hospital in each of India's 626 districts."²

The transfer of huge funds to the tax heavens could never be possible, had there been no collusion of the bankers with the black money generators.

The facts and figures (in response to a RTI on May 2, 2018) presented by the Reserve Bank of India **revealed** that over 23,000 cases of fraud involving a whopping Rs. 1 lakh crore were reported in the past five years in various banks. Elaborating the issue it pointed out that in 2016-17, banks had reported 5,076 cases of fraud involving Rs 23,933 crore whereas a total of 5,152 cases of fraud, up from over 5,000 cases in 2016-17, were reported in banks from April, 2017, to March 1, 2018. The central bank further said that the highest ever amount of Rs 28,459 crore is said to have been involved in these cases of fraud reported from April, 2017, to March 1, 2018. Providing the break-up, the RBI said 4,693 such cases (involving Rs 18,698 crore) and 4,639 cases (involving Rs 19,455 crore) were reported in 2015-16 and 2014-15 respectively. In 2013-14, banks had reported 4,306 cases of fraud, involving Rs 10,170 crore. The RBI said "The reported fraud cases are processed and action is taken according to the facts and circumstances of individual cases,"

A huge loan fraud of Rs 600 involving IDBI bank is one of the glaring examples of 'how the top management of IDBI bank looted their own bank.' The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) arrested Mr. M.O. Rego , current CEO of Syndicate Bank and Mr.Kishore Kharat, the current CEO of Indian Bank besides Mr. MS

Raghavan, the then CMD of IDBI Bank. All three top executives had deeply connived with the Aircel founder C Sivasankaran and three companies -- Axcel Sunshine Limited (British Virgin Islands) and Win Wind Oy (Finland) and 15 IDBI bank officials for siphoning Rs 600 crore from IDBI. The top officials of CBI told India Today that, "in this case, bank never approached us to file a complaint." India Today learnt that 'these loans were sanctioned because the top management of IDBI bank intentionally allowed doing so.'

According to CBI, in October 2010, IDBI sanctioned loan of Rs 322 crore to Win Wind Oy, a Finland-based company. The loan went NPA (Non Profitable Asset) in October 2013 after the company went bankrupt in Finland. In spite of knowing about NPA, in February 2014, the IDBI bank gave loan of Rs 523 crore to Axcel Sunshine Ltd, which is based in British Virgin Island. This company is associate of Siva Group. This loan was used to repay loan of other companies of Siva Group," said a senior officer. According to a senior officer of CBI, "We have lodged the case on the allegations of perpetrating fraud through the loan accounts of M/s. Win Wind Oy, Finland and M/s. Axcel Sunshine Limited to an extent of around Rs 600 crore." "This is case of fraud of bank by the executives of the bank, promoters of the group of companies involved to derive wrongful gain," said the CBI official.

The CBI registered a case against 39 accused under Sections 120-B, 409, 420 of Indian Penal Code and under Sections 13(2) read with 13(1)(d) of PC Act, 1988. CBI has booked then senior officials of IDBI, M/s Axcel Sunshine Limited, having its registered office at Porteuallis Trust Net (BVI) Limited, British Virgin Islands, and others.*³

The above discussion shows that the 'criminalization of politics' and 'criminalization of Bankers' have the same magnitude in India.

Two major news headlines appeared on August 27, 2018: **"Bankers burn midnight oil to resolve 70 stressed accounts"** and **"PSU banks plan to closure of 70 overseas offices"** respectively. Both the news items confirm the doubt about the Indian banks' precarious health condition.

The first news item reads... 'With the six-month deadline set by Reserve Bank to finalise resolution plans for around 70 large stressed accounts worth over Rs.3.8 trillion ending on Monday, banks are burning midnight oil to avoid bankruptcy proceedings against these defaulters who are mostly power produces. Bankers prefer out-of-NCLT resolution as the bankruptcy resolution so far have seen them taking large haircuts which in cases like Alok Industries was a 86%. The RBI circular asks banks to identify projects with even a day's default as stressed assets and conclude resolution proceedings within 180 days. The circular came into effect on March 1 and the 180-day deadline concludes on August 27.'

'...It can be noted that almost three-fourths of these Rs.3.8 trillion-worth stressed assets are power companies which had dragged the Cental Bank to the Allahabad High Court where the matter is still pending.... 'Last week State Bank managing director Arijit Basu has said about eight power projects worth Rs.17000 crore were expected to be resolved soon as lenders were nearing consensus in these accounts.'

'There are reports that lenders have identified at least 60 NPA accounts worth Rs.3.5 trillion against whom bankruptcy proceedings will be initiated.'

And, the second news item reads... 'Public sector banks are in the process of closing or rationalizing about 70 overseas operations as part of capital conservation exercise.' ... 'Unviable foreign operations are being shut while multiple branches in same cities or nearby places are being rationalized with a view to achieving efficiency, sources said.'

As part of this exercise, PSBs plan to close or rationalize about 70 overseas operations during the current fiscal, sources said. According to the data, 159 branches are operating in foreign countries, of which 41 branches were in losses in 2016-17.

'The country's largest lender SBI led the pack with nine of its overseas branches in the red. It was followed by Bank of India and Bank of Baroda with eight and seven branches, respectively.'*⁴

The inputs given above clearly indicate that the 'Banking' in general is losing its relevance rapidly and getting mired in legal complications. Even if NCLT becomes instrumental in recovering the sunken capital, it would involve huge erosion and would involve huge economic and social cost. It is high time to wind up the banks and the branches because any bail-out amount will not succeed to rejuvenate the ailing banks. Cancer cannot be treated with band-aids.

The viability of bank-less and branch-less economy gets justified when Greg Chen, Regional Representative for South Asia, CGAP interviewed the founding Director of MicroSave, Mr. Graham A. N. Wright, about branchless banking in India and he said “India has huge opportunity to leverage the potential of e/m-banking and build a cash-light economy.” With its cutting edge IT industry and huge population, the Government of India is determined to achieve ‘financial inclusion’ through digital money and is aggressively proceeding to achieve it.’

He further elaborated that “The **gradual regulatory evolution** to support business correspondent network managers (BCNMs) and banks in their outreach efforts continues – and the results are beginning to emerge. While the emphasis continues to be on numbers, the targets are such that large scale outreach infrastructure is being built in a short time frame, with an agent covering every village with a population greater than 2,000.”⁵ Once the high quality network of BCNM-managed and individual agents is established; branch-less and bank-less banking will become a new reality within the financial services ecosystem of India.

Towards cash-less economy

Alvin Toffler, the prolific ‘future historian’, had conceptualized about a plastic card that would hold monetary value in the form of ‘energy strip’ vide which all the future transactions would take place electronically. In his revolutionary book ‘Future Shock’ (1970), he had elaborated that the electronic power would transform the face of economy by replacing ‘physical cash’ with ‘electronic cash.’ Virtually, the ‘polymer banknotes’ was initiated by the Reserve Bank of Australia in 1973. Since then, the world has witnessed ocean change in the modes of virtual monetary transaction. Crypto-currency is one of the emerging realities among them.

The utility of the polymer money has been dramatic but the cash transaction could not be mitigated altogether, because of the two fundamental reasons. The first reason is psychological and the second is its inherent nature of ‘currentness’ and ‘non- transparency’ during transactions.

The author of this paper randomly interviewed a large number of people from all walks of life and the typical answer came basically in two forms.

(1) People feel ‘better’ and ‘confident’ holding ‘cash’ in their wallets and feel ‘proud’ paying in cash and displaying their ‘fatty’ wallets to the shopkeepers as well as to other people around them. People feel especially ‘proud’ when they use the new currency as confetti on special occasions or they conceal them as their ‘very personal’ property. The ‘touch and sight’ of new banknotes has a special thrill for most of the people especially for the housewives. At the time of ‘demonetization’ in November 2016; a lot of new-banknotes came out of the housewives’ hidden treasure for its exchange with the valid ones. This ‘feel’ and ‘thrill’ factors are directly linked to the banknotes’ and coins’ variety, glitter and super-liquidity nature.

(2) Attraction for ‘cash’ is universal phenomenon. All the illegal and underhand dealings are done in cash. The biggest quality of cash is its ‘non-transparency’. Any sort of and any volume of cash transactions can be undertaken without keeping any record of the transactions’ place, time and the beneficiaries. Within very short period of ‘demonetization’, hoards of Cash were confiscated. A recent most confiscation (in July 2018) of Rs.160 crores in cash and 90 Kg. gold from a non-descript firm M/s SPK Ltd’s head office at Chennai, indicates the momentum of black money and lure of cash and yellow metal of the Indians.

Although, the Government of India has accepted on several occasions that no authenticated data and information are maintained on ‘black money’ in the country, this does not mean that the estimated quantum of shadow economy to the tune of 46% does not exist in India. The main avenues of underhand ‘cash transaction’ are real-estates, education, mining & quarrying, health services, manufacturing and judiciary system. By natural instinct, people do not prefer ‘transparency, scalability and accountability’ and with the lesser degree of economic advancement of a country; these three elements are abhorred to the extent. People at large hanker for cash and stash it for its future abuse and misuse.

“The RBI and the Government are making several efforts to reduce the use of cash in the economy by promoting the digital/payment devices including prepaid instruments and cards. RBI’s effort to encourage these new varieties of payment and settlement facilities aims to achieve the goal of a ‘less cash’ society. With limited cash in hand and an indefinite crunch in sight, most people are rushing to cashless transactions.”⁶

There is no country in the world where ‘cash’ has been mitigated entirely to enjoy only the advantageous part of the cash. Even Sweden and Switzerland have tactically minimized the use of cash where as both are highly developed countries. In India, there is large unorganized sector and 93% people earn their livelihood from unorganized commercial activities. Though, the national minimum wage rate is fixed at Rs.272.68(at current prices) but following ‘perishable’ nature of labor and having no organized bargaining power; daily wagers earn

something between Rs.150 to Rs.175 per day and that too, they get their wages in cash. A rough estimate says that around 35% of Indians earn less than \$2 per day i.e. Rs.141 at the par rate on 29th August, 2018. Although the government is making strategic efforts to restrain the use of cash in the economy through various types of digital/payment devices however, it may encourage these new varieties of payment to achieve the goal of a 'less cash' society only. Cash transaction is a culture in the society and changing a culture is 'hard nut to crack' in a versatile and democratic country like India. Any amount of 'demonetization' or persuasion will prove futile until the psychological set up of common people is changed.

It is true that in a modern economy, money moves more and more electronically as was viewed by Alvin Toffler in 1970 and Bill Gates about 'virtual banking' system in 1994. The "Indian government's twin thrusts—to encourage digital identification and cashless transactions—are driving change throughout the economy. These measures picked up steam after the Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI), a statutory body responsible for providing the country's residents with a biometric identity and a digital platform to authenticate it was set up in 2016. The UIDAI has issued more than a billion unique identity (Aadhaar) cards, covering most of the country's adult population. The government is pushing the whole financial system to use this unified identification system, and that has major implications for the sector. The system, which can be used not only for verifying customers but also for loans, direct transfers of subsidies, and a host of other financial transactions, could change the contours of formal and informal business in India."⁷

Though the purpose of 'demonetization' remained obscure till date for which prominent economist like Steve Hanke (Johns Hopkins University Professor of Applied Economics) commented-'Demonetisation, is in principal, a mistake, because it involves a theft -- a taking of private property by the State' and 'It is one of those bad Indian ideas that has been tried twice in the past, with two failures for the record books' and finally criticized saying 'This cloud over the economy will probably remain as long as Modi is in power.'⁸

Demonetization was a Himalayan blunder- the Reserve Bank of India, on 28th August 2018, issued its annual report in which Mr.Urjit Patel has committed that 99.3% of the demonetized notes (valuing Rs.15.42 lakh crores in circulation) were withdrawn from the system and only Rs.10000 crores or 0.7% are still scattered within the system unnecessarily. The question comes up as to who is misleading the Indian public--is it the Global Financial Integrity (GFI) or the Government of India which claims to have Rs.10000 crores only as unaccounted money in the system. Such amount is a miniscule one in comparison to the mammoth financial structure of India. If the government is revealing the truth, it essentially means that there was either no need of spending around Rs.12500 crores for printing new notes against the old ones or the huge amount of black money was whitened in the process of demonetization. Today, on 31st August, Mr. Arun Jaitley, the finance minister of India, appeared on morning DD News to describe that since demonetization, the number of tax-payers has gone up from 3.41 crores to 6.31 crores and the collected tax amount has exponentially gone up from around Rs.4.83 lakh crores to 10.56 lakh crores as a bold step of demonetization. He came forward with such data only after Mr. Rahul Gandhi questioned the validity of demonetization on 30th August. However, any serious intellectual or scholar understands that the rise in tax amount and number of taxpayers have gone up due to excise duty hike in petrol and diesel and implementation of GST. And it has nothing to do with 'demonetization' at all.

The electronic transaction witnessed a steady rise since 2008 and a surge after demonetization. Around 44 per cent people are now using Net banking, and it is most preferred mode of payment among the internet users. Continuous extensions of facilities such as bill payment, account maintenance, fund transfer, at the ATM stations have reduced personal visits for branch banking has dramatically reduced. The banks all over the country witnessed surge in card usage in the post demonetization period, especially the customers are making purchases and making payments through their debit cards.

The biggest difficulty in the way of cash-less or less-cash economy is that the large number of people are less literate, having no knowledge of digital transaction, having a fearsome apathy with the modern gadgets, infinite lack of trust on the government, the system and the technology. Whenever the government comes up with a new project or scheme for their benefit, they become skeptical and tacitly reject the beneficial schemes as 'jumla' of the government. The Modi government had come to power with the promise that the every farthing of Rs.70 lakh crores of black money, stashed in Swiss Bank, would be brought back and every Indian would get Rs.15 lakh in their accounts but nothing happened as such. A movement of opening Jan-Dhan accounts was run enthusiastically and almost 90% of adults got linked with the banks but yet no amount appeared in their accounts. Of course, a good number of such accounts were misused for money laundering during demonetization drive. The Central and state governments of India had launched around 28657 pro-people development schemes in the last 70 years, out of which around 9850 died its natural death, 4567 remained either technically held up or half-done and 6435 got scrapped or backfired and the rest are awaiting its completion and

evaluation. One of the highly ambitious schemes, for distributing very low cost generic medicines dying slowly but surely because of non-availability of medicines at those outlets. The much-hyped on-going 'Shauchalaya' scheme is going to die shortly, in spite of its gigantic pomp and show, because of non-availability of water and its unscientific design. One may question the context of these issues with the bank-less banking and cash-less economy; the simple answer is that the people have lost TRUST and CONFIDENCE on the governments and the leadership. People are fed up with blatant lies, eye-wash, pomp and show and political 'jumla' like 'Garibi Hatao', 'India Shining' or 'Aachhey Din.' If China or the USA is giving prominence to India or GDP growth rate touches 7.4%, India has beaten up French economy or for that matter, inflow of FDI has increased dramatically-it makes no difference for a common man whose pocket is being regularly sucked due to ever-increasing prices of diesel and petrol, cost of commutation, fees of the wards, vegetable prices, medical expenditure, mobile-recharge tariff and lack of disposable income to survive and grow.

Even if people indulge in cash-less transactions, security and safety of their accounts are not ensured on date. While, 'India boasts to be a vibrant and rapidly growing economy with sophisticated technology-based banking; enormous data breach from the debit cards issued by various Indian banks reported in October 2016. A rough estimate showed that around 3.2 million debit cards were compromised. Major Indian banks such as the SBI, HDFC Bank, ICICI, YES Bank and Axis Bank were among the worst hit. A good number of such debit card users reported unauthorized use of their cards in locations somewhere in China. This online fraud resulted in one of the India's biggest card replacement drive in banking history. The State Bank of India alone announced the blocking and early replacement of almost 600,000 debit cards.*⁹&¹⁰

CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS

The recent announcements by the government in the union budget of 2017-18 is a positive step towards encouraging cashless transactions, banning cash transactions beyond Rs. 3 lakh in value, restructuring the taxation system by reducing its incidence on lower and middle income groups and taking necessary steps in implementing GST while simplifying tax administration. Having a caution from the RBI about the gross NPA which might surpass the height of Rs.15 lakh crores; the government is planning for early merger of 11 sick banks out of 21 PSBs within six months so that their capital base may be broadened without bail-out and the 'trust' of the customers and stake-holders might be reposed.

Though, the government is putting its best efforts to 'digitize' the economy, it has to consider the bitter truth that the real income of the common people is continuously falling and any degree of digitization would not help if the people are having no disposable income in their accounts. The government can easily get rid of the high-cost sinking PSBs either by privatizing them or by merging all of them with the State Bank of India by the year end and may ensure e-payments provided it works immediately on providing 'UBI'(Universal Basic Income) to the tune of Rs.10000 per month in all the Jan-Dhan accounts. So far as the availability of loans and advances for personal and commercial purposes are concerned, the system of deliverance required to be centralized and the documents relating to pre and post sanctioning process may be channelized through the highly trained and motivated BCs. Necessary regulatory changes be brought in the loan processing system within 31st December and compatible software be developed for better control and surveillance of the borrowers and loan accounts.

With increasing greed, bribery, corruption and falling ethics among the government and bank officials; it has become imperative to shift altogether from physical banking to virtual banking and generalize bio-metric transaction process for shift and sundry. This would restore the 'Trust' in government as well as inculcate psychological preparedness among people for cash-less transaction.

On the basis of the above facts and figures, thought-based discussions, it can safely be concluded that the physical banking and cash-less transactions can be minimized by the year 2020.

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DESCRIPTIVE STUDY ON USAGE OF THE E-BANKING DURING THE PANDEMIC - COVID-19

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ABSTRACT

The COVID-19 pandemic adversely impacted various industrial sectors of India as well as other countries across globe. In India, impact is resulting to a negative growth rate in economy. Many sectors were performing good before the pandemic but now they have been pulled down by this pandemic. COVID-19 has led to significant structural and behavioural changes in the form of social distancing, drive for economic rejuvenation, and increasing regulatory and government interventions. These changes, such as disruptions to physical operations, impact on asset quality and liquidity, and demand pressure on digital channels, have posed challenges to financial institutions across key functions. Digital banking reduces a person's bank visits and manual work, along with saving time. The COVID-19 pandemic has accelerated the process of digital banking due to its numerous benefits. Smartphone usage has resulted in an additional surge in digital banking during the COVID-19 pandemic. Moreover, swift transactions, 24/7 banking facilities, and smooth mobile banking have flourished the digital banking industry. This study focuses on Descriptive Study On Usage Of The E-Banking During The Pandemic - Covid-19. Besides business moving online and knowing money is also moving online, in this research we tried to analyse what part Covid-19 is playing to push the E-Banking? How much this lockdown is affecting the E-Banking? Are we rushing by getting rid of cash? And if we are, what is the cost?

Keywords: E-Banking, Covid-19, Online Banking.

INTRODUCTION

Indian economy basically depends on the three sectors namely primary sector, secondary sector and tertiary sector and all the three sectors are being majorly supported by banking sector. Banking sector is providing the financial support to all these sectors by disbursing loans, advances, short term credits, issuing letter of credit, bank guarantees etc as its traditional work. Apart from it the new phase of Indian Banking resembles in work like providing forex support, digital banking, e-commerce, telebanking, e-kiosk and many more. You cannot imagine rapid growing economy without banking support. If banking sector get impacted by any obstacle its consequences will definitely be borne by all these three sectors which are pillar of the Indian economy.

Ideally, banks are boring yet important part of our lives. Boring because one has to wait for long hours in queue just to get cash or transfer money. If you hit your rewind button, then, about 30 years ago, banking systems dealt with a lot of paperwork. Computers and the internet were not advanced enough to run quickly. A lot has changed to date but a huge push to go digital came from the COVID-19 pandemic. This outbreak changed the shape of the entire banking industry by making it go digital.

In simple terms, digital banking means converting all traditional banking services to online or digital mode. These services could be deposits, transfers, withdrawals, applying for various financial services, account handling, loan management, and bill payments. Digital banking eliminates the need for paperwork such as demand drafts, cashing cheques, or pay-in slips. One has the complete liberty to perform all banking activities 24/7 without literally going to the bank. Digital banking facilities are accessible with a stable internet connection and any electronic gadget like mobiles, laptops, or tabs.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

- Historically, the launching of the primary cash machine Machine (ATM) in Finland marked the beginning of a replacement banking channel, which made Finland the leading country in E-Banking, before it became widely utilized in the other developed and developing countries (H. Sharma, 2011). More recently, E-Banking, or the distribution of monetary services via electronic systems, has spread among customers thanks to rapid improvement in IT and thru competition between banks (Mahdi, Rezaul, & Rahman, 2010).
- Lustsik (2004) defines E-Banking services as a spread of e-channels for doing banking transactions through Internet, telephone, TV, mobile, and computer. Banking customers' desires and expectations with reference to service are expanding, as technology advances and improves. These days, the customer wants to work and do his or her banking transactions at any location without getting to the bank, at any time without being limited to the bank's working hours, and to try to to all his or her payments (purchasing, bills, stocks) during a fast and cost-effective way. Consequently, financial services quality ought to be

characterized by independence, elasticity, freedom, and flexibility, to accommodate these desires (Khalfan & Alshawaf, 2004).

- In Lebanon, E-Banking is still mostly limited to the Internet and mobile telephones. This is due partially to slow development of IT infrastructure within the country. With that in mind, we are defining the concept because the ability to conduct banking and financial transactions electronically via the web or mobile telephone applications.

What are the Benefits of Digital Banking during the COVID-19 Pandemic?

There is a significant advantage of fund or money transfer as digital banking skips the hassle of issuing demand drafts or cheques. One can simply transfer money from one account to the other without visiting a bank from the safety of their homes. This ensures a low risk of COVID-19 infection and the liberty of transactions anytime and anywhere. A few notable options for online money transfers are IMPS (Immediate Payment Service), RTGS (Real-Time Gross Settlement), and NEFT (National Electronic Fund Transfer).

Apart from this, one has the luxury of downloading e-bank statements at any point in time. These bank statements can be saved on mobile phones or laptops and can be accessed easily. This prevents the need to visit banks and take printed copies of statements, thus preventing unwanted contact during the COVID-19 pandemic. Moreover, the installation of ATM machines in every nook and corner is aiding people in withdrawing cash, be it day or night.

Bill payments can be smoothly managed with digital banking by simply logging in to your bank account. All kinds of bills such as electricity, phone, gas, and television can be completed via digital banking. Mostly, several banks have auto-debit facility to pay bills automatically whenever issued. For instance, HDFC bank has started a pre-paid mobile recharge facility as part of the digital banking initiative. In addition to this, one can open a fixed deposit account in seconds, invest in mutual funds, and apply for loans and various insurance policies as well.

The rise in smartphone usage and the availability of strong network connectivity has paved way for mobile banking systems. Since everyone nowadays possesses a smartphone, one can download apps for transaction purposes. Google Pay, Apple Pay, BHIM, SBI's Yono, Payzapp and many more are gaining popularity amidst the COVID-19 outbreak. For transactions, one just has to scan a QR code or know the phone number of the beneficiary. Mobile banking apps are like mini-digital banks that include all banking services on the go.

If at all you have to stop a cheque process, then simply log in to your account and click on update cheque process. Furthermore, one can track credits and debits of the account as banks send SMS or e-mails of transactions. These notifications aid in preventing frauds and one must report them as quickly as possible to the bank authorities. Beyond this, digital banking displays transaction history and any pending payments as well.

The Future of Digital Banking

The banking industry of the future will look radically different from what it is today driven by some evolutionary changes. It would be safe to say that the future of banking is 'Digital'. The pandemic has reshaped our lives from how we shop, travel, work, to even how we bank, and has also driven a change in consumer behaviour. Driven by the pandemic, the social and economic landscape has been radically reshaped while customer needs and expectations continue to dynamically evolve. Consumers have become more demanding of digital experiences. The pandemic has only amplified the need for easy access to banking products, services and information. Given most customers are now comfortable using online channels, the traditional 'customer loyalty' for physical proximity of branch would now be influenced by personalization and customization provided through digital offerings. Some of the key purchase drivers would be 'Value for money', 'Ease of buying', 'Personal safety' Etc. The digital banking sector will continue to grow in the upcoming years with a few changes in technology. Several banks are already utilizing artificial intelligence for meeting the financial demands and expectations of customers. Today it is artificial intelligence; tomorrow, it will be something else that'll augment digital banking to a greater height.

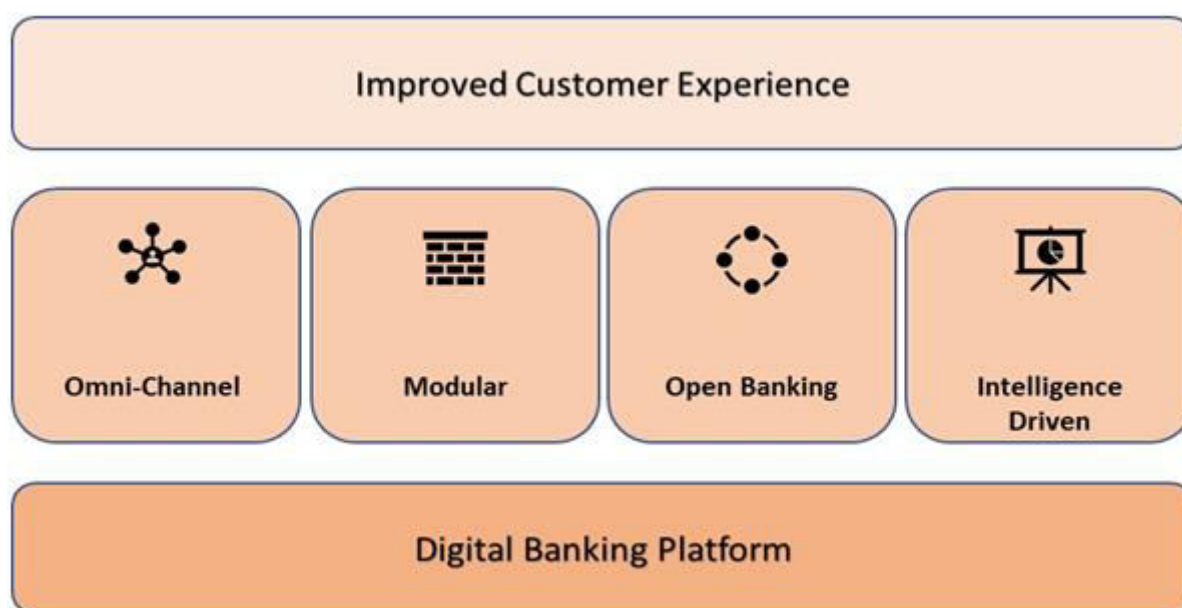
Since, in India after 23 March, 2020 lockdown was implemented. People are trying to go for E-Banking as often as possible avoiding the physical contact with each other. The key is it can take place from anywhere and anytime. And if we take a step back and take a look at the whole picture it has made a global impact because since less cash traction is happening the economy is still moving though at a slower speed but it hasn't just stopped. According to Ey fintech adoption index 2017, India is in 2nd place when it comes to using digital payment systems. So we can say in the distant future, coins and notes are going to go extinct and transactions will fully happen online.

Digital Banking Will Be The Future Of Banking Post Corona Pandemic

Customers now expect banks to maximize digital interactions and come up with digital alternatives for their day-to-day banking needs as they are now more open to trying out a new app than they were before the COVID-19 pandemic. In the last few years, banking as an industry has seen a massive move towards digitization. Traditional banks are challenged by new-age, digital only banks that rely on replacing the traditional banking experience with a hyper-personalised digital first approach. In addition, banks need to boost their Return on Equity, bring down Cost to Income ratio etc. in order to stay competitive. Banks have also been facing threats from new entrants such as Google, Amazon and other technology companies looking to enter this space. COVID-19 has accelerated some of these trends, like changed customer behaviour and adaptation of newer tools and technologies by the banks. Customers now expect banks to maximize digital interactions and come up with digital alternatives for their day-to-day banking needs as they are now more open to trying out a new app than they were before the COVID-19 pandemic.

Digital Banking – Way Ahead

In the post COVID world, digital banks will need to replace many of the customer's existing transactions and interactions with the bank by improved use of technology.



To achieve this, they will need to build a robust, scalable technology platform focusing on the above mentioned components.

By integrating different kinds of customer data (demographic, transaction, interaction, behaviour, application usage etc.), banks can create unique experiences for each customer by leveraging technologies such as Cognitive Computing, Machine Learning, Natural Language Processing etc.

In the post-COVID world, customers will need to feel unique and cared for even when they interact with banks over digital channels.

Digital Banking experience will be a game changer for enhancing customer satisfaction post-COVID. Banks need to take a holistic view and invest across all pillars of digital banking to retain existing customers and acquire new ones.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVE:

This research aims,

1. To study the impact of a pandemic on the E-Banking.
2. To study the preference of consumers of digital payment systems.

HYPOTHESIS:

H0: There is no significant relation between Covid-19 and E-Banking.

H1: There is a significant relation between Covid-19 and E-Banking.

RESEARCH AND METHODOLOGY:

Research design is descriptive. The data for the study is collected from both primary and secondary sources. Primary data is generated through an online survey.

TESTING OF HYPOTHESIS:

t-Test: Paired Two Sample for Means		
<i>Questions</i>	Did you use E-Banking before Covid-19?	Do you use E-Banking now?
Mean	1.229007634	1.13740458
Variance	0.177921315	0.119436289
Observations	131	131
Pearson Correlation	0.732313584	
Hypothesized Mean Difference	0	
df	130	
t Stat	3.620668957	
P(T<=t) one-tail	0.0002098	
t Critical one-tail	1.656659413	
P(T<=t) two-tail	0.0004197	
t Critical two-tail	1.978380405	

By using T-test paired of Two sample mean series as $p < 0.05$ i.e. **0.0002 P (T<=t)**, hence hypothesis **H0(i.e. There is a significant relation between Covid-19 and E-Banking.)** is accepted.

SUGGESTIONS

- According to our survey, we found out that some level of education is required for the usage of E-Banking. So our suggestion is to make the payment interface easy and spread more and more awareness because in this pandemic social distancing is a must and we need to maintain minimum human to human contact.
- Our suggestion to coders and application developers is to create a more secure system, because people are putting their hard earned money and it shouldn't get stolen. Because the more the business goes online, the higher is the risk of cyber attacks.
- It is also important we have a bit of control how fast this change happens because some people might be left behind, some people may find it hard to grasp and understand the E-Banking or fintech. Also, there are people who rely heavily on cash because many people don't even have a proper smartphone or a bank account.

CONCLUSIONS

E-Banking are helping local vendors and helping many consumers in a very great and innovative way, not only has it kept our economy alive but also reduced human to human contact. And people who are using it should also encourage other people to use it. But if we look at the big picture, Central banks enact monetary policies by taking control over the amount of money which is printed and which is in circulation and they are able to do it because they are the only entity that prints money, the purpose is to control that amount of flow of cash in the economy. But in the society which is cashless it is a bit harder because there are other entity too that can create money e.g. Facebook announced that they are looking forward to launching its own digital currency. So, that point is the E-Banking is a great opportunity for taking the economic cashless but we should also look out for consequences. Also, the government needs to make sure as we move to a cashless society, vulnerable people aren't left behind.

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COPING WITH AND ADAPTING TO THE CRISES DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC BY THE LOCAL FOOD JOINTS (POLI BHAJI KENDRA) IN MULUND EAST AREA

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ABSTRACT

Food industry in India got adversely affected during the lockdown period. Post lockdown period slowly and gradually the food industry started adjusting itself to the new normal. However this served as the actual time for the local food joints to resonate and expand their business.

The Local Food Joints popularly known as the Poli Bhaji Kendra, form an integral part of the working Mumbaikars. The term Poli Bhaji is culturally loaded as it is a Maharashtrian cuisine served almost every day in all homes.

The paper takes into account the crises faced by the workforce especially the poor, single women and widows, in this local sector of food industry. This paper also seeks to examine the adaptations made by the Local Food Joints (Poli Bhaji Kendra) during the Covid-19 Pandemic Crises. Some of the food joints invented newer ideas of delivering their food products. A focus will also be made on these ideas. The investigation and study is restricted to the area of Mulund (East) a suburb in the north east of Mumbai city.

The qualitative method of questionnaire will be used while undertaking this study. The method of data collection will be the obtaining of first-hand information from group interviews.

Key words : Poli Bhaji Kendra, Lock down

INTRODUCTION

The global markets have faced enormous changes in the Covid-19 pandemic situation. These markets witnessed major changes in the consumer behavior, that have been much influenced by the changing situation and recession prevailing in the country. As unemployment is a crucial issue hovering currently in India, many people especially women have started the business of local food joints in the locality. Now customers belonging to different age groups flock towards the food joints to satisfy their taste buds and hedonistic needs. As the topic mentioned above, a detailed research is carried out in Mulund (East) area at local level in order to understand and analyze how the small-scale businesses are functioning in the situation of pandemic crises. Pandemic is not a new concept that is encountered in the history of humanity, because human beings have previously faced various pandemics. Now taking into consideration the food industry and food supply chain, it has been majorly affected globally right from the field to the consumer. The food production, processing, distribution and demand have faced major implications and this has an impact on the consumer behavior.

Moreover, restricted food trade policies, restrictions of workers and financial pressures in food supply chain have negatively impacted the food industry. The local food joints are operational today even in the post lockdown scenario but the market economy is fluctuating and not providing expected profit to these small business firms and enterprise. Many of the local food joints in Mulund (East) have been started by single mother, widow, and women from low financial background. In order to earn a basic livelihood and support their respective families this particular business is carried out mostly by the women. As the pandemic started tearing through India most of the food joints faced huge hit. Various home chef and women with no institutional or monetary support found their resilience tested in unprecedented ways. Survival thus became a challenge. According to a 2019 report by the National Restaurant Association of India (NRAI) India employs about one million delivery representatives, across online delivery services like Swiggy, Zomato and UberEATS. But Mumbai's popular culture of food joints which used to relish by people cutting cross community and class barriers have no much consumers now. Many vendors have even returned back to their native places because their small-scale businesses had shut-down. The year 2020 was a year of long overdue miseries and introspection, across the wider society and within the food and beverage industry.

To start a business at local level by a woman is a critical challenge but women entrepreneurs face many problems while executing their business idea in reality. Defying social expectations, accessing funding, struggling to be taken seriously, building support system, balancing business and family life, coping with fear of failure are some of the prominent factors when a woman decides to start the business. As the labour force in our country is large chunk of population, many of the people lost their respective jobs and shifted to this business

sector called as the local food joints, where the food is provided at an affordable and reasonable price taking into consideration the obtaining force of the people in the respective areas.

Therefore adapting to new normal and addressing the prevailing situation have been very much crucial today for the local food joints. Thus, the research paper is focusing on the crises faced by the Local food joints in Mulund (East) area which are managed mostly by the women.

Aim : To understand the COVID-19 pandemic crises situation faced by local food joints in Mulund east area.

OBJECTIVES:

- 1) To study the difficulties and problems faced by local food joints in Mulund (East) area during the pandemic.
- 2) To analyze the new normal adaptation strategies that the local food joints in Mulund (East) area adopted to maintain their food business.

Crises faced and Adaptation made by the Local food Joints in Mulund East

There are about 30 lakh street food joints in India. And to help the chefs on the street, the South Asian Association for Gastronomy (SAAG) started a campaign called 'Save Street Food' in India, Sri Lanka, Nepal and Bangladesh. But life isn't rosy and business isn't picking up in the Covid-19 pandemic crises. As the research topic is focusing on a particular area it is important to have basic knowledge of that area. Mulund, the area of research, is a suburb in the north east of Mumbai, Maharashtra, India and it is famous for its street food culture. But because of the pandemic situation the street food and local Poli bhaji Kendra have been affected enormously. Small scale business has almost stop functioning in this situation, along with bearing monetary loss, street vendors and owners of local food joints also had to undergo mental stress due to restrictions imposed by the local authorities. For India and its States like other developing countries, lockdown came with a huge social and economic cost and in April 2020 alone, 12 crores individuals lost their jobs. As in India more than 80% of the workforce is engaged in the informal sector for their livelihoods and 15% of the informal sector works as street vendors in India.

A research is conducted to study sustainability of Poli Bhaji Kendra during pandemic situation in Mulund (East). There are number of activities related to supply of Poli bhaji and food articles to the customers very regularly. In pandemic situation how these units sustained and survived is the research question of the study. In order to study this situation in Mulund (East) area an interview method is carried out with a well prepared and planned questionnaire covering all the aspects related to the topic. To understand the issue of Poli Bhaji Kendra in Mulund, twelve Kendra's were interviewed by asking twelve questions. The questions focused on the key areas of the topic starting from the name of particular food joint, how old is the joint, did the joint faced any kind of problems during the lockdown, was it functioning during the lockdown, prices of food items were increased or not, were the COVID-19 patients served food, any special request from senior citizens, monthly turnover, whether BMC guidelines are followed or not post lockdown and whether taken help from social media platforms like Swiggy, Zomato etc. Now the responses from various Kendra's have been different as each food joint's experience during lockdown and post lockdown is different so there are mixed responses and opinions of the people.

The Poli Bhaji Kendras which were interviewed are Shubhangi Caterers, Joshi Poli Bhaji Bhakri Kendra, Sharda Parab Poli Bhaji Kendra, Suswad, Vandana, Shri Siddhivinayak, Vardayini, Annapurna, Hanchate, Anugraha, Veeni's Kitchen and Ruchira food Van. Now all of these food joints are well experienced and were functioning during the pandemic situation.

Shubhangi Caterers, Suswad, Vandana, Annapurna are the four Poli Bhaji Kendra who served the food to COVID-19 patients by the way of home and hospital delivery. So, a good work has been done by these food joints as they helped the hospitals also in serving food. One important thing noticed during the interview was every Food joint is taking into consideration proper care, maintaining hygiene, wearing mask and gloves while serving food and talking to customers, also proper sanitization of the food joints has been done and the temperature of each customer is checked when the person enters the joint, the consumers are directed to maintain a queue in order to follow social distancing and avoid crowding. Therefore, all the mandatory provisions, rules and guidelines have been followed by all these food joints in Mulund (East) area. And now people have also started buying the food products because proper COVID preventing mechanism is followed by the Poli Bhaji Kendra.

Shubhangi Caterers is a twenty five years old unit and the second generation is running the business successfully. One good thing which was observed was that the waiters and delivery boys working in this food joint were paid for working extra hours.

Moreover one food joint while interviewing it was noticed that it has the highest experience of more than 40 years in the food industry and the name of it is Joshi Poli Bhaji Kendra. It was also functioning during lockdown phase but it didn't increase the cost of food products during the crises situation and its monthly turn over post lockdown is reasonable. Senior citizens often buy food from this joint as it is old, famous, providing food at reasonable price and the quality, taste of the food is very desirable and liked by most of the people in Mulund (East) area.

The food joint named Suswad has the highest monthly turnover post lockdown amongst all the other local food joints. Suswad has maintained its standard and taste as it is 25 years old food joint so trusted by people and proper hygiene is maintained by this particular joint. Therefore, people are more inclined towards this particular food joint in terms of buying Poli and Bhaji.

Vandana Poli Bhaji Kendra in Gavan Pada, Mulund (East) is three years old joint and the lockdown phase for the owners was a learning experience as its business was not functioning efficiently during that time. This Poli Bhaji Kendra was functioning during the lockdown but the demand was less. No COVID-19 patients were ever served by this food joint and there was no special request of any particular senior citizen for food delivery during the pandemic situation. Prices of food products have not increased post lockdown and strict adherence to BMC guidelines is been followed by this food joint in order to combat the pandemic. The food joint has not taken help from any social media platforms to flourish their business and the monthly turnover has been reasonable.

For all the food joints the lockdown phase was a learning phase except for one food joint that is Ruchira Food Van in Palm Acres area. It is five years old and it faced difficult time during the lockdown as there was monetary pressure and the business was not flourishing as earlier but still it was operational during the lockdown period and the prices of food products were considerably increased. In order to expand their business, the owners even delivered food on special request done by the senior citizens. BMC guidelines of preventing Covid-19 pandemic have been efficiently followed by them during post lockdown.

There is one newly opened joint in Mulund (East) near Khandola Mandir named Veeni's Kitchen- which is just few months old, it is serving the senior citizens by way of home delivery and also following the BMC guidelines.

The effect of Covid-19 pandemic on the restaurant industry and local food joints has been really critical as many food establishments are struggling to keep their heads above water. Also, it is witnessed that new customers tend to order more in order to discover the food joint. Age is an underlying factor in how the orders are placed. Younger consumers are more likely to opt for take-out or pick-up order, while senior citizens and especially those with kids are more likely to place order for home delivery. Now home delivery in heavily hit area by the virus is also a risk for the delivery boys and it is a major concern also. Compared to the holidays, many lockdown chefs and women working in food joints are looking for healthy cooking and simply one pot meals that require less time and effort, that are also easily repeatable.

You tube and other social networking apps have helped the local food joints by creating their page on social media, providing information about the menu which they serve along with price and discounts and offers so that people can approach them and it can help them to expand their business, by doing publicity or putting up a banner on the street can actually help the food joints to carry out their business effectively. As majority of the women have come ahead and showed courage to start and execute the business. It is very much important that we support such small-scale business and help them to flourish and expand.

SUMMARY

Information given by representative of Poli Bhaji Kendra is summarised and presented as follows.

1. Initially information is collected about 'how old is the unit'? It is observed that most of the units are in the range of 5 years to 15 years old. There are very few units which are less than 5 years old. There are three units which are functioning for more than 25 years. This indicates, information is collected from all categories of respondents according to age of the unit.
2. Question was asked about their view on the lock down phase. Information revealed that almost 90% respondent said it was 'learning phase' in our business. There was no definite solution about sustainability of Poli Bhaji Kendra in pandemic situation. Therefore respondent's opinion was 'learning face'. Every unit tried to find solution for sustainability according to location, circumstances and opportunities by protecting health of the individual and family members.

3. From information about functioning of their unit during lockdown it is observed that, 50% of the units were functioning during lockdown. Those were not functioning to the optimum capacity but were functioning according to demand of customers.
4. Respondents were also questioned about change in price during lockdown phase. Most of respondents provided information that 'no change in price'. From this information inclusion is Poli Bhaji Kendra functioning for sustainability and on humanity ground. These units had no intention to take advantage of the situation by increasing the prices abnormally.
5. In lockdown situation families were diagnosed Covid positive and many families required to be quarantined for at least for 14 days. They were not supposed to move out of their house and subsequently cannot purchase grocery and domestic requirements. At that situation Poli Bhaji kendras extended support by supplying fresh and healthy food to the patients and their family members. Most of Poli Bhaji Kendras were functioning on humanity ground to provide fresh and healthy food. In most of the cases representative of the Poli Bhaji Kendra was delivering food at the doorstep of the customers. This was very appreciating, because hotels, restaurants were closed. Services of Swiggy, Zomato were not available. Therefore most of Poli Bhaji Kendra had taken initiative to deliver the food by them.
6. Besides Covid patients there was request from senior citizens to supply the food. Maids and servants not allowed to enter the building and work in regular manner hence it was necessary to provide food for senior citizens. Poli Bhaji Kendras which were functioning extended their services to senior citizens on the request. A few Units thus extended services to senior citizens for the smooth functioning during pandemic situation.
7. Information is collected about payment to the employees of the unit. Not only units which are functioning paid salary to their employees but also some units which were not functioning paid salaries to the Employees on humanity ground. This helped employees for their domestic financial management.
8. Post lockdown situation was important to rebuild original business of the units. All units were having proper knowledge about guidelines given by Municipal Corporation. These guidelines were followed completely by each and every unit not because of compulsion but because of awareness of importance of health of individual family members as well as customers to whom food was provided. All units were collecting information about guidelines issued by Municipal Corporation from time to time and followed completely.
9. Information also collected about turnover of unit post lockdown situation. From the financial information provided by the units it is observed that units which are not functioning their turnover is reasonable. But units which were functioning during lockdown situation reported significant increase in turnover. This increase in turnover because of mouth publicity of Poli Bhaji Kendras, which were functioning during lockdown situation. Their services were appreciated by customers and recommended to their friends and relatives. This mouth publicity has impact on significant increase in turnover of the units which were functioning during lockdown situation.

CONCLUSION

Food diversity in India is very unique and an implicit characteristic of India's diversified culture consisting of different regions and states within. Traditionally, Indians like to have home-cooked meals and that is why the craze and demand for Poli Bhaji Kendra has increased. Because it serves food that is similar to home cooked food and one can get it at absolutely pocket friendly price. However, with changing time due to increasing awareness and influence of western culture, there is a slight shift in food consumption patterns among urban Indian families. Today local food joint industry is getting more adapted to Indian food requirements and is growing in India. It is eventually gaining acceptance from younger as well as senior members of the society. As consumer acceptance of food served by Poli bhaji kendra is critically important for the future growth and expansion of the outlet. In today's times consumers are demanding more information related to hygiene issue and nutritional values. Based on the analysis and results it can be said that with more and more acceptability of Poli bhaji Kendra's and change in lifestyle during the post lockdown period, competition among food joints with respect to quality of food and customer service will be more prominent in the days to come.

As the Poli bhaji is a Maharashtrian cuisine so Marathi speaking population is more inclined towards these Kendra's. It is the comfort food which any age group of people can have and the feeling of getting served homemade food is much satisfying than food served at fast food outlets. It is important for the local food joints to maintain hygiene, quality and taste amidst the Covid-19 pandemic crises. The BMC guidelines should be

thoroughly followed by the consumers and also by the owners of food joints. As some areas even today have a greater number of COVID-19 cases so in such areas if the food joint is located then they need to be more vigilant and efficient in taking care while dealing with the customers and also while serving them the food. As the interview method was followed in analyzing the topic, the owners of the food joints were very cooperative and answered willingly and honestly. Most of the Poli Bhaji kendra are serving vegetarian meals, there are very few who sell both vegetarian and non-vegetarian. It was observed that some food joints paid extra to their delivery boys. It was also observed that the demand for Swiggy and Zomato has also increased because people prefer to order online rather than visiting the outlet because of the prevailing condition.

Thus, today the local food joint industry is getting adapted to Indian food requirements and is in growing demand. It is important to note the Indian food habits and changing preferences towards food consumption. If a food joint correctly identifies the pattern of food consumption by consumers then eventually the business will surely enhance and expand. Also, by providing consumer feedback to the local food joints can help others to know about the joint and also about the food they serve. Moreover, single women, widows have also started this business in order to sustain and yield financial stability in life. As the Pandemic is still prevailing in our country and also at the local level, so people are bit skeptical about buying outside food so in order to gain the confidence of the customers proper packaging of the food with all the preventive and safety precautions (e.g.: - wearing gloves, mask and sanitation while packaging the food and talking to the customers) should be strictly followed by the Poli Bhaji Kendra's. As the hotels and canteens were shut down during the lock down and post lock down period, this served as the actual time for the local food joints to resonate and expand their business. And as the prices are reasonable and hygiene is followed so people are attracted towards such food joints and buy the products in large number. And few joints have also started provided healthy organic and vegan food on the demand of the customers who are health conscious and follow a proper diet and are non-vegetarians. Thus, the emerging concept and business of Poli Bhaji Kendra's/Local food joints has gained greater prominence today.

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DECLINING HEALTH OF YAMUNA RIVER ECOSYSTEM

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1. ABSTRACT

Yamuna River is also called Mailee (dirty) river and river of sorrow to Delhi, Mathura and Agra. Yamuna River water is in serious problem and its quality and quantity is deteriorating with the increase in urbanization and industrialization. Wastewater is a major source of pollution in the river Yamuna which is governed by the population, sewage network water supply and collection efficiency of relevant infrastructure etc. and with the increase in population there will be continue to increase in pollution of Yamuna River. The pollution in the Yamuna River is increasing day by day and the river water is becoming unfit for use. Many serious water quality problems are faced in the cities, towns and villages for whom Yamuna River water is source for their use. There is huge increase in Yamuna River pollution which drastically effects its aquatic ecosystem, agriculture, and the humans who reside in these areas. This review focuses on the current status and major sources of pollution in the Yamuna River and its Impacts on Yamuna River ecosystem.

Keywords: Yamuna, River, Pollution, Waste, Water.

2. INTRODUCTION

The largest tributary of the River Ganga is Yamuna river. The main stream of the river Yamuna River's Main stream originates from the Yamunotri glacier in the Mussoorie range of the lower Himalayas near Bandar Punch (38° 59' N 78° 27' E) at an elevation of about 6320 meter above mean sea level in the Uttarkashi (Uttaranchal) district. On the grounds of different geological and ecological characteristic, the river Yamuna has five segments – Himalayan Segment, Upper Segment, Delhi Segment, Eutrophicated segment, and Diluted segment [1] The emission of unprocessed domestic and industrial wastes has badly deteriorated the quality of Yamuna in all the segments except Himalayan segment which maintain river quality standards [2]. Yamuna is the sub-basin of the System of River Ganga. Seven Indian states are been covered by this large basin. Yamuna originates in the Mussoorie range of the lower Himalayas from Yamunotri glacier, and after a traverse of 1,376 km it joins the Ganga at Allahabad. 366,220 sq km is the drainage area of the Yamuna basin, which encircles the seven states, viz. Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Delhi, Haryana, Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand and Himachal Pradesh. The Yamuna River has four main tributaries in the Himalayan region: Hanuman Ganga, Rishi Ganga, Tons and Giri [3]. In the plains, the main tributaries are the Chambal, Sind, Hindon, Betwa and Ken.

Various uses of Yamuna River water are as follows:

1. The river water is used for abstractive and other uses like irrigation, domestic water supply, industrial etc. Which has subjected to its overexploitation in terms of both quantity and quality. A huge number of population is dependent on the Yamuna river. For different purpose the river water is abstracted at various location. The points of abstract and addition in water of Yamuna River are shown in Figure 1.

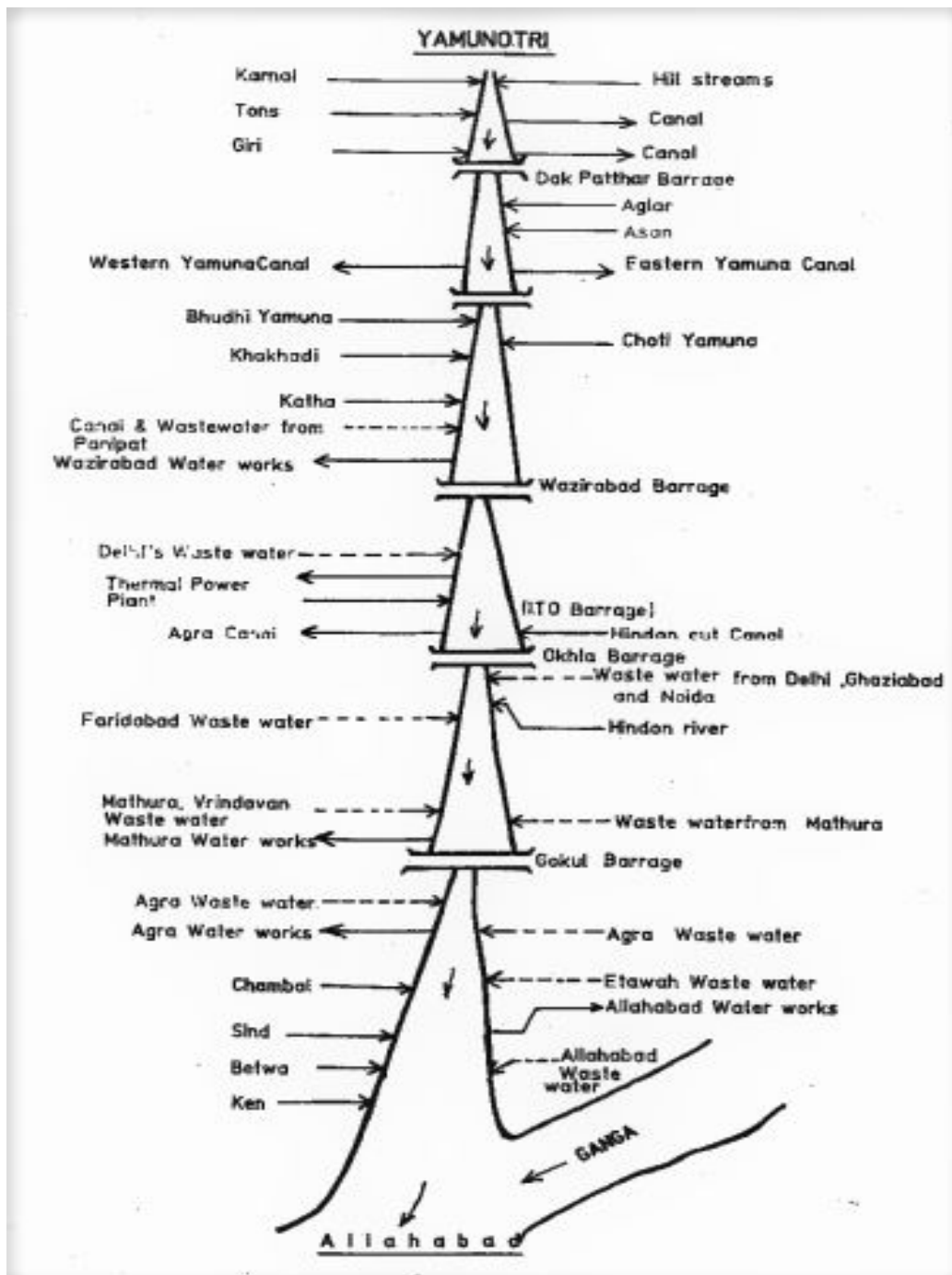


Figure 2.1: Points of abstract and addition in Yamuna River (CPCB 2006-07) [4]

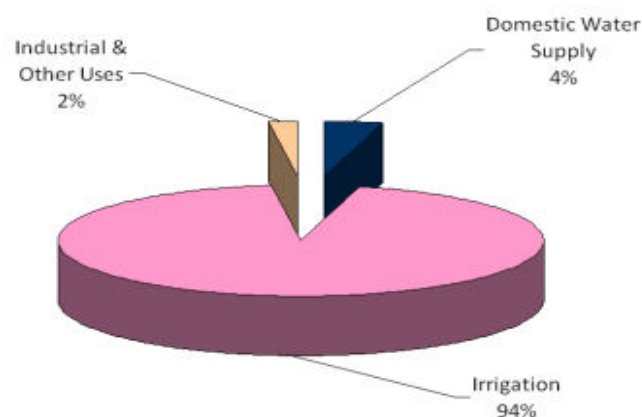


Figure 2.2: Water abstracted from River Yamuna for various uses in percentage (CPCB, 2006-07)[4]

2. Approximately 4% of Yamuna river water is used for domestic water supply. Use of Yamuna river water for domestic water supply is found in Mathura, Agra, Delhi and Allahabad. It is estimated that about 94% of Yamuna river water is used for irrigation. In the entire Yamuna basin, the irrigated land is about 12.3 million hectares and approximately half of it (about 49%) is irrigated exclusively from surface water. [5]
3. Pisciculture is not practiced on large scale but the river water used for pisciculture is not used in an organized manner.
4. Yamuna River water is used by the people for animal bathing or millions of people come and take a dip in the holy river. So River water is used for bathing and washing and much of this is attributable due to religious rituals.
5. The flowing river water and canal water is used by around 70% of the cattles in Yamuna basin for bathing and drinking of water which leads to a huge impact on the water quality. (CPCB, 2006-07) [4]

3. Sources of pollution in Yamuna river -

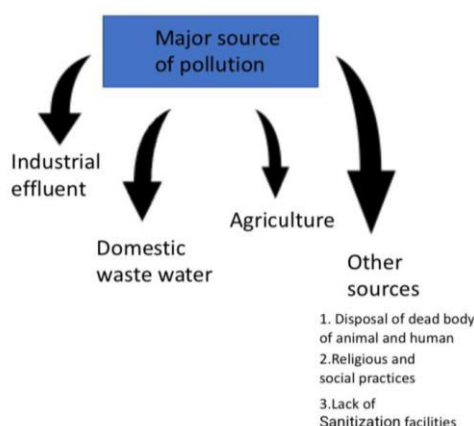


Figure 3.1: Sources of Pollution [3]

Industrial effluents

Most of the industries are on its bank and used to dump the untreated effluents into the river. Estimates by Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) states that 359 industrial units approximately, directly or indirectly discharge their effluents in Yamuna. According to the reports by central pollution control board (CPCB) pollutants are generated from 20 large, 25 medium and almost 93,000 small scale industries that are located in Delhi also flows in the river. [6]

Domestic waste water

Large scale discharge of wastewater in Yamuna makes it one of the most polluted rivers of the world especially around the Delhi. According to a Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) survey, Delhi contributes 23 percent of the total wastewater generated by Class I cities (cities with more than 100,000 people) [7]. More shockingly, this is 47 per cent of the waste generated by 101 Class I cities and 122 Class II cities (Population: 50,000-99,999) in the Ganga basin. [7]

Pollution from agriculture-

The one of the main sources of contamination in the Yamuna River is agriculture. Agriculture is one of the leading causes for water pollution, it is responsible for the discharge of the huge amount of plant nutrients, agrochemicals, pathogens by runoff from agricultural fields affects quality of river.

Solid waste

Dumping of solid waste and garbage is one of the major problems in Yamuna River[5]. People living the city or people near the river dump the solids wastes and untreated water indiscriminately into the river. Solid wastes that are dumped mainly composed of animal waste or cow dung, fecal matter, generated from various authorized and unauthorized dairy colonies located in Sonipat, Panipat, Noida, Delhi, Mathura, Etawah and Agra and this is considered as one of the major non-point source of pollution. As per the report of Yamuna Action Plan the content of suspended solids in Yamuna is 1000-10,000 mg/L and the permissible content of suspended solids is 100 mg/L. [6]

Other sources of pollution

There are many other reasons which causes pollution of Yamuna river water:

Dumping of the dead animals or humans, wastes of animals into the river water. Religious and holy occasions every year where many people take a dip into Yamuna river water, and leave behind the worship materials as an offering to god like diyas,, flowers, etc. which increase the suspended materials in the river water. The superstitious mindset of the peoples and lack of awareness among the people about the consequences of their attitude or actions in regard to the river pollution has contributed and it's still contributing and increasing the Yamuna River Pollution. There are many cities and towns that are situated along the Yamuna River which lack proper sanitization facilities and many people use river catchment areas for defecation and dumping of untreated wastes and this is also a source of organic and pathogenic contamination in the river.

Regular monitoring by Central Pollution Control Board of the drains in Delhi discharging wastewater to river Yamuna is done. Wastewater flow in the Yamuna river is major source of pollution, which is governed by population, water supply, sewerage network and collection, efficiency of the relevant infrastructure, etc. Currently, the waste water generated in the basin is 8,444 MLD, from which about 4,458 MLD is directly discharged into the river Yamuna and 1,200 MLD is discharged into its tributaries and 2,786 MLD which is remaining is used for irrigation or disposed of on land [3]. As the population is growing, generation of wastewater will further escalate. Waste water generated by Delhi alone is 44 % of all the sewage generated in the basin and along it whole course the sewage getting added is 84. State-wise wastewater generation, which demonstrates that the Uttar Pradesh is highest contributor of industrial waste in the Yamuna River through Hindon River and Hindon-cut. On the sewage treatment front, Delhi has highest sewage treatment capacity of 2,330 MLD which is about 68 % of the total sewage treatment capacity in the basin.. Inspite of several STPs have been installed along the river course with a varied designed capacity [3]. There is still a large gap between generation and treatment in Delhi itself [10]

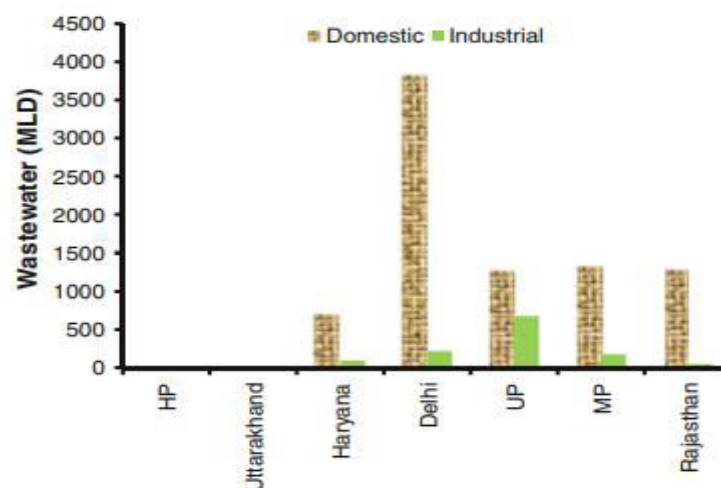


Figure 3.2: State-wise industrial and domestic wastewater

4. Impact on Yamuna ecosystem-

Due to the huge discharge of waste into river basins, the effect is more pronounced in the water quality in these areas. It affects the live of aquatic organisms and agriculture, and hence the humans who reside in these areas. Since 1977, Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) is regularly carrying out Water quality monitoring and analysis of Yamuna River. Water quality criteria for a healthy river are that it should contain at least 5 mg/L of Dissolved Oxygen and about 3 mg/L of Biochemical Oxygen Demand dissolved oxygen(mg/l). the Pathogens (disease causing bacteria's) represented by the Fecal Coliforms counts should not exceed 500 per 100 mL of water.

Following are the different water quality parameters of Yamuna river:

Biological oxygen demand (BOD)

It measures the rate of consumption of oxygen by biological organisms to breakdown the organic matter added by sewage or effluents discharged by industries. High demand of BOD shows that the Dissolved Oxygen level is falling, and Aquatic life and biodiversity of river is under threat. The reason is the of higher levels of organic pollutants and nitrate in water. As per reports of CPCB,2020 the BOD level in Yamuna from Yamunotri (origin) to Palla (Place between Sonipat and Nizamuddin Bridge) in Delhi is usually ranges from 1-9.1 mg/l. From Nizamuddin Bridge to Agra downstream the BOD level ranges from 4.7 to max. 114 mg/l. Beyond this from River Yamuna at Bates water U.P. to River Yamuna at Allahabad downstream ranges from 1.8 to 20 mg/l [8]

Dissolved oxygen

As per reports of CPCB,2020 Dissolved oxygen in river Yamuna at Yamunotri to Palla , Delhi ranges from 5.2 to 17.1 mg/l. From Nizamuddin, Delhi to River Yamuna at downstream of Agra, U.P. Dissolved oxygen ranges from 1.4 to 16.2 mg/l. Beyond this from River Yamuna at Bates water, U.P. to River Yamuna at Allahabad downstream ranges from 2.6 to 11.5 mg/l [8].

Chemical oxygen demand

The presence of the organic and inorganic pollutants in the water body indicates High COD beyond the permissible limits. As per reports of CPCB, 2006. Palla and Surghat's COD levels are found lower than 50 mg/l and highest COD (460 mg/l) at Pantoon Pool[9].

Nitrate N + Nitrite N

As per reports of CPCB,2020 Nitrate N + Nitrite N in river Yamuna at Yamunotri to Palla, Delhi ranges from 0.01 to 26.00 mg/l. From Nizamuddin, Delhi to River Yamuna at downstream of Agra, U.P. ranges from 0.01 to 3.56 mg/l. Beyond this from River Yamuna at Bates water, U.P. to River Yamuna at Allahabad downstream ranges from 0.28 to 3.80 mg/l. Ammonia is rapidly oxidized by certain microorganisms in natural water bodies from nitrite to nitrate, a process that requires the presence of dissolved oxygen. So, high BOD levels are because of increased ammonia level through sewage. High BOD levels and increased level of ammonia are indicators of heavy sewage (organic) pollution [10].

Fecal coliform (MPN/100ML)

As per reports of CPCB,2020 Fecal coliform in river Yamuna at Yamunotri to Palla , Delhi ranges from 4 to 11000000 MPN/100 ml. From Nizamuddin, Delhi to River Yamuna at downstream of Agra, U.P. ranges from 400 to 7900000 MPN/100 ml. Beyond this from River Yamuna at Bates water, U.P. to River Yamuna at Allahabad downstream ranges from 20 to 7800 MPN/100 ml[9]. The Coliform population exhibits an positive trends with BOD, ammonia, chlorides and sulphates i.e. population will be very high, which is directly related to pollution load . Therefore, highest population of these bacteria was recorded at Site B especially during summers[10]. On 13th June 2002, Many dead fishes were found in the Sikendra Taj Mahal area along the water body which shows how much the Yamuna river is polluted [7]. The reports shows the complete failure of Pollution control measures. Analysis of the data collected from Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB),2020 (figure: 4.1) and primary sampling at several locations in the Yamuna River indicates that the quality of water is going down day by day and will keep on getting deteriorated if proper management is not done.

Water Quality of River Yamuna (Under NWMP-2020)										
Station code	Station Name	State Name	DissolvedO2 (mg/L)		BOD (mg/L)		Nitrate N + Nitrite N (mg/L)		Fecal Coliform (MPN/100ML)	
Primary Water Quality Criteria for outdoor bathing			Min	Max	Min	Max	Min	Max	Min	Max
			>5 mg/l		< 3 mg/l		-		< 2500 MPN/100 ml	
1492	RIVER YAMUNA AT YAMUNOTRI	UTTARAKHAND	10.8	10.8	BDL	BDL	0.02	0.02	4	4
1493	RIVER YAMUNA AT HANUMANCHATTI	UTTARAKHAND	11.6	11.6	BDL	BDL	0.32	0.32	94	94
1494	RIVER YAMUNA AT U/S OF LAKHWAR DAM	UTTARAKHAND	8.6	10.8	BDL	BDL	0.33	0.33	BDL	9
1490	RIVER YAMUNA AT U/S DAK PATHAR	UTTARAKHAND	8.2	10.2	BDL	1.2	0.38	0.38	17	34
1553	RIVER YAMUNA , U/S PAONTA SAHIB	HIMACHAL PRADESH	7.1	9.1	BDL	1.8	0.02	1.11	9	46
1554	RIVER YAMUNA , D/S PAONTA SAHIB	HIMACHAL PRADESH	7.0	9.0	BDL	2.0	0.02	1.17	11	27
4439	RIVER YAMUNA U/S RANBAXY	HIMACHAL PRADESH	7.1	8.9	BDL	1.6	0.01	2.47	10	130
4440	RIVER YAMUNA D/S RANBAXY	HIMACHAL PRADESH	7.0	8.8	BDL	1.8	0.01	1.31	10	33
1117	RIVER YAMUNA AT HATHNIKUND, YAMUNANAGAR	HARYANA	7.1	8.5	2.4	6.6	0.04	0.65	200	3200
1496	RIVER YAMUNA AT KALANAUR, YAMUNA NAGAR	HARYANA	6.8	9.3	2.2	5.2	0.17	26.00	200	49000
4914	RIVER YAMUNA AT MAGALaura	HARYANA	5.2	10.8	BDL	4.0	0.41	1.71	49	7000
10004	RIVER YAMUNA AT KHOIKIPUR PANIPAT	HARYANA	5.6	8.6	1.5	9.1	0.52	1.95	34	110000
1119	RIVER YAMUNA AT SONEPAT, HARYANA	HARYANA	7.1	10.6	1.8	5.5	0.06	0.36	110	220000
1120	RIVER YAMUNA AT PALLA, DELHI	DELHI	5.6	17.1	1.4	7.9	0.50	1.40	78	79000
1121	RIVER YAMUNA AT NIZAMUDDIN, DELHI	DELHI	BDL	2.4	5.6	57.0	0.40	2.80	210000	11000000
1375	RIVER YAMUNA AT OKHLA BRIDGE (INLET OF AGRA CANAL), DELHI	DELHI	BDL	2.6	5.6	27.0	0.10	1.20	78000	3300000
1812	RIVER YAMUNA AT OKHLA AFTER MEETING OF SHAHDARA DRAIN, DELHI	DELHI	BDL	5.6	7.7	114.0	0.30	2.00	68000	7900000
1497	RIVER YAMUNA AT MAZAWALI, U.P	UTTAR PRADESH	BDL	2.3	8.7	59.0	0.01	1.81	680	4900000
2493	RIVER YAMUNA AT SHAHPUR	UTTAR PRADESH	4.6	6.9	5.8	10.0	-	-	31000	85000
2495	RIVER YAMUNA AT KESIGHAT, VRINDAVAN	UTTAR PRADESH	4.0	7.6	6.0	10.4	-	-	24000	65000
1123	RIVER YAMUNA AT MATHURA U/S , U.P.	UTTAR PRADESH	BDL	4.6	7.3	30.0	0.50	1.66	400	920000
2494	RIVER YAMUNA AT VISHRAMGHAT, MATHURA	UTTAR PRADESH	4.1	7.4	6.8	12.0	-	-	31000	92000
1124	RIVER YAMUNA AT MATHURA D/S , U.P.	UTTAR PRADESH	1.6	6.8	6.9	21.0	0.51	1.61	1700	170000
1125	RIVER YAMUNA AT AGRA U/S, U.P.	UTTAR PRADESH	1.4	9.6	4.7	25.0	0.48	2.40	220	3300000
1126	RIVER YAMUNA AT D/S OF AGRA, U.P.	UTTAR PRADESH	3.8	16.2	9.1	25.0	0.44	3.56	450	6100000
1498	RIVER YAMUNA AT BATESWAR, U.P	UTTAR PRADESH	2.6	9.2	14.0	20.0	0.76	2.80	450	1400
1127	RIVER YAMUNA AT ETAWAH, U.P.	UTTAR PRADESH	7.3	7.3	13.0	15.0	0.75	1.02	20	200
1499	RIVER YAMUNA AT JUHIKA B/C WITH CHAMBAL, ETAWAH, U.P	UTTAR PRADESH	8.1	11.3	8.7	13.0	1.65	3.80	68	7800
2283	RIVER YAMUNA AT HAMIRPUR	UTTAR PRADESH	8.4	8.4	2.8	6.0	1.14	3.10	330	2200
1069	RIVER YAMUNA AT ALLAHABAD D/S (BALUA GHAT), U.P	UTTAR PRADESH	7.3	11.5	1.8	2.4	0.28	1.66	310	2100

Figure: 4.1 River Yamuna water quality (Yamunotri to Allahabad), 2020 [8]

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

This review focuses on the current status and major sources of pollution in the Yamuna River and its impacts on Yamuna ecosystem. Unchecked and poorly managed dumping of waste in river water, rapid urban growth across the country and the poor government oversight which is making problem worse. Condition of polluted Yamuna River cannot be improved without the awareness among the people specially the local peoples all the pilgrims and their involvement in taking measures or precautions before dumping the waste or adding further waste load in the Yamuna River. Nearly all the STPs installed by Delhi Jal Board are based on biological system which necessitates continued flow of wastewater into the plant. If there will be any obstruction in flow for longer duration of time that will impact the treatment efficiency of the STPs. Delhi Jal Board should explore the possibility of balancing the flow to the STPs. While designing new STPs, the nature of the habitation around STPs and the distance of the farthest point in the catchment area should be considered for better flow management into the plant [12]. There is no improvement in the water quality of the river which is seen through inadequate treatment capacities. Stringent measures urgently required to take in order to revitalize or at least better the condition of water quality of river Yamuna.

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TRANSITION FROM LOOK EAST TO ACT EAST POLICY AND ITS IMPACT IN NORTHEAST INDIA

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ABSTRACT

The development deficit in the North-East remains a challenge for the government of India. This challenge can be addressed by integrating the North-East with its Southeast Asia region through the policies of Look East and, its renewed version, Act East Policy. India's stable democratic political system, large middle-class population, immense military clouts in South Asia, rising economic fortunes and global ambitions make it a potential power that could play a very important role in world affairs. The main objectives of the study are- to look into the transition from Look East Policy to Act East Policy in India and to understand its attributes and to understand the impact of the Look East- Act East policies in the North-eastern region of India.

Key Words: Look East Policy, Act East Policy, North East, Development, ASEAN

INTRODUCTION:

India's North-East, a distinctive geopolitical entity comprising the states of Assam, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Manipur, Tripura, Nagaland and Arunachal Pradesh is spread over an area of 2.55 lakh sq.km. This accounts for 7.8 percent of the total landmass of India and 3.73 percent of India's vast population. Except the former princely states of Manipur and Tripura, all other states were parts of British colonial Assam. It is to be noted that during the post-colonial period the political map of the North-East transformed very significantly. Nationalism and ethnicity are the two factors which played a very decisive role in the process of transformation of these states in post colonial period. In 2001, Sikkim was included as an eight state to the key policy making institution namely the North East Council (Brahma, 2010. P18). This region is also known for its diversity, which represents multiple ethnic, linguistic, cultural, religious identities and competing ethnic aspirations which is distinct from mainland India. This distinctiveness places the North-East in a unique geographical and political space that reflects its ethnic and genealogical connections to the rest of Southeast Asian countries (Gogoi, 2010. P1).

The North-East region is connected with the Indian mainland by a 22 km land corridor through Siliguri in the state of West-Bengal, popularly known as Chicken's Neck'. The region shares borders with four Asian countries such as China, Myanmar, Bhutan and Bangladesh (Brahma, 2010. P18). Contemporary North-East is witnessing three levels of problems such as i. from within, its own historicity and geographical peculiarity, intra-ethnic conflicts and rebel movements, ii. from the mainstream due to non-recognition of sufficient regional autonomy and adequate political representation at national level and iii. external support to the militant groups of northeast and illegal migration from its neighbourhood especially from Bangladesh, Myanmar and China. These factors have induced a certain degree of instability, political degeneration and have as well contributed to the economic backwardness, retarded infrastructural development and psychological alienation of this region from the mainland India (Gogoi, 2010. P1). Thus, the development deficit in the North-East remains a challenge for the government of India. This challenge can be addressed by integrating the North-East with its Southeast Asia region through the policies of Look East and, its renewed version, Act East Policy. India's stable democratic political system, large middle class population, immense military clouts in South Asia, rising economic fortunes and global ambitions make it a potential power that could play a very important role in world affairs (Brahma, 2010).

OBJECTIVES

- To look into the transition from Look East Policy to Act East Policy in India and to understand its attributes
- To understand the impact of the Look East- Act East policies in the North-eastern region of India
- To look into the Indo-Myanmar and Indo-Bangladesh equation in order to understand the prospects and the problems of Look East- Act East policies through India's immediate neighbourhood

METHODOLOGY

The required information is obtained from books, journal, newspaper and other archival records both official and non-official. The method of historical analysis is employed to find out the answer of the research objectives proposed.

The Look East Policy:

The LEP, a part of India's extended neighbourhood policy was initiated by the then Prime Minister Narasimha Rao in an address in Singapore in 1994 and has been followed by the successive governments of India. The intensification of the economic linkages with the ASEAN in the first phase was led by the Rao government and later the second phase was led by the NDA government under the leadership of A. B. Vajpayee. Under the leadership of Dr. Manmohan Singh, the LEP has been re-energised with a renewed focus on the role of Northeast in India's vision of the world and India's place in the evolving global economy (Gogoi, 2010. P 34). India's LEP is a major foreign policy shift, in fact, a 'paradigm shift', which has brought changes in India's orientation towards China and Southeast Asia. In the pre 1990s India's foreign policy has been Pakistan centric in particular and subcontinental specific in general. But with the LEP, India has decided to come out of the 'sub-continental cold war situation and take up a proactive role in the region (Indrakumar, 2009. P 20)." Closer ties with Myanmar and other Southeast Asian countries are needed to check rising China and to contain conflict in its northeastern region. These political objectives are conjunctively supplemented by the economic imperatives of integration with ASEAN economy vis-à-vis the interest of global economy (Singh, 2009. P17).

In the post cold war era the ASEAN countries realise that India is an emerging player who can play a very important role in shaping the future political and security environment of Asia. They see India's competitive strength in democratic institution, resilience and stability of India's political institutions and the potentials to sustain high economic growth rates as an emerging economic power. In the meantime, Prime Minister Rao in 1991 through his initiative for economic liberalisation opened up new vistas for regional integration with the global economy with special emphasis on economic diplomacy. To quote K Indrakumar, " with the collapse of bi-polarity, India's role as a leader of Third World countries diminishes and a kind of inferiority complex emerged in India's ruling circle vis-à-vis Southeast Asia and East Asian economic development. For many decades, India thought it was far ahead of all the countries of Southeast Asia but the superior performance of 'ASEAN Tigers' (Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand and Indonesia) came as a rude shock to India, inflicting great damage to its image and international status. With the liberalisation and privatisation of its economy, India seems determined to emulate the 'ASEAN Tigers' model. It is pertinent to mention that India's Look East policy is not a coincidental phenomenon but a logical outcome of neo-liberal economic reforms (Indrakumar, 2009.P 27)." As a result, India formally shaped the Look East Policy to foster closer economic ties with its South and Southeast Asian neighbours with emphasis on renewing political and economic contacts with the ASEAN members. This policy has led to making India a Sectoral Dialogue Partner of the ASEAN in 1992, a Full Dialogue Partner of the ASEAN in 1995, member of ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) in 1996. In November 2002, the first ASEAN-India summit was held in Cambodia to mark a major milestone in integrating India in Southeast Asia. The fifth ASEAN-India summit was held in Philippines in 2007 resolved to implement free trade agreement and is considered a significant breakthrough for the Look East Policy (Gogoi, 2010. P36). It is to be noted that India's perception of the 'East' in the phrase of Look East policy is not confined within ASEAN countries. The ultimate goal is to have a strong hold in the Asia-Pacific region. This region is vital to India's economic and political security because of its geo-political and geo-economic implications.

In accordance with its new policy of making the Look East Policy more relevant for the Northeast India there has been initiation of some infrastructural projects and India has also joined in some multilateral initiatives that provide the opportunity to develop infrastructure linkages between Northeast India and Southeast Asia (Singh, 2010. P 64). Better connectivity of Northeast India with Southeast Asia can transform the region into an attractive economic zone of the world. The decision of the central government to link up the region with Southeast Asia through proposed Asian Highway and Trilateral Highway project involving India, Thailand and Myanmar, proves the point that the government has finally decided to take locational advantage of Northeast India. The proposed Asian Highways would pass through the Northeastern states of Assam and Manipur connecting Thailand via Myanmar. It would pass through Moreh in India, Tamu and Bagan in Myanmar before reaching Maesot in Thailand (Brahma, 2010.P 23). It is to be noted that the Northeastern states of India have been demanding for long the reopening of Stilwell road for connecting Ledo in Assam to Künming in China's Yunnan province via Myittha in Myanmar. The reopening of this road could transform the economy of Northeast India by reducing time, cost and distance involved in trade with China and Southeast Asia. China has shown its interest to reopen the Stilwell road by developing its part of the road and linked it with its Highway network. But India has been reluctant about the reopening of the Stilwell road due to insurgency problems and the fear of increase of Chinese influence in its Northeastern region. However, due to the normalisation in India-China relations and pressure from the Northeastern states, India has shown interest in opening of the Stilwell road. Thus, in future the Stilwell road would reemerged as another link between India's Northeast with Southeast Asia including China (Singh, 2010. P 68). Facilitation of these projects entails the sponsorship of the

World Bank as plans for the 1360 km trans Asian highways to link India, Myanmar and Thailand in the first phase and with India-China in the second phase. This trans Asian highways will, in due course of time, be part of a much larger trans-Eurasian highway linking South Asia, Southeast Asia, China and Europe (Singh, 2009. P 17). Along with better road connectivity the Indian government has emphasized importance on better rail, air and telecommunication connectivity between Northeast India and Southeast Asia countries.

Transition from Look East to Act East:

During her visit in India, US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton expressed that Washington encourages New Delhi not just to “look” East but to engage East and “act” East (Sajjanhar, 2016). This US push to India to act on the Indo-Pacific region was reaffirmed in August 2014 when India’s External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj announced that the decades-long “Look East Policy” would become “Act East Policy”. It was forwarded by the speech of Prime Minister Narendra Modi at the 4th East Asia Summit and 12th India-ASEAN Summit in Myanmar in November 2014. He formally asserted that India had turned the “Look East Policy” into “Act East Policy” (Press Information Bureau, 2014). Though New Delhi has not clearly outlined the key features, content, and scope of the policy initiative, Act East Policy is not only the continuation of the Look East Policy but also represents a transformation in India’s foreign policy towards eastern world. As part of its Act East Policy, India is helping Southeast Asian countries to build up strategic infrastructures and capacities. Whether Beijing likes it or not, India has emerged as one of the main players in the Indo-Pacific strategic landscape. However, there remains a question whether something substantial has or has not changed by the renaming of the Look East Policy to Act East Policy? This question concerns all the policymakers and scholars of the North East States. Critics also argued that these phases are deeply rooted in the domestic political rhetoric rather than tectonic foreign policy shifts as the BJP Government under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi has sought to differentiate their foreign policy formulation from its predecessor, Congress (Singh, 2021).

From the very beginning, the Government of India did not declare explicitly the objectives of this policy. From time to time, scholars and thinkers who are dealing in this field implicitly or explicitly explain the main agendas of this policy. With the transition from Look East to Act East Policy, the major differences between the two of India need mention. Look East Policy was launched in 1991 and its main focus was boosting economic cooperation. Its relationship (bilateral and multilateral) was mainly ASEAN and its member countries. North East India was present only verbally but almost absent in its plan of forging deeper ties with Southeast Asia. It almost did not cover maritime security. The Act East Policy, on the other hand, is an upgraded version of Look East Policy and initiated in 2014. It encompasses economic cooperation, political, security, cultural and capacity building infrastructures. It extends India’s relations upto with East and Southeast Asian countries and even Australia. In this policy, the Government of India acknowledges the North Eastern Region as a ‘gateway’ of this policy. It covers maritime security architecture of the Indo-Pacific region.

Look East- Act East Policy and its implications for Northeast India:

One of the important visions that came through the Look East and Act East Policy was its aim to integrate the North East Region into the larger economic enclave of Southeast Asia. In its second phase of the policy, the North East Region gained importance as a corridor of opportunity and India embarked on an effort to improve the region within itself, with mainland India and Southeast Asia. India began to explore its potential in economic cooperation and integration with Southeast Asian countries.

In all, most of the India-ASEAN trade relations mainly centers on the sea routes along the coastal belts of India. As such the amount of interaction between the nations was at minimal. Indeed, there was a lack of realization on the Indian part to emphasize the importance of NER as a physical route despite the region’s proximity to Southeast Asia. There could be many answers to this juggling question as to why NER was not taken into consideration in enhancing its relations with Southeast Asia at first instance. It is true that NER turns out simply being a transmission belt connecting India and ASEAN, where Myanmar (who shares 1640km long border) provides a key link in establishing a chain of connectivity with the rest of Southeast Asia. However, prior to 1997 when Myanmar became a fully ASEAN member, it closed its interaction to the outside world (Lachungpa, 2018).

Therefore, it was the strategic consideration in realizing the importance of Myanmar in enhancing India-Southeast Asia connection that strategy was made to bring the NER and Myanmar at the core of its policy planning. In this regard, India and Myanmar signed the Border Trade Agreement in 1994 and eliminated the bottleneck of connectivity issue. The agreement provided for the opening of check posts along the India-Myanmar border at Moreh in Manipur (India) and Tamu in Sagaing (Myanmar) and Champai in Mizoram (India) and Rhi in Chin (Myanmar). With the opening of the border posts, India- Myanmar registered a progressive flow in the formal trade and secured a connectivity relation thus obtaining its strategy of bringing

NER and Myanmar into its Look East policy. Furthermore, with this opening, four other check posts (Pangsau, Paletwa, Lunguwas-Yanyong, and Pangnyo) were also opened along the India-Myanmar border (Deigracia & Bhattacharjee, 2016).

After Myanmar became a full ASEAN member in 1997 further steps were taken to use the possible strategy to map the North Eastern Region (NER) into connectivity and development projects. In this regard, various projects were drawn up by India and ASEAN to integrate the region and make it a powerful economic block to reckon with (Lachungpa, 2018).

Significant opportunities which this policy would provide, according to Singh, 2021, for the sustainable development of the North Eastern Region of India are as under:

Connectivity: This landlocked region is opening day by day with the rest of the country. Many international Organisations like World Bank, New Investment Bank give soft loan for physical infrastructures. Foreign countries like Japan through Japan Infrastructure Cooperation Agency (JICA) invest huge money for road constructions in Mizoram, Assam etc. The construction of Asian Highways would provide large business investment. The organised and unorganised sector can export their goods to the neighbouring countries. It will increase the economic activities of the region. Also, the projects which are underway namely the Trilateral Highway Proposal to link NER of India to Myanmar and Bangladesh; the BCIM Economic Corridor to connect Bangladesh, China, India and Myanmar to South and Southeast Asia; the Kaladan Multimodal Transport Project to combine the land, river and sea route to link Kolkata, Northeast Region, and Myanmar; Asian Highway I and II to improve highway system in Asia; all these projects have reflected the strategic significance of NER in India's Act East Policy.

Untapped resources: This region is a world's biodiversity hotspot region. So, it has multiple natural scenic beauties which will attract tourists. North East people are known for their hospitality. This area has an edge of the region. There are a lot of natural resources like oil and gas, coal, hydropower etc. If these resources utilise in a sustainable manner, lot of jobs will generate thereby will reduce the unemployment rate among the educated youths. This will in great length reduce the anti-national activities in the region.

Human Resources: As the literacy rate is high and maximum of the youth are English educated, with the coming of adequate infrastructure, youth of this region automatically will generate jobs. We can promote the Atmanirbhar Bharat idea among them. The outflow of people from this region could be minimised in large number. This would reduce the sponsor economy model which has been following in the last many decades. Thus, these states can regenerate a self-sustain economy which is not entirely depending upon the Centre government's fund like the present situation.

Cultural connections: Since ancient time, Indian value system and culture has spread in Southeast Asia. This cultural connection brings closure mainly with Southern India. During the British time, Indian diasporas were settled in Myanmar and Bangladesh and Nepalese also settled in India. We have Manipuri communities in Myanmar and Bangladesh. It strengthens ties with these countries significantly.

Opportunity to strengthen: This policy gives a golden chance to strengthen India's relationship with the Indo-Pacific region's countries. India has multiple bilateral relations with these countries for instance, India-Japan Act East Forum initiative in 2017 and India-Singapore Comprehensive Economic Cooperation Agreement in 2005. India is a founding member of East Asia Summit which was established in 2005. With all these, India is able to extend its geo-strategic position upto the South China Sea. All these opportunities can be achieved only through the NER of India as it stands as the gateway to India's physical interaction with the South, Southeast and East Asian countries,

Although there are a lot of opportunities that this policy can offer NER, there are also several constraints while executing Act East Policy that come in the path of its development. First, lack of infrastructure development of the region makes it very difficult for the region to be connected to mainland India. Second, security concerns prevail in the NER and it is the only region where security concerns dominate economy. The security forces and the counter terror tactics in the North East Region have remained pitted against these challenges posed by the armed groups. As such the idea of bringing the NER at the core of Look East policy based on developing the region has been marred by the security issue. Also, the policy to rechristen the Look East into Act East is mired by the growing role of China in the Asia-Pacific regions with its soft power backed by development and economic incentives like One Belt One Road, Asian Development Bank etc. In addition, many Indian policymakers assert that the rise in armed militants in the NER is made possible by the continuous support that China is providing to the militants. As such, it is the projection of greater rivalry between India and China that

objectifies the Look East policy-Act East policy than the development and connectivity initiatives (Lachungpa, 2018).

At this juncture, it is important to look into the present relationship that India shares with its immediate neighbours viz. Myanmar and Bangladesh for the success of its Act East Policy as it has become quite evident that after securing favourable conditions in the NER of India, Myanmar and Bangladesh stands highly important for India to be able to spread its influence in the Southeast and South Asian region.

Indo-Myanmar Equation

India shares a long land border of over 1600 Km with Myanmar as well as a maritime boundary in the Bay of Bengal. Four north-eastern states viz. Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland, Manipur and Mizoram share boundaries with Myanmar. Both countries share a heritage of religious, linguistic and ethnic ties. Further, Myanmar is the only ASEAN country adjoining India and, therefore, our gateway to South East Asia with which we are seeking greater economic integration through India's 'Look East' and now 'Act East' Policy. Business opportunities that emerge from a surging economy in Myanmar also provide new vistas for engagement.

Being the only country that sits at the intersection of India's "Act East" policy, Myanmar is an essential element in India's practice of regional diplomacy in the Indo-Pacific, and serves as a land bridge to connect South Asia and Southeast Asia. It is therefore in India's geostrategic interest to see Myanmar prevail as a stable and autonomous country, thereby making possible greater bilateral engagement in India-Myanmar relations, a report by The Diplomat states.

It is also interesting to mention that Myanmar is the only Southeast Asian country that has a separate bureaucratic division (shared with Bangladesh) in India's External Affairs Ministry, testifying to the continued importance of Myanmar to India's foreign policy under Modi's government.

In order to improve Indo- Myanmar economic relations, attempts have been made by both sides to facilitate connectivity as India regards Myanmar as a gateway to Southeast Asia. As such, infrastructural development projects are underway, like the India-Myanmar-Thailand Trilateral Highway and the Kaladan Multi-Modal Transit Transport which aims to connect the Northeastern part of India to Southwestern Myanmar.

According to the information provided in the website of the Consulate General of India, Sittwe, Myanmar, foreign relations between the two countries have flourished over the years in the field of defence, trade, commercial cooperation and development cooperation. Defense and security cooperation between the two nations have strengthened as there has been exchange of high-level visits, signing MoU in Border Cooperation, training, Army, Airforce and Naval Staff which are important indicators in this direction. Besides normal trade, both sides have also taken steps to bolster trade across the land border. Even in the banking sector, many Indian banks have representative offices in Yangon, the capital of Myanmar. Apart from these, India is also linked to Myanmar on the cultural front as both the nations share close cultural ties and a deep kingship given India's Buddhist heritage.

Given the fact that Myanmar is crucial for India's Act East Policy, the recent political developments in Myanmar can be a matter of concern for the Indian state. Myanmar has been under its military since February 2021 when it detained leaders of her National League for Democracy (NLD). Throughout the military coup, India has been cautious about its diplomatic relationship with Myanmar as although it has condemned the violence and the military rule but at the same time it has not reinforced the legitimacy of the 2020 Myanmar elections results. The rise of military rule in Myanmar is a matter of concern for India for, primarily, two reasons- firstly, since Myanmar shares a border with the four Northeastern states of Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland, Manipur and Mizoram, political instability in the region can result in refugee influx on the Indian side. Also, there is evidence of the Northeast Indian region receiving training, financial and material support to continue insurgency in the region. In this regard, Alex Waterman writes, "the Sagaing region across the India-Myanmar border has long provided sanctuary for armed groups, while simultaneously offering opportunities for networking and operational coordination". The political changes in Myanmar might result in deepening security concerns in the Northeastern part of India.

Secondly, according to a report published in The Wire, the growing international isolation of the Myanmar Army could once again push the country into dependence on China. In the aftermath of the Rohingya crisis, China maintained a strong record of engagement with the NLD government as it signed the China Myanmar Economic Corridor Agreement. Chinese investment in Myanmar has increased rapidly, making Beijing the largest investor in the country and Myanmar featuring prominently in China's trade calculus. This can delay

India's mission to dominate the region's trade and commerce since Myanmar is the corridor to the Asian Highway.

The military taking over Myanmar, has halted any progress being made between two countries. This intensifies the position of India's Northeast as a critical actor in the success of the Act East Policy, which cannot be underestimated as it further determines India's engagement with its neighbours.

Indo-Bangladesh Equation:

Bangladesh has been India's key ally under its Neighborhood First and Act East policy. During her visit to Bangladesh in 2017, the Former External Affairs Minister, Late Shushma Swaraj during her visit had said, "When we say "neighborhood first" policy, it is "Bangladesh first" for us." This statement was again reiterated by Foreign Secretary Harsh V. Shringla during his last visit to Bangladesh. In recent years, New Delhi has invested heavily both economically and diplomatically in Dhaka. Connectivity has been central to India's investment in Bangladesh. India has given loans and grants to build roads, bridges, seaports, integrated check posts (ICP), opening up border haats (along the borders).

For the realisation of the optimum potential of its Act East policy in its economic and strategic sense, Bangladesh will play a vital role. Due to this fact, India has been working towards building infrastructural connectivity between NER and Bangladesh. The focus of the government is to re-link NER with Bangladesh through road, rail, water and air connectivity. The two countries recently inaugurated the Feni bridge connecting Sabroom in Tripura to Ramgarh in Bangladesh. In railways, out of the six pre-1947 rail-links, four have been restored and the two will be restored by 2022. An inland waterway has also been developed between Sonamura port, Tripura and Munshiganj. Both the countries are also working to double the air connectivity to 120 flights per week. Bangladesh has also offered the use of Chattogram and Sylhet International Airport, by the people of North East India and the Saidpur Airport is been developed for the use of people of the NER.

Greater connectivity between NER and Bangladesh is a win-win situation for New Delhi. NER is the gateway to South-East Asia. This was highlighted by Prime Minister Modi during his visit to Thailand where he said, "North East India will be the gateway to South-East Asia." The NER linkages with the South East Asia will be equally beneficial for Bangladesh too. It has shown its eagerness to be a partner of the India-Myanmar-Thailand trilateral highway project in the latest joint statement issued after Modi's visit. This linkage will open a new market for the Bangladesh jute, garment and leather export industry. It will also lead to the development of the economically backward area of the eastern part of Bangladesh. New Delhi should see this as an opportunity as now it has one more partner to help in building this project. With Bangladesh coming in, this project will surely gain the required push and lead to faster completion of this project. The linkages will also serve a strategic purpose for India as it will bring it closer to South East Asian countries and increase its influence in these countries.

Despite having huge prospects for maintaining cordial foreign relationships, there are a few issues that cause displeasure between the nations. Firstly, the issue of Teesta Water sharing agreement has been one ground of tension between both the nations. Although Modi government seeks to sign this water sharing agreements, it is facing opposition from the Government of West Bengal. Secondly, the anti- Islamic sentiments of India which was reflected in the passing of NRC bill, received backlash from the Muslim dominated region of Bangladesh. Thirdly, there has been instances of illegal migration on the border areas which becomes a cause of concern especially for the northeastern states which shares boundary with Bangladesh. However, on the eve of political instability in Myanmar, it is imperative for India to maintain and enhance cordial relation with Bangladesh as it stands as the only gateway which will connects India to the Southeastern and Southern Asia through roads and waterways.

CONCLUSION

The Look-East- Act-East policy- formulated to connect with the Southeast Asian nations proves to be an indispensable proposal to India in the period of foreign exchange crisis of the early 1990s, expanding, protecting and strengthening its interests in the globalized world and particularly in Southeast Asia. After more than twenty years of its first inception, today the policy stands as one of the best-conceived policy by the Indian government. The policy apparently pursued as an economic centric endeavor with the vision to integrate India's crippling economy with the expanding economies of Southeast Asia has expanded in the areas encompassing security, strategic, political, counter-terrorism and defense collaboration. It has enlarged its relation not only to the ASEAN but to the Far East countries, including Japan, Australia, and South Korea. This illustrates the growth that the policy has achieved in its endeavor and also in establishing as an alternative power to China in Southeast Asia and AsiaPacific. The essence of incorporating NER in the second phase of its policy by bringing

development and connectivity projects is also a significant step to the conflict-ridden region. It was projected that the initiative might contribute and address its major problems of underdevelopment.

The initiative to include NER in the larger Act East policy seems logical and necessary for the development of the region. However, the questions of visibility of these projects depend on several internal and external factors. As such, in the essence of Look East-act east policy, bringing NER was one of its ultimate aims. In this regard, the policy needs to be hastened in such a way that the economic prosperity of the region becomes noticeable. There should be a proper monitoring mechanism to tackle the challenges, including the social, cultural and political problems. The policy should be practical in addressing the real stake of the people of the region in availing all the proposed benefits. With the possession of such consideration, the policy can meet its potentials and strengthen its relations with Southeast Asia and also bring prosperity to the North East Region.

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DIGITAL AND SOCIAL MEDIA IN INDIA AND GLOBAL CONTEXT: A COMPREHENSIVE ANALYSIS

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ABSTRACT

This research paper aims to provide a comprehensive analysis of the impact of digital and social media in both India and the global context. With the rapid proliferation of internet access and smartphone usage, digital platforms have become significant contributors to social dynamics worldwide. By examining the multifaceted implications of digital and social media, this paper explores their influence on social relationships, political participation, identity construction, and societal changes. Drawing from diverse studies and scholarly research, this paper offers valuable insights into the emerging field of digital sociology and highlights the unique characteristics and challenges faced by India in this digital age.

Keywords: digital media, social media, India, global context, social relationships, political participation, identity construction, challenges, future direction.

INTRODUCTION

The introduction provides an overview of the rise of digital and social media platforms, highlighting their transformative effects on communication, information dissemination, and social interactions. It establishes the relevance and significance of studying digital and social media in the Indian and global context, setting the stage for the subsequent sections.

Digital and Social Media Landscape in India: This section offers a comprehensive overview of the digital and social media landscape in India, including statistics on internet penetration, smartphone usage, and popular social media platforms. It examines the role of digital platforms in shaping Indian society, economy, and politics, emphasizing the unique challenges and opportunities posed by India's diverse cultural and linguistic landscape.

Social Media and Social Relationships: This section delves into the impact of social media on social relationships, exploring how digital platforms influence friendship networks, family dynamics, and community engagement. It examines both positive and negative aspects, such as increased connectivity, social support, but also potential risks of isolation, addiction, and cyberbullying.

Political Participation and Activism in the Digital Age: This section investigates the role of digital and social media in shaping political participation, activism, and social movements. It examines case studies from India and around the world to illustrate how digital platforms facilitate political mobilization, influence public opinion, and challenge traditional power structures.

Identity Construction in Digital Spaces: This section focuses on the ways in which digital and social media platforms contribute to the construction and negotiation of identities. It explores how individuals navigate multiple identities, present themselves online, and engage in self-expression, while also addressing the issues of privacy, surveillance, and the impact of online interactions on offline lives.

Global Perspectives on Digital and Social Media: This section broadens the scope to examine global perspectives on digital and social media, drawing comparisons and contrasts between India and other countries. It explores the similarities and differences in the adoption, usage patterns, and social implications of digital platforms across diverse cultural, political, and economic contexts.

Challenges and Future Directions: This section highlights the challenges and ethical considerations associated with digital and social media, such as misinformation, privacy concerns, and the digital divide. It also discusses potential avenues for future research, emphasizing the need for interdisciplinary approaches and collaborative efforts to address the evolving dynamics of digital and social media in India and the world.

CONCLUSION:

The conclusion summarizes the key findings of the research paper, emphasizing the transformative impact of digital and social media in India and globally. It underscores the importance of continued research in understanding the complex interactions between technology, society, and culture, and the implications for individuals and communities.

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ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE IN MARKETING: A REVIEW

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ABSTRACT

AI tools can also be used to analyze the performance of a competitor's campaigns and reveal their customers' expectations. For this research, relevant articles on AI in marketing are studies and reviewed from Scopus, Google scholar, researchGate and other platforms. Then these articles were read and the topic of the paper was developed. This paper attempts to review the role of AI in marketing. This study is an attempt to understand and explore the applications of Artificial Intelligence in marketing for growth in today's competitive world of sales and marketing.

INTRODUCTION

AI can be broadly defined as “intelligence exhibited by machines” (Siau, 2017). Russell and Norvig (2003, p. 31) defines AI as intelligence that uses sensors to perceive and effectors to react to the environment.

It is the science and engineering of making intelligent machines, especially intelligent computer programs. It is related to the similar task of using computers to understand human intelligence, but AI does not have to confine itself to methods that are biologically observable. (Stanford, 2007)

A seminal study by Wirth (2018) argues that AI, in its current stage of development, is capable of replacing or augmenting the requisite expertise to take informed marketing decision, whereas an other critical study of De Bruyn et al. (2020) cautions against just defining AI as the “intelligence demonstrated by machines” and not defining the perimeter well enough which could potentially lead to more confusion. The specific applications of AI in various marketing segments and their transformations for marketing sectors are examined in this research paper.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

AI is becoming increasingly important in marketing. Companies such as Google, Rare Carat, Spotify, and Under Armor are among the expanding list of firms enhancing their performance through the adoption of AI-based platforms (such as Microsoft Cognitive Services, Amazon Lex, Google Assistant, or IBM Watson). This approach increases their customer interaction across marketing channels and improves market forecasting and automation. Marketers can more precisely identify which customers should be targeted and whether they should be included or excluded from the campaign. Customers will be better matched to items they are likely to buy, and irrelevant or out-of-stock products will be avoided. Brands can utilize AI to improve customer experience by providing tailored content and offers and excellent customer service to each consumer. Predictive marketing analytics is one method that firms use with AI. By analysing data from previous occurrences, AI can reliably and adequately predict how performance will appear in the future, depending on a range of parameters. Understanding what individuals value most can help make more meaningful recommendations to them. However, most AI-based customization solutions start from the top-down and are tailored to the individual rather than a whole group. The capacity to employ AI to forecast the success of marketing initiatives and better tailor user experiences is a vast technical trend that will continue for many years.

OBJECTIVES

1. To understand the concept of Artificial Intelligence.
2. To explore the applications of Artificial Intelligence in marketing.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study is based on secondary data, which is gathered from different websites and research articles.

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE (AI)

Artificial Intelligence defines technologies rising these days which will perceive, learn, so act supported that information varieties of AI in use these days embrace digital assistants, chatbots, and machine learning. Today, AI works in 3 ways, a) aided intelligence, wide offered these days, improves what individuals and organizations are already doing. An easy example, rise in cars these days, is that the GPS navigation program that gives directions to drivers and adjusts to road conditions, b) increased intelligence, rising these days, allows individuals and organizations to try to things they couldn't otherwise do. For example, the mixture of programs that organize cars in ride-sharing services permits businesses that might not otherwise exist. c) Autonomous

intelligence, being developed for the longer term, establishes machines that act on their own. Associate example of this may be self-driving vehicles, once they acquire widespread use.

As a future with AI approaches, it's vital to know however individuals consider it nowadays, however it'll amplify the globe tomorrow, and what guiding principles are going to be needed to navigate this monumental modification (PwC, 2017).

The applications mentioned below with respective real-world examples help us understand how few early-adopting firms significantly improved customer satisfaction and customer retention; thereby increasing their revenue. Thus, we can say that implementation of AI applications leads to significant improvement in marketing performance and profitability. However, rate of adoption of AI in India is slow when compared to other countries apart from few sectors like BFSI. BFSI as a sector has seen accelerated adoption of AI in the last couple of years and is predicted to do so in the future (Accenture, 2017). Banks in India like ICICI have been able to reduce their turnaround time for processes such as disputed transactions by 80% with the help of AI (LiveMint, 2017). Most of the AI technologies implemented by firms in BFSI sector can also be used by firms in other sectors like Retail, Telecom, Media/Entertainment etc. to not only improve their marketing performance but also transform their businesses.

AI (ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE) MARKETING

AI marketing uses artificial intelligence technologies to make automated decisions based on data collection, data analysis, and additional observations of audience or economic trends that may impact marketing efforts. AI is often used in digital marketing efforts where speed is essential. AI marketing tools use data and customer profiles to learn how to best communicate with customers, then serve them tailored messages at the right time without intervention from marketing team members, ensuring maximum efficiency. For many of today's digital marketers, AI is used to augment marketing teams or to perform more tactical tasks that require less human nuance.

AI MARKETING USE CASES INCLUDE:

- **Data Analysis:** Collecting and sifting through large amounts of marketing data from various campaigns and programs that would otherwise have to be sorted manually.
- **Natural Language Processing (NLP):** Creating human-like language for content creation, customer service bots, experience personalization and more.
- **Media Buying:** Predicting the most effective ad and media placements for a business in order to reach their target audience and maximize marketing strategy ROI.
- **Automated Decision-Making:** AI marketing tools help a business to decide which marketing or business growth strategy they should use based on past data or outside data inputs.
- **Content Generation:** Writing both short and long pieces of content for a marketing strategy, such as video captions, email subject lines, web copy, blogs and more.
- **Real-time Personalization:** Changing a customer's experience with a marketing asset such as a web page, social post or email to fit the customer's past preferences to encourage a certain action, such as clicking a link, signing up for something or buying a product.

TYPES OF AI MARKETING SOLUTIONS

It's clear that artificial intelligence holds a vital role in helping marketers connect with consumers. The following components of AI marketing make up today's leading solutions that are helping to bridge the gap between the vast amounts of customer data being collected and the actionable next steps digital marketers can take in their future campaigns:

MACHINE LEARNING

Machine learning is driven by artificial intelligence, which involves computer algorithms that can analyze information and improve digital marketing campaigns automatically through experience. Devices that leverage machine learning analyze new information in the context of relevant historical data, which can inform digital marketing campaigns based on what has or hasn't worked in the past.

BIG DATA AND ANALYTICS

The emergence of digital media has brought on an influx of "big data", which has provided opportunities for digital marketers to understand their efforts and accurately attribute value across channels. This has also led to an over-saturation of data, as many digital marketers struggle to determine which data sets are worth collecting.

AI marketing can help parse through all that data at light speed, filtering it down to its essentials and not only analyzing it but also recommending the best elements of future digital marketing campaigns.

AI MARKETING PLATFORMS & TOOLS

Effective AI-powered marketing solutions provide digital marketers with a central platform for managing the huge amounts of data being collected. These AI marketing platforms have the ability to glean insightful marketing intelligence from your target audience so you can make data-driven decisions about how to best reach them. For example, frameworks such as Bayesian Learning and Forgetting can help marketers gain a clearer understanding of how receptive a customer is to a specific digital marketing effort.

CHALLENGES FOR AI MARKETING

Modern marketing relies on an in-depth understanding of customer needs and preferences, and the ability to act on that knowledge quickly and effectively. The ability to make real-time, data-driven decisions has brought AI marketing solutions to the forefront for marketing stakeholders. However, marketing teams must be discerning when deciding how to best integrate AI into their campaigns and operations. The development and use of AI marketing tools is still in its early stages. Therefore, there are a few challenges to be aware of when implementing AI into your digital marketing strategy.

- Training Time and Data Quality
- Privacy
- Getting Buy-In
- Deployment Best Practices
- Adapting to a Changing Marketing Landscape

HOW TO USE AI IN MARKETING

It's important to begin with a thorough plan when leveraging AI in marketing campaigns and operations. This will ensure marketing teams minimize costly challenges and achieve the most value from their AI investment in the least amount of time.

Before implementing any AI marketing tools, there are a few key factors for digital marketers to consider:

- Establish Goals
- Science Talent
- Maintain Data Privacy Standards
- Data Quantity and Sources
- Acquire Data Data Quality
- Create an Integrated AI Marketing Strategy

BENEFITS OF LEVERAGING AI (ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE) IN MARKETING

There are a myriad of use cases for incorporating AI marketing into your digital marketing programs, and each of these use cases yields different benefits. For example, AI marketing can be an asset in areas such as risk reduction, increased speed, greater customer satisfaction, increased revenue, and more. Benefits may be quantifiable (number of sales) or not quantifiable (user satisfaction). There are a few overarching benefits that can be applied across AI marketing use cases:

- Increased Campaign ROI
- Better Customer Relationships & Real-Time Personalization
- Enhanced Marketing Measurement
- Make Decisions Faster

CONCLUSION

The evolution of AI from simply technological alignment to supplementing organization performance & thereby generating core competence suggest not only the growing vitality of incorporating technology into mainstream operations but urgent need of required interconnections and interaction between technology and domains of marketing. Thus there is a need for business growth using new digital technologies thorough AI implementation.

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A STUDY OF TECHNOLOGY-ENHANCED LEARNING IN HIGHER EDUCATION IN MUMBAI CITY

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ABSTRACT

Education is the basic tool that connects people in the workplace. The article emphasizes education as the linchpin connecting individuals in the workplace, asserting its significance in employment enhancement. It delves into the impact of the fourth industrial revolution on education, highlighting challenges faced by higher education institutions in aligning with rapid technological advancements. This quantitative study focuses on the demands imposed by the fourth industrial revolution on education, advocating for virtual learning environments and stressing the importance of blended learning in higher education. Employing a structured questionnaire distributed among 350 research scholars in 2021, the study concludes that higher education institutions need virtual learning environments, assert the essentiality of blended learning in the era of the fourth industrial revolution, and propose optional rather than compulsory online training in curricula. Ultimately, the study affirms the readiness of higher education institutions to embrace technological changes in education.

Keywords: *Technology-enhanced learning, Online learning, Higher education, Blended learning, MOOC*

INTRODUCTION

Mumbai, a bustling metropolis and educational hub, stands at the forefront of India's higher education landscape. In recent years, the realm of higher education has undergone a profound transformation, deeply influenced by the integration of technology into learning methodologies. This study aims to comprehensively explore the dynamics and impact of technology-enhanced learning (TEL) within the higher education sphere in Mumbai. With the advent of digital advancements, the traditional paradigms of education are swiftly evolving, necessitating an in-depth analysis of the roles, challenges, and implications of technology in shaping the learning environment.

This research endeavors to investigate the multifaceted dimensions of TEL, examining its integration into curriculum design, pedagogical practices, student engagement, and institutional strategies. Moreover, it seeks to elucidate the benefits, limitations, and potential barriers associated with the adoption of technology in higher education, specifically tailored to Mumbai's diverse educational landscape.

By scrutinizing the current landscape and future prospects of technology-driven learning initiatives, this study aspires to provide valuable insights for educational institutions, policymakers, and stakeholders navigating the ever-evolving terrain of higher education in Mumbai. In doing so, it aims to contribute to a deeper understanding of the transformative impact of technology on learning methodologies and the educational experiences of students and educators within the city.

The term "fourth industrial revolution," coined by Klaus Schwab, the executive and founder chairman of the World Economic Forum, encapsulates a digitally connected world where domains are integrated with new technology, shaping both online and offline structures to manage lives (Miller, 2016). Each industrial revolution, from the first shifting economies to industry dominance to the automation of production in the third, represents distinct but interconnected events leading to successive innovations and advancements. This article explores the fourth industrial revolution's impact on education, specifically addressing the challenges faced by higher education institutions in adapting to the technological demands of this era.

Education serves as the linchpin connecting individuals to the workplace, acting as a fundamental tool in reducing unemployment and fostering economic growth. However, the Fourth Industrial Revolution presents a challenge to traditional employment methods through its digitalization impact in the workplace. Certain industries are increasingly substituting human labor with advanced technologies, indirectly contributing to rising unemployment rates, demanding reconsideration. Integrating entrepreneurship, employment, and

education offers a path to build robust careers and businesses by harmonizing these elements with digital technology. The focus of this revolution centers on technological adeptness, encouraging the use of technology for learning, skill development, and exploration, essential for navigating the digital landscape. Technology-Enhanced Learning (TEL) complements teaching and learning through technological support, yet many higher education institutions lack the necessary resources for learners and educators to fully embrace this approach.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

(Hughes & Dobbins, 2015): In their paper titled "The Utilization of Data Analysis Techniques in Predicting Student Performance in Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs)," the authors explored the impact of technology on open learning and its role in predicting student performance to identify at-risk students before dropout. They employed the eRegister system to capture and analyze data, finding a correlation between high/active engagement, interaction, attendance, and higher academic performance. Their efforts in normalizing data into consistent series aimed to create a dashboard of statistics usable by MOOC organizers. Consequently, the study emphasized the fundamental necessity for predictive systems within learning communities.

(Scanlon, 2010): In the paper titled "Technology-Enhanced Learning in Science: Interactions, Affordances, and Design-Based Research," the author investigated participatory design, design-based research, and socio-cultural approaches through case studies. The study emphasized the integration of educational technology into the development of theory. It underscored the significance of understanding complex interactions among learners, teachers, and resources, highlighting contemporary learning theories' role in evaluating and designing learning settings.

(Gulati, 2008): Gulati's work, "Technology-Enhanced Learning in Developing Nations: A Review," provided an overview of education's development in open, distance, and technology-enabled modes, aiming to reach those deprived of education globally. The paper addressed challenges faced by adults and children in accessing learning opportunities in developing countries, questioning the value of continued investment in e-learning amid these challenges. While highlighting the effectiveness and accessibility of traditional mediums like radio, journals, and television for rural and underprivileged groups, the study suggested that investing in improved ICT facilities could offer new opportunities. It emphasized that while the urban elite may benefit more from new infrastructure, investing in ICT could still foster opportunities for some segments within developing countries.

THE RATIONALE OF THE STUDY:

In an era propelled by technological advancements, assessing the preparedness of higher education has become imperative. While traditional teaching methods remain prevalent, the potential for technological innovations within classrooms is boundless. This study aims to underscore the necessity for virtual learning environments and emphasize the significance of blended learning approaches in higher education.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY:

- 1) To understand the need for a virtual learning environment.
- 2) To understand the importance of blended learning in the fourth revolution age.
- 3) To recognize the necessity of online training and its inclusion as a part of the curriculum.
- 4) To find out the adaptability of technological change in higher education institutes.

HYPOTHESIS:

1. The virtual learning environment is not required in higher education.
2. Blended learning is not essential for transforming in the fourth revolution age
3. Compulsory online training should not be part of the curriculum.
4. Higher education institutions are not ready to adopt technological change

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY:

This study is quantitative research. A structured questionnaire was made in Google form and distributed to approximately 350 research scholars. The period of the study is 2021. The research was conducted in Mumbai city. Data analysis is done through Megastat software and compilation of results is done in excel.

DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS:**Demographic profile of Respondents:**

Age			Organisation in which you work		
	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percent</i>		<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percent</i>
20-30	27	36.0	Aided college	16	21.3
30-40	35	46.7	Unaided College	53	70.7
40-50	11	14.7	Other	6	8.0
50-60	2	2.7			
	75	100.0		75	100.0

Under five-point Likert scale, points are allotted as follows 1,2,3,4, and 5 to the option Strongly Disagree, Agree, Neutral, Agree and Strongly Agree respectively

H₁: Virtual learning environment is not required in higher education

Frequency Distribution - Quantitative									Chisquare Goodness of Fit Test					Output
Parameter 1: 'Virtual learning environment is needed in Higher education														
lower	upper	midpoint	width	frequency	percent	Cum freq	percent	Observed	Expected	O - E	(O - E)² / E	% of chisq		
1	<	2	2	1	2	2.7	2	2.7	2	15.000	-13.000	11.267	24.85	45.33 chi-square 4 df 3.39E-09 p-value
2	<	3	3	1	6	8.0	8	10.7	6	15.000	-9.000	5.400	11.91	
3	<	4	4	1	10	13.3	18	24.0	10	15.000	-5.000	1.667	3.68	
4	<	5	5	1	24	32.0	42	56.0	24	15.000	9.000	5.400	11.91	
5	<	6	5	1	33	44.0	75	100.0	33	15.000	18.000	21.600	47.65	
				75	100.0				75	75.000	0.000	45.333	100.00	

Inference: Where, total chi-square value is 45.33 at DF - 1 and the P-value is 3.39 at significance level 0.05, the chi-square value is more than the p-value so we reject the null hypothesis and concludes that virtual learning environment is required in higher education.

H₂: Blended learning is not essential for transforming in the fourth revolution age

Frequency Distribution - Quantitative									Chisquare Goodness of Fit Test					Output
Parameter 2: 'Blended learning (mixed e-learning and face-to-face learning methodology) should be used to keep pace in the transforming technological age														
lower	upper	midpoint	width	frequency	percent	Cum freq	percent	Observed	Expected	O - E	(O - E) ² / E	% of chisq		
1	<	2	2	1	3	4.0	3	4.0	3	15.000	-12.000	9.600	11.43	84.00 chi-square 4 df 2.47E-17 p-value
2	<	3	3	1	2	2.7	5	6.7	2	15.000	-13.000	11.267	13.41	
3	<	4	4	1	6	8.0	11	14.7	6	15.000	-9.000	5.400	6.43	
4	<	5	5	1	20	26.7	31	41.3	20	15.000	5.000	1.667	1.98	
5	<	6	5	1	44	58.7	75	100.0	44	15.000	29.000	56.067	66.75	
				75	100.0				75	75.000	0.000	84.000	100.00	

Inference: Where, total chi-square value is 84 at DF - 1 and the P-value is 2.47 at significance level 0.05, the chi-square value is more than the p-value so we reject the null hypothesis and concludes that learning is essential for transforming in the fourth revolution age.

H₃: Compulsory online training should not be made a part of the curriculum.

Frequency Distribution - Quantitative									Chisquare Goodness of Fit Test					Output
Parameter 3: "Compulsory online training should be made a part of curriculum"														37.73 chi-square 4 df 1.27E-07 p-value
lower	upper	midpoint	width	frequency	percent	Cum freq	percent	Observed	Expected	O - E (O - E)² / E % of chisq				
1	<	2	2	1	5	6.7	5	6.7	5	15.000	-10.000	6.667	17.67	
2	<	3	3	1	3	4.0	8	10.7	3	15.000	-12.000	9.600	25.44	
3	<	4	4	1	12	16.0	20	26.7	12	15.000	-3.000	0.600	1.59	
4	<	5	5	1	27	36.0	47	62.7	27	15.000	12.000	9.600	25.44	
5	<	6	5	1	28	37.3	75	100.0	28	15.000	13.000	11.267	29.86	
				75	100.0				75	75.000	0.000	37.733	100.00	

Inference: Where, total chi-square value is 37.73 at DF - 1 and the P-value is 1.27 at significance level 0.05, the chi-square value is more than the p-value so we reject the null hypothesis and conclude that Compulsory online training should not be made a part of the curriculum.

H₄: Higher education institutions are not ready to adopt technological change

Chisquare Goodness of Fit Test					
Parameter 1: Technology enabled learning					
Observed	Expected	O - E	(O - E) ² / E	% of chisq	Output
65	37.500	27.500	20.167	50.00	40.33 chi-square 1 df
10	37.500	-27.500	20.167	50.00	
75	75.000	0.000	40.333	100.00	2.14E-10 p-value
Parameter 2: Blended learning					
Observed	Expected	O - E	(O - E) ² / E	% of chisq	Output
65	37.500	27.500	20.167	50.00	40.33 chi-square 1 df
10	37.500	-27.500	20.167	50.00	
75	75.000	0.000	40.333	100.00	2.14E-10 p-value
Parameter 3: Blended learning					
Observed	Expected	O - E	(O - E) ² / E	% of chisq	Output
57	37.500	19.500	10.140	50.00	20.28 chi-square 1 df
18	37.500	-19.500	10.140	50.00	
75	75.000	0.000	20.280	100.00	6.69E-06 p-value
Parameter 4: Lecture capture facility					
Observed	Expected	O - E	(O - E) ² / E	% of chisq	Output
50	37.500	12.500	4.167	50.00	8.33 chi-square 1 df
25	37.500	-12.500	4.167	50.00	
75	75.000	0.000	8.333	100.00	.0039 p-value
Parameter 5: Electronic management of assignment					
Observed	Expected	O - E	(O - E) ² / E	% of chisq	Output
51	37.500	13.500	4.860	50.00	9.72 chi-square 1 df
24	37.500	-13.500	4.860	50.00	
75	75.000	0.000	9.720	100.00	.0018 p-value
Parameter 6: MOOC development					
Observed	Expected	O - E	(O - E) ² / E	% of chisq	Output
52	37.500	14.500	5.607	50.00	11.21 chi-square 1 df
23	37.500	-14.500	5.607	50.00	
75	75.000	0.000	11.213	100.00	.0008 p-value
Parameter 7: e-assessment (eg. Quiz)					
Observed	Expected	O - E	(O - E) ² / E	% of chisq	Output
62	37.500	24.500	16.007	50.00	32.01 chi-square 1 df
13	37.500	-24.500	16.007	50.00	
75	75.000	0.000	32.013	100.00	1.53E-08 p-value
Parameter 8: Mobile learning					
Observed	Expected	O - E	(O - E) ² / E	% of chisq	Output
59	37.500	21.500	12.327	50.00	24.65 chi-square 1 df
16	37.500	-21.500	12.327	50.00	
75	75.000	0.000	24.653	100.00	6.86E-07 p-value
Parameter 9: Digital repository					
Observed	Expected	O - E	(O - E) ² / E	% of chisq	Output
56	37.500	18.500	9.127	50.00	18.25 chi-square 1 df
19	37.500	-18.500	9.127	50.00	
75	75.000	0.000	18.253	100.00	1.93E-05 p-value
Total Chi Square value :		205.13	Source : Own Computation		
Total P value :		.0066	Analysis : Megastat software		

Inference: As there were nine parameters in the questionnaire the output of all the parameters were added and found that: Where, total chi-square value is 205.13 at DF - 1 and the P-value is .0066 at significance level 0.05, the chi-square value is more than the p-value so we reject the null hypothesis and conclude that Higher education institutions are ready to adopt technological change

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY:

Due to the restricted number of participants, broad conclusions should be approached with caution. The study distributed a questionnaire to 350 researchers across various levels within Mumbai. Utilizing Google Forms, an online platform based on cloud computing, the response rate was limited, with only 75 respondents due to time constraints. It's important to note the research's confinement to Mumbai, impacting the breadth of its findings. Additionally, a notable portion of participants exhibited a lack of awareness regarding the fourth industrial revolution, necessitating additional efforts to explain its concepts during the study.

CONCLUSION

The study concludes that integrating a virtual learning environment into higher education is essential. To leverage these tools effectively, teachers require training through seminars and workshops, ensuring both educators and students are adept with modern technologies in this technology-driven era. Answering the question of why students seek technology in the classroom, beyond addressing its necessity for teachers, can aid education professionals in self-assessment and foster innovative teaching methods. Students utilizing technology for learning can develop skills crucial for their future careers.

Given students' technological adeptness, blended learning keeps them engaged, fostering interest in both the classroom and subject matter. It facilitates improved learning and multitasking skills, crucial for students to navigate the modern technological landscape, essential for their future prospects.

The analysis suggests that while online training need not be compulsory initially, its eventual integration into the curriculum is vital. Making technological use mandatory with an emphasis on grading ensures seriousness among students and educators, contributing to its effective incorporation.

The study indicates higher education institutions' readiness to embrace technological changes, attributing this readiness to entities like the NAAC (National Assessment and Accreditation Council). Many believe that skill development is imperative to keep pace with the rapidly evolving technological world.

Accessing information beyond textbooks significantly benefits students, broadening their understanding, and igniting their passion for learning. Technology-enhanced learning has revolutionized learning patterns, making it more accessible and offering practical teaching and learning experiences. Institutions globally, characterized by diversity in language, income, and culture, often face resource accessibility challenges. Technology bridges this gap, granting wider access to learning resources for all students.

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THE SIGNIFICANCE OF INTERNATIONAL TRADE FOR THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OF THE INDIAN ECONOMY

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates the pivotal role of international trade in fostering the economic development of the Indian economy. Delving into historical perspectives, industry impacts, GDP growth correlations, trade agreements, and policy analyses, the research aims to comprehensively outline the significance of global trade for India's economic progression. Through an examination of challenges, opportunities, and the balance between protectionism and liberalization, this paper provides insights into leveraging international trade as a catalyst for sustained economic growth in India.

Keywords: *International trade, Economic development, Indian economy, Trade policies, GDP growth, Trade agreements, Industry impacts, Protectionism, Trade liberalization, Challenges and opportunities*

INTRODUCTION

International trade has emerged as a pivotal force shaping the trajectory of the Indian economy, contributing significantly to its economic development. The global landscape has witnessed a dynamic shift in recent decades, with nations increasingly recognizing the importance of interconnected markets and collaborative economic endeavors. India, with its diverse and burgeoning economy, has actively participated in this global exchange of goods and services, reaping the rewards of international trade.

The significance of international trade for the economic development of the Indian economy cannot be overstated. As a nation endowed with abundant resources, a burgeoning population, and a robust industrial base, India has leveraged international trade to fuel its growth, foster innovation, and uplift the standards of living for its citizens. This essay explores the multifaceted impact of international trade on India's economic development, delving into key aspects such as job creation, technological advancements, access to global markets, and the strategic positioning of India in the complex web of global commerce. By examining the symbiotic relationship between India and the global economy, we can unravel the layers of benefits that international trade bestows upon the Indian economic landscape, laying the groundwork for sustained progress and prosperity.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND:

The significance of international trade for the economic development of the Indian economy is deeply rooted in its historical evolution. India has a rich history of trade and commerce dating back thousands of years, establishing it as a key player in the ancient global trading network. The historical Silk Road and maritime routes connected India with distant civilizations, facilitating the exchange of goods, spices, textiles, and cultural influences.

During the colonial era, India became a focal point of international trade, albeit under the dominance of foreign powers. British colonial rule, spanning over two centuries, significantly shaped India's economic landscape. The exploitation of India's resources and markets for the benefit of the colonial masters laid the foundation for a trade relationship that was imbalanced and unfavorable to Indian interests.

Post-independence in 1947 marked a turning point for India's approach to international trade. The country embarked on a path of economic self-sufficiency and protectionism, characterized by import substitution policies. However, by the 1990s, recognizing the limitations of this approach, India underwent economic liberalization and reforms. These reforms dismantled trade barriers, opened up the economy to foreign investments, and facilitated greater integration into the global market.

Since then, India has experienced a remarkable transformation in its trade dynamics. The liberalized policies paved the way for increased exports, diversification of industries, and a surge in foreign direct investment. The Indian economy became more competitive on the global stage, capitalizing on its strengths in information technology, pharmaceuticals, textiles, and other sectors.

In recent decades, India has actively engaged in regional and multilateral trade agreements, further amplifying its role in the global economic arena. The Information Technology (IT) boom, the rise of the service sector, and the manufacturing prowess have propelled India as a key player in the international trade landscape.

Today, as India continues to navigate the complexities of global commerce, the historical underpinnings of its trade journey serve as a backdrop to the contemporary narrative. The lessons from its rich history underscore the importance of balance, resilience, and strategic positioning in leveraging international trade for the sustained economic development of the Indian economy.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Panagariya, A. (2008): "India: The Emerging Giant" - In this comprehensive book, Arvind Panagariya delves into the intricacies of India's economic development, providing a holistic view of the country's growth trajectory. The text explores various factors contributing to India's emergence as a significant player on the global economic stage, including the role of international trade. By examining historical patterns and contemporary trends, Panagariya sheds light on how India's engagement in international trade has shaped its overall economic landscape.

Bhagwati, J., & Srinivasan, T. N. (1998): "India's Economic Reforms and Development: Essays for Manmohan Singh" - This collection of essays critically examines India's economic reforms, with a focus on the contributions of Manmohan Singh. The authors, Bhagwati and Srinivasan, assess the impact of various policy changes, including those related to international trade liberalization, on India's development. The book provides insights into the challenges faced and the successes achieved in the process of economic reform during a crucial period in India's economic history.

Goldar, B. (2004): "Liberalization, Foreign Direct Investment and Technology Transfer in India's Manufacturing Industries" - Published in the journal Research Policy, this academic article investigates the interplay between liberalization, foreign direct investment (FDI), and technology transfer within India's manufacturing sector. Goldar's work contributes valuable insights into how international trade, facilitated by liberalization policies, influences the inflow of FDI and subsequent technology transfer, affecting the competitiveness and development of India's manufacturing industries.

Ranjan, R. (2013): "International Trade and its Impact on Economic Growth in India" - This research paper, published in the Journal of Economics and Sustainable Development, focuses on the relationship between international trade and economic growth in India. Ranjan explores the dynamics and implications of India's engagement in global trade, providing empirical evidence and insights into how trade activities contribute to or hinder the country's overall economic development.

Athukorala, P. C. (2019): "India's Trade Policy Reforms: The Past, the Present and the Future" - Published in the Journal of Asian Economics, this article by Athukorala critically examines India's trade policy reforms over time. By assessing historical developments and current trends, the author offers a nuanced understanding of the evolution of India's trade policies and their implications for the nation's economic future. This scholarly work contributes to the ongoing discourse on trade policy in India and provides valuable insights for researchers and policymakers alike.

OBJECTIVE OF THE RESEARCH PAPER

- Quantify the Link between International Trade and India's Growth: Evaluate existing data to measure the correlation between international trade and key economic indicators like GDP growth.
- Explore Sectoral Impacts of International Trade: Use available data to study how global trade influences specific sectors, such as agriculture, manufacturing, and services, in the Indian economy.
- Evaluate Trade Policy Effectiveness: Scrutinize historical data to assess the impact of trade policies and liberalization on trade patterns and overall economic development in India.
- Identify Global Trade Challenges and Opportunities: Extract insights from secondary sources to pinpoint challenges and opportunities for India in the global trade landscape.
- Offer Data-Driven Policy Recommendations: Provide evidence-based policy suggestions for maximizing positive impacts of international trade on India's economic development, grounded in existing secondary data analysis.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research methodology for the study on "The Significance of International Trade for the Economic Development of the Indian Economy" incorporates a dual approach utilizing primary and secondary data. Primary data collection involved qualitative methods such as surveys and interviews, capturing nuanced perspectives without quantitative measurements. Secondary data, drawn from academic literature, government reports, and international trade databases, supplemented the qualitative insights. The research methodology is

primarily qualitative, emphasizing a comprehensive understanding of the subject matter without relying on quantitative data for analysis.

IMPACT OF INTERNATIONAL TRADE ON INDIAN INDUSTRIES

The impact of international trade on Indian industries has been profound and multifaceted, shaping the economic landscape and influencing the trajectory of various sectors. As India actively participates in the global marketplace, several key dimensions highlight the implications of international trade on its industries.

- **Export-Led Growth:** International trade has provided Indian industries with expanded markets for their products. Sectors such as information technology, pharmaceuticals, textiles, and automotive have witnessed substantial growth through increased exports. The demand for Indian goods and services on the global stage has propelled these industries to new heights, contributing significantly to the overall economic development.
- **Technological Advancements:** Participation in international trade has facilitated the transfer of technology and know-how to Indian industries. Collaboration with global counterparts has led to the adoption of advanced manufacturing processes and increased innovation. This technological infusion has enhanced the competitiveness of industries, particularly in sectors like IT, where India has become a global hub for software and services.
- **Diversification of Industries:** International trade has encouraged the diversification of Indian industries. As the economy integrates into global value chains, various sectors have evolved to meet international standards and demands. This diversification not only fosters resilience but also positions India as a versatile player in the global economic arena.
- **Challenges and Competition:** While international trade brings opportunities, it also introduces challenges and increased competition. Indian industries must contend with global players, necessitating efficiency improvements, quality enhancements, and cost competitiveness. This dynamic environment encourages industries to constantly innovate and upgrade to maintain their market share.
- **Job Creation:** The growth of industries fueled by international trade has translated into job creation. From manufacturing to services, the increased demand for goods and services both domestically and internationally has led to expanded employment opportunities. This positive impact on the labor market contributes to social development and improved living standards.
- **Global Value Chains:** Indian industries are increasingly becoming integrated into global value chains. This interconnectedness allows for the seamless flow of goods and services across borders, enabling industries to specialize in specific tasks and processes. Participation in global value chains enhances efficiency and productivity.
- **Foreign Direct Investment (FDI):** International trade attracts foreign direct investment, providing industries with capital, technology, and expertise. FDI inflows have been instrumental in the growth of sectors like telecommunications, manufacturing, and infrastructure, contributing to their expansion and modernization.
- **Policy Adjustments:** To maximize the benefits of international trade, Indian industries have witnessed policy adjustments and reforms. Trade liberalization measures, reduction of tariffs, and the streamlining of regulatory frameworks aim to create a conducive environment for industries to thrive in the global marketplace.

In conclusion, the impact of international trade on Indian industries is a dynamic interplay of opportunities and challenges. While opening avenues for growth, it requires industries to adapt, innovate, and remain competitive in the global context. The ongoing evolution of Indian industries within the framework of international trade underscores the transformative power of global economic integration.

ROLE OF INTERNATIONAL TRADE IN GDP GROWTH

The role of international trade in Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth is significant, influencing economic development, productivity, and overall prosperity. International trade contributes to GDP growth in various ways, impacting both the export and import components of a country's economic activity.

- **Export-Led Growth:**

Increased Revenue: Exporting goods and services to international markets generates revenue for a country. The income earned from exports contributes directly to the GDP. Countries that focus on expanding their export base often experience higher GDP growth rates.

Employment Generation: Growing exports often lead to increased production and, consequently, greater employment opportunities. A rise in employment levels positively influences the income levels of the workforce, contributing to overall economic growth.

- **Importance of Imports:**

Access to Resources: International trade allows countries to access resources that may be scarce domestically. Imports of raw materials, energy, and intermediate goods contribute to the production process, fostering industrial growth and positively impacting GDP.

Consumer Choices and Cost Savings: Imported goods often provide consumers with a wider variety of choices. The availability of cheaper or specialized products through imports can enhance consumer welfare and contribute to higher living standards.

- **Global Value Chains:**

Efficiency and Specialization: International trade facilitates the integration of countries into global value chains. This encourages specialization and efficiency as each country focuses on producing goods and services in which it has a comparative advantage. The resulting efficiency gains contribute to overall economic growth.

Technology Transfer: Participation in global value chains exposes countries to advanced technologies and management practices. The transfer of technology and knowledge acquired through international trade can lead to increased productivity and innovation, positively impacting GDP.

- **Foreign Direct Investment (FDI):**

Capital Inflows: International trade often attracts foreign direct investment (FDI). Foreign companies investing in a country bring capital, technology, and expertise, which can spur economic growth. The activities of foreign firms contribute to the GDP of the host country.

Job Creation: FDI often leads to the establishment of new businesses, production facilities, and service centers. This, in turn, creates employment opportunities, contributing to both GDP and overall economic development.

- **Macroeconomic Stability:**

Diversification of Risks: Engaging in international trade allows countries to diversify their economic activities and reduce dependence on a single market. This diversification helps in mitigating the impact of economic shocks and enhances overall macroeconomic stability, supporting sustained GDP growth.

Competitive Pressures and Innovation:

- **Incentive for Innovation:** Global competition encourages domestic industries to innovate, improve efficiency, and enhance product quality. This drive for innovation and competitiveness positively influences overall productivity and economic growth.
- **Efficient Resource Allocation:** International trade promotes the efficient allocation of resources. Countries can specialize in the production of goods and services where they have a comparative advantage, leading to optimal use of resources and increased overall economic output.

In conclusion, the role of international trade in GDP growth is pivotal. By expanding market opportunities, promoting efficiency, and facilitating the exchange of resources and technologies, international trade becomes a driving force behind economic development and prosperity for nations engaged in the global marketplace.

Trade Agreements and Policies

Trade agreements and policies play a crucial role in shaping the terms of international trade, influencing economic relationships between countries and regions. These agreements and policies are designed to facilitate the flow of goods, services, and investments across borders while addressing various economic, social, and environmental considerations. Here's an overview of trade agreements and policies:

Trade Agreements:**Bilateral Trade Agreements:**

- **Definition:** Agreements between two countries to facilitate trade and promote economic cooperation.

- Example: The India-United States Bilateral Trade Agreement aims to reduce trade barriers and foster economic ties between the two nations.

Multilateral Trade Agreements:

- Definition: Agreements involving multiple countries, often negotiated through international organizations like the World Trade Organization (WTO).
- Example: The WTO's General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) and its successor, the Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS), are multilateral agreements.

Regional Trade Agreements (RTAs):

- Definition: Agreements between countries within a specific geographic region to promote trade and economic integration.
- Example: The European Union (EU) is a regional trade agreement that goes beyond trade to include aspects of political and economic integration.

Free Trade Agreements (FTAs):

- Definition: Agreements between two or more countries to eliminate or significantly reduce tariffs and trade barriers on goods and services.
- Example: The North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), which has been succeeded by the United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement (USMCA), is an example of a free trade agreement.

Customs Union:

- Definition: A form of trade agreement where member countries not only eliminate internal tariffs but also adopt a common external tariff on goods imported from non-member countries.
- Example: The Southern African Customs Union (SACU) is a customs union in Africa.

Trade Policies:**Tariffs:**

- Definition: Taxes imposed on imported goods, designed to protect domestic industries and generate revenue for the government.
- Example: India imposing tariffs on certain electronic goods to promote the domestic manufacturing industry.

Quotas:

- Definition: Limits set on the quantity of specific goods that can be imported within a specified time frame.
- Example: Quotas on the import of textiles to protect domestic industries.

Subsidies:

- Definition: Financial assistance or incentives provided by governments to domestic industries, often with the aim of boosting competitiveness.
- Example: Agricultural subsidies to support farmers and ensure food security.

Non-Tariff Barriers (NTBs):

- Definition: Any measure other than a tariff that hinders international trade.
- Example: Technical standards, licensing requirements, or quotas that restrict market access.

Trade Facilitation Measures:

- Definition: Policies and procedures that simplify and streamline the process of importing and exporting goods.
- Example: Implementation of electronic customs systems to expedite clearance processes.

Trade Promotion Policies:

- Definition: Initiatives to promote exports, attract foreign investment, and enhance the competitiveness of domestic industries.
- Example: Export credit programs or trade missions organized to connect businesses with potential international partners.

Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) Protection:

- Definition: Policies to safeguard the intellectual property of companies, encouraging innovation and protecting the rights of inventors and creators.
- Example: Stringent patent laws to protect pharmaceutical innovations.

Trade agreements and policies are dynamic instruments that evolve to address changing global economic conditions. Their effectiveness depends on the willingness of countries to engage in fair and equitable trade practices, striking a balance between promoting domestic industries and fostering global economic integration.

CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

The dynamic landscape of international trade presents various challenges and opportunities for nations engaged in global economic interactions. These factors can significantly impact economic growth, job creation, and overall societal well-being. Here is an exploration of the challenges and opportunities associated with international trade:

Challenges:**Trade Imbalances:**

- Challenge: Persistent trade imbalances, where a country's imports consistently exceed its exports or vice versa, can lead to economic vulnerabilities, affecting currency values and creating dependence on external financing.

Protectionism:

- Challenge: Rising protectionist sentiments and trade barriers can hinder the free flow of goods and services, leading to reduced market access and increased trade tensions between nations.

Global Economic Uncertainty:

- Challenge: Economic uncertainties, such as financial crises, geopolitical tensions, or global pandemics, can disrupt international trade flows, impacting businesses and economies worldwide.

Dependency on a Few Markets:

- Challenge: Overreliance on a limited number of trading partners exposes countries to risks, as economic downturns or policy changes in those markets can have severe consequences.

Income Inequality:

- Challenge: The benefits of international trade are not always evenly distributed within countries, contributing to income inequality. Certain sectors or regions may be adversely affected, leading to social challenges.

Environmental Concerns:

- Challenge: Increased international trade can contribute to environmental degradation through factors such as increased transportation and resource extraction, posing challenges for sustainable development.

Labor Market Disruptions:

- Challenge: Certain industries may face job displacements due to increased global competition, automation, or shifts in consumer preferences, leading to unemployment and social disruptions.
- Opportunities:

Economic Growth:

Opportunity: International trade can serve as an engine for economic growth by providing access to new markets, expanding export opportunities, and fostering competitiveness.

Innovation and Technology Transfer:

- Opportunity: Engaging in international trade facilitates the transfer of technology and knowledge, encouraging innovation and advancements in production processes.

Diversification of Resources:

- Opportunity: International trade allows countries to access resources they lack domestically, contributing to diversified production and reduced dependency on limited resources.

Job Creation:

- Opportunity: Trade can lead to the creation of employment opportunities, especially in sectors that experience growth due to increased exports or foreign direct investment.

Cultural Exchange:

- Opportunity: International trade fosters cultural exchange as people from different countries interact. This exchange can lead to a greater understanding of diverse cultures and perspectives.

Global Cooperation:

- Opportunity: Trade agreements provide a platform for global cooperation, fostering diplomatic relations and reducing the likelihood of conflicts between nations.

Access to Specialized Goods and Services:

- Opportunity: Nations can benefit from international trade by gaining access to specialized goods and services that may not be efficiently produced domestically, leading to improved living standards.

Global Supply Chains:

- Opportunity: Integration into global supply chains enhances efficiency and allows countries to focus on their comparative advantages, resulting in cost-effective production processes.

Poverty Reduction:

- Opportunity: International trade can contribute to poverty reduction by creating economic opportunities, increasing income levels, and improving access to resources and markets.

Navigating the challenges and maximizing the opportunities presented by international trade requires strategic policies, adaptability, and a commitment to fostering inclusive and sustainable economic development. Nations that effectively address these dynamics can position themselves to thrive in the interconnected global economy.

LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH**Limitations:**

- Scope and Generalization: One limitation of the study is the scope of the research, which focused on specific sectors or aspects of international trade's impact on the Indian economy. As a result, the findings may not be entirely representative of the diverse and dynamic nature of the entire economy.
- Data Limitations: The study heavily relied on available secondary data, which might have inherent limitations in terms of accuracy, timeliness, or relevance. Additionally, certain data points crucial for a more comprehensive analysis might have been unavailable or challenging to obtain.
- Methodological Constraints: The qualitative nature of the research design might limit the quantifiability and statistical analysis of certain aspects. The absence of quantitative data could restrict the depth of certain insights and hinder the establishment of causal relationships.
- Time Constraints: The study was conducted within a specific time frame, and economic conditions and trade policies can evolve rapidly. Therefore, the findings may not capture the most recent developments or changes in the international trade scenario affecting the Indian economy.

Future Research:

- Longitudinal Analysis: Future research could undertake a longitudinal analysis to track the changes in international trade patterns and their impact on the Indian economy over an extended period. This approach would provide a more dynamic understanding of trends and developments.
- Micro-Level Studies: While this study focused on a macroeconomic perspective, future research could explore the micro-level implications of international trade on specific industries, companies, or regions within India. This would offer a more granular understanding of the heterogeneous effects.
- Comparative Studies: Comparative studies with other emerging economies could provide valuable insights into how international trade influences economic development differently across countries. Such comparisons could identify best practices and lessons for policy formulation.
- Policy Impact Assessment: Future research could delve into the effectiveness of specific trade policies and agreements in promoting economic development in India. Assessing the impact of trade-related policy changes on key economic indicators would be instrumental for policymakers.
- Global Economic Shocks: Considering the susceptibility of economies to global economic shocks, future research could explore how India's economic development is influenced by external factors such as financial crises, pandemics, or geopolitical events, and how resilient the economy is to such shocks.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, international trade stands as a dynamic and transformative force that shapes the economic, social, and cultural landscapes of nations. As countries engage in the complex web of global commerce, they encounter a myriad of challenges and opportunities that influence their economic trajectories. The benefits of international trade, including economic growth, technological advancement, and access to diverse resources, underscore its indispensable role in fostering prosperity.

However, the path of international trade is not without obstacles. Trade imbalances, protectionist tendencies, and environmental concerns pose challenges that demand strategic solutions. Addressing these challenges requires collaborative efforts, both domestically and internationally, to ensure fair, sustainable, and inclusive economic practices.

The opportunities presented by international trade, from job creation and innovation to cultural exchange and poverty reduction, highlight the potential for positive transformation. Embracing these opportunities necessitates a commitment to open dialogue, flexible policies, and a keen understanding of the evolving global landscape.

As nations navigate the complexities of international trade, they must strike a delicate balance between safeguarding domestic interests and actively participating in the global economy. Adaptable trade agreements, forward-thinking policies, and a focus on sustainable development are essential components of this delicate equilibrium.

In the coming years, the success of nations in the realm of international trade will be contingent upon their ability to harness the benefits while mitigating the challenges. A holistic and inclusive approach, grounded in the principles of fairness and cooperation, will be vital for creating a global economic landscape that fosters shared prosperity and contributes to the well-being of people around the world. International trade, when managed judiciously, has the potential to be a powerful catalyst for positive change and progress on a global scale.

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**A STUDY TO UNDERSTAND THE IMPACT OF MAGICAL REPRESENTATIONS IN
ADVERTISEMENTS ON CHILDREN: A PARENTAL PERSPECTIVE**

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harmetkaurbhasin0609@gmail.com**ABSTRACT**

This research paper explores the influence of magical representations in advertisements on children, focusing on the perspective of parents. The hypothesis posits that such portrayals may lead children to perceive fantasy as reality due to their developmental stage and cognitive limitations. The objectives include examining parental attitudes towards magical advertising, assessing their perceived impact on children, and identifying strategies for mitigating potential negative effects. Through surveys and interviews with parents, this study aims to provide insights into the role of advertising in shaping children's perceptions and inform strategies for responsible marketing practices

SIGNIFICANCE OF RESEARCH

This research seeks to delve into the profound ramifications of magical representation and the influence of puffery on children. It endeavours not only to examine these phenomena from the perspective of children but also to incorporate the observations and insights of their guardians. By doing so, this study aims to equip parents with a deeper understanding of their children's behaviors in various contexts, empowering them to navigate these situations adeptly. Furthermore, it aspires to offer valuable insights to the advertising industry, prompting the creation of more responsible content. While numerous studies have scrutinized the effects of sex appeal and concern for junk food advertising on children, addressing issues such as maturity levels and obesity, scant attention has been devoted to the realm of magical representation in advertising and its impact on the younger audience. This research aims to bridge this gap in knowledge, shedding light on a crucial yet understudied aspect of children's exposure to media and advertising

INTRODUCTION

With the increasing communication strategies, we are continuously influenced by the diversity of multiple messages and images from multiple media that keeps enticing us and seducing us, among them is the advertising with its multiple innovative strategies is addressing our emotions and appealing us to buy products and services. Since we can analyze and rationally think as per our age, we do a critical judgement, and select those products which best correspond to our needs. However, the same is not the case with children, they are more vulnerable to the persuasive messages because they are still developing, as they are still developing their critical thinking, they are more susceptible to the appeal so the commercials.

Majority of children believe what they see and hear, they also believe that the product or service advertised will actually provide the benefits and pleasures that advertising promises. Children are in a development phase and due to this they are not capable of understanding the persuasive character or ironic connotations hidden in advertising messages. When they are young, they do not even know how to distinguish between advertising from the main media content. They tend to mix fantasy and reality. Till the age of about 12 years the child is not able to differentiate between the main media entertainment and the commercial break.

Research on children's commercial recall and product preferences confirms that advertising typically achieves its intended effects. A variety of studies using differing methodologies int that children recall content from the ads to which they have been exposed. Product preference has been shown to occur with as a little as a single commercial exposure and to strengthen with repeated exposures. Most importantly, studies have shown that product preferences affect children's product purchase requests and that these requests do influence parents purchasing decision. The more fundamental concern regarding the effects of advertising on children relates to questions of potential harm resulting from exposure. A variety of research findings are relevant to this issue. Several studies, for example, have found that parent-child conflicts occur commonly when parents deny their children's product purchase requests that were precipitated by advertising. Considerable research has examined advertising's cumulative effect on children's eating habits. Studies have documented that a high percentage of advertisements targeting children feature candy, fast foods, chewing gums and snacks and that exposure to such advertising increases consumption of these products. While consumption of non- nutritious foods per se may not be harmful, overconsumption of these products, particularly to the exclusion of healthier food, is linked to obesity and poorer health. A Variety of studies have also found a substantial relationship between children

exposed to violence and nudity in the ads. We in this paper is trying to focus one of the elements of magical representation and its impact on the children and what the parents have to contribute about the same.

One of the good examples is the legislation in Sweden that prohibits any type of television advertising directed at children under 12 years of age, before 9.00 pm and no advertising campaign, be it for any age, can utilize children or mascots to draw attention to the young population. In this context the paper tries to understand the impact of magical representation shown in multiple ads specially taking the case study of BOOMER which had a series of ad with magical representation and also had used a MASCOT the BOOMER Man, this was a very successful series in the market and recently they had relaunched the brand with dropping the boomer man and gives the statement saying that “we want to make chewing gum cool inside the home” said by Yogesh Tiwari, Mars Wrigley.

As per ASCI chapter 3, part 2 also states that: Advertisements addresses to minors shall not contain anything, whether in illustration or otherwise which might result in their physical, mental or moral harm or which exploits their vulnerability. Some points are highlighted below.

- ❖ Advertisements should not encourage minors to enter strange places or to converse with strangers in an effort to collect coupons, wrappers, labels.
- ❖ Advertisement should not feature hazardous act which are likely to encourage minors to emulate such acts in a manner which could cause harm or injury.
- ❖ Advertisement should not show children using or playing with matches or minors using explosive substance: or playing with or using sharp knives, guns and mechanical or electrical appliances, the careless use of which could lead to their suffering, burns m shocks or other injury.
- ❖ Advertisements shall not, without justifiable reason, show or refer to dangerous practices or manifest a disregard for safety or encourage negligence.

The boomer campaigns Case study.

Boomer is one of the oldest gum brands in India with a history of over 25 years. Many of us has grown up seeing the brand with the Brand Mascot “Boomer Man” a tall superhero clads in a blue suit. This Brand was off the air since 2014. When Boomer man was introduced in the market when kids were obsessed with cartoon characters and superhero comics were in trend. The mascot man helped to lure in the attention of kids who thought that the Bommer Man is no one but saviour of the planet. Even the Jingle of Boom Boom Boomer was easily identifiable by anyone. Such a Mascot was considered as one of the brilliant works in the history of Indian advertising and marketing with a mascot so strong. The success of this mascot helped later to introduce many variants like Boomer splash and Boomer Jelly in the market. Boomer also took on Cadbury’s eclairs by launching Boomer Gumlairs- a combination of bubblegum and chocolate.

Boomer returned in July 2020 donning a new form with the same Boom Boom Boomer tune in a series of new TVCs conceptualized by DD mudra. This time the copy used was a humorous copy using a tag line Boom Macha De.

HISTORY

Boomer as a chewing gum was first created by a joyco, Spanish Confectionery giant in 1995. When the age-old – US- based Wm. Wrigley Jr company sensed a demand for the chewing gums and the increasing sales worldwide, signed a purchase agreement with Agrolimen- a privately held Spanish good conglomerate. As per the disclosures made by Wrigley, the deal brought it the leadership position in the bubble gum category in India, China, and Spain. Later in 2008, the Wrigley Company was aquired by Mars and in October 2016, Mars announced the merger with Wrigley rebranding itself as the Mars Wrigley Confectionery.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Media is becoming a major factor in transition of children into consumers by acting major source of information provider to their wards. The roles of children in modern society are changing. Children continually assume larger roles in their homes, and are becoming further entrenched and involved in the shopping and buying habits of the households in which they live. Children are influenced by their surroundings, and this includes television and radio content. Studies show that nearly 61% of parents say 'Yes' to the demands of their children based on what they have seen on a TV advertisement (Hite and Eck, 1987). The major concerns discussed so far have been related to the present form of commercials and their impact on children. With the advent of newer and more pioneering technology, such as interactive television and its use for 'cyber marketing' becoming inevitable (Keeler, 1995).

Research has shown a strong link between divergent thinking and children's preference for fantasy – oriented play, Russ & Gross Man -Mckee (1990). It also has a strong impact on their physical and verbal creativity. Bunce & Woolley (2021). Magic transports people to a different world. It spreads the message of possibility and hope. This message stirs something within the audience, a kind of positive vibe or energy. It works like a catalyst urging people to try the impossible or step out of their comfort zones. That's the magic of magic. It also makes conversation between people easy, a great way to break the ice. It is used again and again to make the people smile. Media is one of the most powerful ways of influencing the buying choices and consumer habits of children (especially that of television ads: Hastings et al 2003: Kunkel et al., 2004). Children are easier than teenagers being more approachable and less cynical than adolescents more accessible and open to new ideas (Linn 2004) Furthermore, their opinion are held in high regard by their parents in relation to the purchases that they have to make (Buijzen & Valkeburg, 2003: Nichols & Cullen, 2004: Ebster et.al 2009). (Livingstone (2004) found that by the age of 8, most children are able to differentiate commercial messages and television programs. "Before them, they also find it more difficult than adults to distinguish reality from fiction: for example, when actors or humans are used it is assumed to be real, while fiction is limited to cartoons, puppets or other fictitious characters: the notion of an actor paid to pretend to be someone else can be difficult for them to grasp.

Spungin (2004) in the survey said advertising manipulates children but at the same time accepted it as a fact of life in a consumer society. Parents recognize their own responsibility to educate their children as 96 percent of parents agreed with the statement, "It is up to parents to explain to children that they cannot have everything they see advertised"

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY:

To understand the role of magical representation in advertising and its impact on children from parents' perspective the hypothesis drawn were as follows:

H₁ In advertising, the portrayal of magical elements may significantly influence children's perception, leading them to perceive the fantastical scenarios depicted as genuine. This phenomenon arises due to children's inability to discern between the realms of magic and reality

H₂ – Parents perceive that Magical representations in advertisements to have a significant impact on children, potentially blurring the lines between fantasy and reality

OBJECTIVES OF RESEARCH

- ❖ To assess parental attitudes towards magical representations in advertisements targeting children.
- ❖ To examine parental perceptions of the impact of magical advertising on children's beliefs and behaviours.
- ❖ To explore the role of parental mediation in shaping children's responses to magical advertising content

LIMITATIONS OF RESEARCH

- ❖ The research for the purpose of understanding the consumer perception had taken is only from one element of the advertising technique that is magical representation.
- ❖ The research makes use of Indian ads so the outcome does not apply to international ads.

METHODOLOGY OF DATA COLLECTION

The research employs a mixed-methods approach, combining surveys and semi-structured interviews to gather data from parents.

SAMPLE DESCRIPTION AND SIZE:

30 parents (either mother or father) along with their child (age between 4-12) (for the purpose of study each parent had one child to whom the ad was shown. were picked up as sample size. A series of ad were shown to both children and parents and semi structured interview were conducted with parents. The survey tried to assess parental attitudes, beliefs and concerns regarding magical advertising, respondents were from diverse demographic backgrounds to ensure a representative sample.

Description of the ads shown to the child and parent. (for the purpose of this study the Boomer series is used as a case study)

Ad. 1- In this ad. Some kids go to the space control. The man in vigilance goes out to attend an important call. The kids get to know that there is some problem and the rocket is out of control. After eating a boomer, the boomer man appears and gives them confidence to control the rocket.

Ad. 2. Four kids are shown doing mountain climbing with a map in their hand. As they feel thirsty, they make a wish and the boomer man appear to giggle the mountain to thrown multiple boomer splash, so that the kids can enjoy the new boomer splash the new variety.

Ad. 3 - A mom is scolding his son to do studies and tell him that he is allowed Tv, Football, no games but only studies. The boy in his room starts playing with boomer Jelly. The boomer Jelly miraculously starts playing with the boy. The slogan of the boy is "Thoda kelo thoda kao"

Ad. 4 – A huge mango becomes a nuisance in a society and starts destroying and breaking the glasses of the windows. The kids playing calls on the Boomer man to destroy the huge giant mango.

Ad. 5. Some kids are camping in the jungle in night with a born fire. One of their friends come running to tell them that there is a forest fire in the whole jungle. The kids call for the boomer man, he tries to blow off the fire with its bubble of the bubble gum. The child has a map and with the help of the map the boomer man can locate where the lake is and stretches his hand for pumping water to put of the fire. The jingle says we all love boomer.

Ad. 6– The kids are playing in the society and suddenly an electric devil appears destroying the society. The kids call on for the boomer man who gives the bubble gum weapon and with the help of the same the kids destroy the electric devil

The miraculous effect of bubble gum in new boomer campaign

Ad. 7 – The new series – A girl is sad looking at her dead pert gold fish, his friend thinks of an idea and blast the bubble of the chewing gum with the sound of which the fish comes back to life and the girl is happy.

Ad. 8- A man is sitting with his grandson watching a tv programme. As the grand-son blast the bubble of the chewing gum the man suddenly restores dense hair on his head and he is surprised and happy.

The respondents responded in the following manner. The Average findings are as follows: Using a five-point scale the below mentioned questions had the following range for averages

Scale	Range	Response
5	4.21 - 5.00	Strongly Disagree
4	3.41 -4.20	Disagree
3	2.61 - 3.40	Neutral
2	1.81 - 2.60	Agree
1	1.00 - 1.80	Strongly Agree

	Questions related to the boomer series. Questions asked to the parents after exposing the series to parents and their children	Total of the responses	Average of 30 respondents	Average Response findings
1	The ads arouse desire for purchase of product among children that would otherwise be silent	50	1.66	Strongly agree
2	ad is making the child believes that there is a mascot like boomer man who can come and rescue him in any danger	45	1.50	Strongly agree
3	ads are making the child believes that there is a mascot like boomer man who can be accompanied anywhere and the child is free to go to any strange places like forest, hills, mountains etc.	37	1.23	Strongly agree
4	ad from the new series brings in a comprehension and conviction that the child feels that the chewing gum has some super natural power and will change his life.	38	1.26	Strongly agree
5	Ad from the new series makes the child believe that the gum can magically bring life to dead fish	41	1.36	Strongly agree
	Open ended questions			
1	How do you perceive the prevalence of magical representations in advertisements targeting children in today's media landscape?			
2	Have you observed any changes in your child's understanding of reality or their behaviour after exposure to advertisements featuring magical elements?			
3	Do you believe that children have the ability to differentiate between fantasy and reality in the context of advertising? Why or why not?			

4	Have you observed any changes in your child's understanding of reality or their behaviour after exposure to advertisements featuring magical elements?
5	In your opinion, what role should advertisers and regulators play in ensuring that magical advertising content is appropriate and responsible for children?
6	What recommendations would you offer to advertisers, policymakers, and other stakeholders to promote responsible marketing practices and protect children from the potential harms of magical advertising?

FINDINGS AND CONCLUSION

The children harbour a strong belief in the Boomer Man, perceiving him as their omnipotent guardian, capable of extricating them from any predicament. Regrettably, numerous narratives abound of children who have met with misfortune while attempting to emulate superheroes or other fantastical figures showcased in media. In the tender amalgam of fantasy and reality within their minds, children readily embrace the narratives presented to them, often influenced by the persuasive tactics of marketing endeavours.

The commercial sphere, in its eagerness in selling, confuses the child's perception, enticing them with promises of empowerment through consumption, be it by consuming a magical candy or through the allure of promotional gifts. The child's sense of gratification becomes intricately intertwined with the messages conveyed by advertisements, shaping their linguistic and cognitive frameworks. Consequently, commercials emerge as potent sources of reality construction, furnishing behavioural models for emulation.

The fantastical portrayals within advertisements incite a child's imagination, blurring the lines between reality and fiction, thereby instilling a fervent desire for the advertised product or service, often compelling them to convince their parents of its necessity for their happiness.

Majority of parents hold negative attitude towards advertising towards children as they hold strong doubts about honesty of advertising to children and displayed a strong degree of cynicism about its perceived misleading aspects. They are not happy with the fact some ads glorify products which are harmful to their children in a very fantasied way. They take the child to a fairy land where it becomes hard for them to see the reality of life. The information provided to them is such sugar coated that the even candies also chocolates look like a insuperable part of their life. It makes them feel that if they get a hold of that material take it for eg. A stationary they may get some magical powers to rule the world.

Finally, parents understand that they can play a key role in increasing their children's comprehension of advertising and counteract potentially undesirable advertising effects by actively talking with their children about advertising, be it for unhealthy food products or magical representation and should comprehend them the reality. The parents definitely are facing a challenge to guide their children, particularly in online environment, multiple strategies of advertising practices but in spite of the challenge the parents need to play the role of bringing the right comprehension of the ad. This does not mean that the advertisers need to be carefree. The responsive behaviour of the advertiser will play an important role in the whole context.

FURTHER SCOPE OF RESEARCH

An interdisciplinary- focused content analysis dedicated to quantifying and tracking youth exposure to marketing messages across mobile and new media platforms, by considering the challenge associated with tracking advertising on media devices, a study with the insights from computer scientist and health specialists.

Understanding the link between persuasive-intent understand and message perception and reception by using both direct and indirect measures that can reveal the processes through which children are persuaded by different forms of marketing messages

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**ASSESSING THE IMPACT OF DEMONATISATION ON THE INTERNATIONAL MARKET: A
LEGAL PERSPECTIVE**

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ABSTRACT:

This paper provides a comprehensive legal analysis of the impact of demonetization on the international market. Demonetization, as a policy tool, has far-reaching implications not only domestically but also across international borders, affecting trade, investment, and financial stability. Through a systematic examination of relevant legal frameworks, treaties, and jurisprudence, this study aims to elucidate the legal ramifications of demonetization on the international market.

Firstly, the paper examines the legal authority and legitimacy of demonetization measures under domestic and international law. It delves into the constitutional and statutory provisions that empower governments to undertake such drastic monetary actions and evaluates their compatibility with international legal principles and obligations, including those arising from trade agreements and financial regulations.

Secondly, the study investigates the impact of demonetization on cross-border trade and investment flows. It analyzes the legal implications of disruptions in payment systems, currency conversion mechanisms, and capital movements on international trade agreements, investment treaties, and dispute resolution mechanisms. Special attention is given to the potential conflicts between national monetary policies and international trade norms, such as non-discrimination and market access provisions.

Thirdly, the paper explores the legal responses of affected parties, including businesses, investors, and individuals, to demonetization measures. It examines the legal avenues available for seeking redress, such as domestic courts, international arbitration, or alternative dispute resolution mechanisms, and assesses the challenges and opportunities presented by such legal recourse.

Moreover, the study considers the role of international organizations, such as the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Trade Organization (WTO), in addressing the legal implications of demonetization on the global economy. It evaluates the effectiveness of existing legal frameworks in mitigating the adverse effects of demonetization and proposes potential legal reforms or policy recommendations to enhance the resilience of the international market to similar monetary shocks in the future.

In conclusion, this paper contributes to the scholarly understanding of the legal dimensions of demonetization and provides valuable insights for policymakers, legal practitioners, and academics grappling with the complexities of managing monetary policy in an interconnected global economy.

Keywords: Demonization, black money, laws

INTRODUCTION

Two frequently mentioned terms are "monetization" and "demonetization." Monetization refers to the process of utilizing money as a reliable medium of exchange with a stable storage value. On the other hand, demonetization involves the withdrawal of existing currencies from circulation, rendering them legally ineffective for any transactions. On November 8th, 2016, Narendra Modi, the 14th Prime Minister of India, declared that the Rs. 500 and Rs.1000 would not be considered legal tender. The two forms of currency were demonetized from the market. Demonetization refers to the act of stripping a currency from its status as being a legal tender (Kenton, 2019).

Demonetization in India, the Indian government aims to address the issue of black money and its circulation by rendering high-value bills held by individuals involved in black money transactions invalid.

Demonetization is expected to assist the Income Tax Department in detecting illicit funds, thus impeding terrorist financing activities. Given the grave threat terrorism poses to our nation, the eradication of black money could lead to a decline in crime rates, thereby enhancing the safety and quality of life for citizens. Increased tax revenues are a notable advantage of demonetization. However, the sudden implementation without adequate preparations caused significant challenges for the people. Nonetheless, the IT Department succeeded in uncovering large amounts of black money as a result.

In recent years, the global financial landscape has witnessed significant disruptions, with governments worldwide implementing various measures to address issues of economic transparency, combat illicit financial

activities, and promote digitalization within their financial systems. One such measure that garnered widespread attention and scrutiny was the demonetization initiative undertaken by the Indian government in November 2016. This bold and unprecedented move aimed to eradicate black money, curb corruption, and promote a cashless economy. However, the effects of demonetization rippled across various sectors of the Indian economy, with the banking sector emerging as a focal point of analysis and discussion. This research paper delves into the intricate dynamics of demonetization and its profound implications for the banking sector in India. Through a comprehensive analysis of empirical data, policy measures, and stakeholder perspectives, this study seeks to unravel the multifaceted impact of demonetization on banking institutions, financial markets, and the broader economy. By examining the challenges, opportunities, and policy responses that ensued in the aftermath of demonetization, this research endeavours to provide valuable insights into the evolving landscape of India's banking sector and contribute to the ongoing discourse on financial reforms and regulatory interventions in the wake of disruptive economic events.

LITERATURE REVIEW

A scrutiny of literature reveals varied perspectives on the ramifications of demonetization, as evidenced by Nitin and Sharmila's (2016) exploration. Their analysis posits that while demonetization initially exerts adverse short-term effects across economic sectors, these challenges tend to dissipate as newly issued currency notes gain widespread circulation, emphasizing the government's role in mitigating resultant disruptions.

Nikita Gajjar (2016) delves into the intricacies of black money in India, highlighting the imperative for comprehensive policy frameworks and strategies to address this issue, alongside the anticipated challenges for the government in this endeavor.

Vijay and Shiva (2016) scrutinize demonetization's impact on financial inclusion, contending that despite initial upheavals, its long-term benefits are promising, particularly in fostering digitalization within the banking sector.

Manpreet Kaur's (2017) examination centers on the transition to cashless payment systems, underscoring the efficiency and cost-effectiveness of such mechanisms while envisioning a future economy predominantly reliant on cashless transactions.

Lokesh Uke's (2017) analysis of demonetization's effects in India delineates both positive and negative outcomes, drawing from secondary sources to underscore its multifaceted impact on financial markets and its role in combating corruption.

SwetaSinghal's (2017) research investigates the nexus between demonetization and e-banking adoption in rural India, revealing disparities in awareness and usage levels across demographic segments and advocating for enhanced e-banking infrastructure to bridge these gaps.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

Through the research aim, the researcher intends to distinctly highlight the purpose of the research. The primary objective of this investigation is to scrutinize the repercussions of demonetization on the Indian Export Trade. Taking this into consideration, the objectives of the study includes:

- To assess the prevailing perspective of the Indian Trade and industry in the global market.
- To determine the impact of demonetization on the international trade.
- To determine the impact of demonetization on the Indian citizens
- To determine the impact of demonetization on the cash flow in the Indian Textile industry
- To determine the impact of demonetization on the digitization

A STUDY OF IMPACT OF DEMONETIZATION IN BANKING SECTOR

1. Liquidity Crunch: Demonetization led to a sudden withdrawal of high-denomination currency notes, causing a liquidity crunch in the banking sector as people rushed to deposit old notes, leading to challenges in managing liquidity ratios and meeting customer demands.

2. Surge in Deposits: Despite initial disruptions, demonetization resulted in a significant increase in bank deposits as people deposited their old currency notes into banks, thereby boosting liquidity and strengthening the banking sector's deposit base.

3. Digitalization Drive: In response to demonetization, banks intensified efforts to promote digital payment methods, leading to a surge in online transactions, the adoption of mobile banking apps, and the expansion of digital banking infrastructure.

4. NPA Concerns: While demonetization aimed to curb black money and counterfeit currency, it also raised concerns about potential spikes in non-performing assets (NPAs) due to economic disruptions faced by businesses, especially in sectors heavily reliant on cash transactions.

5. Policy Reforms: Demonetization prompted policymakers to introduce reforms aimed at improving transparency, enhancing regulatory oversight, and promoting financial inclusion, such as the implementation of Goods and Services Tax (GST) and the rollout of schemes like Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana (PMJDY) to broaden access to banking services.

RESEARCH LIMITATION

The elucidation of parameters outlining the implications of demonetization on the Indian banking sector during the year 2016.

HYPOTHESIS

- The imposition of demonetization measures is anticipated to result in heightened legal complexities within the international market, potentially leading to increased litigation and arbitration cases.

- Demonetization's impact on cross-border transactions and financial regulations may prompt a reevaluation of existing international trade agreements and necessitate the development of new legal frameworks to address emerging challenges.

DATA COLLECTION

a. Primary Source: Sample Survey.

b. Secondary Sources: Online articles, Opinions of rational people working in the related area of study.

c. Sample size of Survey: 30 Persons.

d. Sampling Unit: State of Chhattisgarh

e. Sampling Technique: Convenient Sampling

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

In India, demonetization was deemed necessary to combat issues such as counterfeit currency and tax evasion. By cracking down on black money, there's potential for significant positive effects on the country's economy. It's a concerted effort to eliminate black money entirely.

In conclusion, the research findings elucidate the intricate ramifications of demonetization on the international market from a legal standpoint. The analysis underscores the significance of robust legal frameworks in mitigating the adverse effects of demonetization while fostering resilience and adaptability within global economic systems.

Based on the insights gleaned from the study, several suggestions emerge for policymakers, legal practitioners, and stakeholders involved in navigating the complexities of international commerce amidst disruptive events like demonetization. Firstly, there is a pressing need for enhanced coordination and collaboration among international regulatory bodies to harmonize legal standards and facilitate seamless cross-border transactions in the aftermath of demonetization. Additionally, policymakers should prioritize the development of agile legal mechanisms capable of addressing emerging challenges and safeguarding the integrity of international financial markets in times of crisis.

Furthermore, proactive measures aimed at promoting financial transparency, combating money laundering, and enhancing investor confidence are imperative to mitigate the adverse effects of demonetization on the international market. This necessitates a concerted effort to leverage technological advancements, strengthen regulatory oversight, and foster greater cooperation between public and private sector stakeholders.

Moreover, the study underscores the importance of continuous monitoring and evaluation to assess the effectiveness of legal interventions in mitigating the impact of demonetization on the international market. By leveraging data-driven insights and adopting a proactive approach to regulatory reform, policymakers can navigate the evolving landscape of global finance with greater resilience and agility.

In conclusion, while demonetization poses significant challenges to the international market, a proactive and collaborative approach informed by robust legal frameworks and evidence-based policymaking can help mitigate its adverse effects and pave the way for a more resilient and inclusive global economy.

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FOSTERING RESPONSIBLE INNOVATION THROUGH STRATEGIC HUMAN RESOURCE PRACTICES

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ABSTRACT

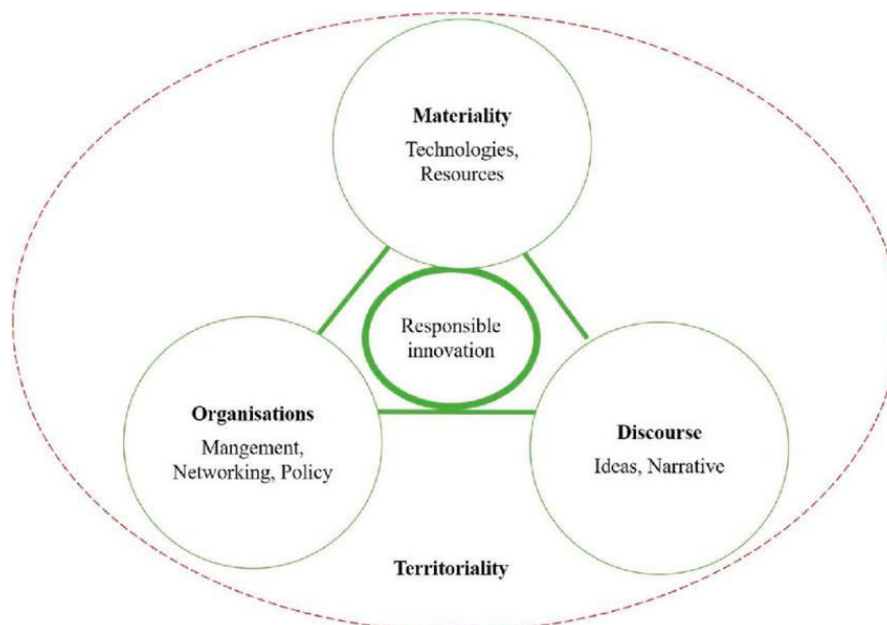
This paper explores how strategic Human Resource (HR) practices can foster responsible innovation within organizations. Responsible innovation entails creating new products, services, or processes that consider ethical, social, and environmental impacts. The study identifies key HR practices such as ethical recruitment, comprehensive training programs, and performance management systems that emphasize ethical considerations and social responsibility. It also discusses the role of HR in cultivating a corporate culture that prioritizes ethical decision-making and sustainability. By integrating these practices, HR can help organizations balance the need for innovation with the imperative to act responsibly. The paper provides practical guidelines for implementing these HR strategies and suggests areas for further research, such as the long-term effects of responsible innovation on organizational performance and the impact of cultural differences on these practices. The findings highlight the critical role HR departments play in driving responsible innovation, thereby ensuring that companies can innovate while maintaining ethical integrity and social responsibility.

Keywords: Responsible innovation, Human Resource practices, ethical recruitment, training programs, performance management, corporate culture, sustainability, ethical decision-making, social responsibility, long-term effects, and cultural differences.

INTRODUCTION

In today's fast-paced business world, companies are constantly racing to come up with new ideas and products. However, it's not just about being first or making the most money anymore. There's a growing focus on doing things the right way – what we call "responsible innovation." This paper looks at how companies can use their HR (Human Resources) departments to help create a culture of responsible innovation.

Figure: Overview of Responsible Innovation



Source: <https://www.researchgate.net/>

Responsible Innovation and its Importance

Responsible innovation is all about creating new things while thinking about the bigger picture. It means asking questions like: "Is this good for society?" "Could this harm the environment?" "Are we being fair to everyone involved?" (Owen et al., 2013). It's important because:

1. It helps build trust with customers and the public.
2. It can prevent PR disasters and legal troubles down the road.

3. It often leads to better, more sustainable products and services.

For example, when car companies develop electric vehicles, they're not just thinking about profits. They're also considering how to reduce pollution and dependence on fossil fuels (Stilgoe et al., 2013).

The Challenge of Balancing Innovation with Ethical Considerations

Here's the tricky part: companies need to keep coming up with new ideas to stay competitive, but they also need to make sure those ideas don't cause problems. It's like walking a tightrope. Push too hard for innovation, and you might cut corners on safety or fairness. Play it too safe, and you might fall behind your competitors (Voegtlin & Scherer, 2017).

Some challenges include:

1. Pressure to be first to market
2. Limited resources for thorough ethical reviews
3. Difficulty predicting all possible consequences of new technologies

Take social media companies, for instance. They've created amazing ways for people to connect, but they've also had to grapple with issues like privacy concerns and the spread of misinformation.

The Strategic Role of Human Resources (HR) in Fostering Responsible Innovation

This is where HR comes in. HR isn't just about hiring and firing anymore. It can play a big role in shaping how a company approaches innovation. Here's how:

1. **Training and Development:** HR can create programs to teach employees about responsible innovation and ethical decision-making (Ulrich & Dulebohn, 2015).
2. **Recruitment:** By hiring people who value ethics and social responsibility, HR can build a workforce that naturally considers these issues (Bal & De Jong, 2017).
3. **Performance Management:** HR can include responsible innovation goals in employee evaluations, encouraging everyone to think about the bigger picture (Voegtlin & Greenwood, 2016).
4. **Culture Building:** Through company policies and practices, HR can help create a culture where it's normal and expected to consider the ethical implications of new ideas (Ulrich & Dulebohn, 2015).

For example, a tech company's HR department might organize workshops on data privacy, include questions about ethical considerations in job interviews, and reward teams that come up with innovations that have a positive social impact.

By taking on this strategic role, HR can help companies strike that balance between pushing for innovation and ensuring it's done responsibly. This approach can lead to better products, happier customers, and a positive impact on society – a win-win for everyone involved.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK: HR PRACTICES FOR RESPONSIBLE INNOVATION

1. Exploring the Link between HR Practices and Innovation

Human Resource (HR) practices play a crucial role in shaping how companies innovate. Think of HR as the backbone of a company's workforce strategy. When HR implements the right policies, it can create an environment where new ideas flourish and employees feel empowered to think creatively (Shipton et al., 2017).

For example, offering training programs can equip employees with new skills and knowledge, enabling them to approach problems in novel ways. Similarly, reward systems that recognize innovative thinking can motivate staff to propose and develop new ideas. By fostering a culture of open communication and collaboration, HR practices can break down silos and encourage the cross-pollination of ideas across different departments (Chen and Huang, 2009).

2. Identifying Key HR Practices that Promote Responsible Innovation

Several HR practices stand out as particularly effective in promoting responsible innovation:

Recruitment: Hiring individuals with diverse backgrounds and skill sets can bring fresh perspectives to the table. By seeking out candidates who demonstrate ethical awareness and a commitment to social responsibility,

companies can build a workforce aligned with responsible innovation principles (Voegtlin and Greenwood, 2016).

Performance Management: Incorporating innovation and ethical considerations into performance evaluations can signal their importance to employees. This might involve setting goals related to developing sustainable products or improving processes to reduce environmental impact (Bos-Nehles et al., 2017).

Training and Development: Offering programs that focus on both technical skills and ethical decision-making can equip employees to innovate responsibly. This could include workshops on sustainable design principles or seminars on the societal impacts of new technologies (Sung and Choi, 2018).

Compensation and Rewards: Designing incentive systems that recognize and reward responsible innovations can motivate employees to consider the broader implications of their work. This might involve bonuses for innovations that meet specific sustainability criteria or recognition programs for ethical breakthroughs (Yanadori and Cui, 2013).

3. Potential Mediating and Moderating Factors Influencing Innovation Responsibility

While HR practices are important, their effectiveness in promoting responsible innovation can be influenced by various factors:

Organizational Culture: A company's values and norms can either reinforce or undermine HR initiatives. A culture that prioritizes short-term profits over long-term sustainability may hinder efforts to promote responsible innovation, regardless of HR policies in place (Dibrell et al., 2014).

Leadership Support: When top management actively champions responsible innovation, it sends a powerful message throughout the organization. Their backing can amplify the impact of HR practices and provide the resources needed to implement them effectively (Damanpour and Schneider, 2006).

External Pressures: Regulatory requirements, consumer expectations, and competitive pressures can all influence how companies approach responsible innovation. These external factors may necessitate adjustments to HR practices to ensure compliance and maintain market position (Porter and Kramer, 2011).

Employee Attitudes: The willingness of employees to embrace responsible innovation can vary based on individual values, career aspirations, and perceptions of job security. HR practices need to address these attitudes to be truly effective (Bos-Nehles and Veenendaal, 2019).

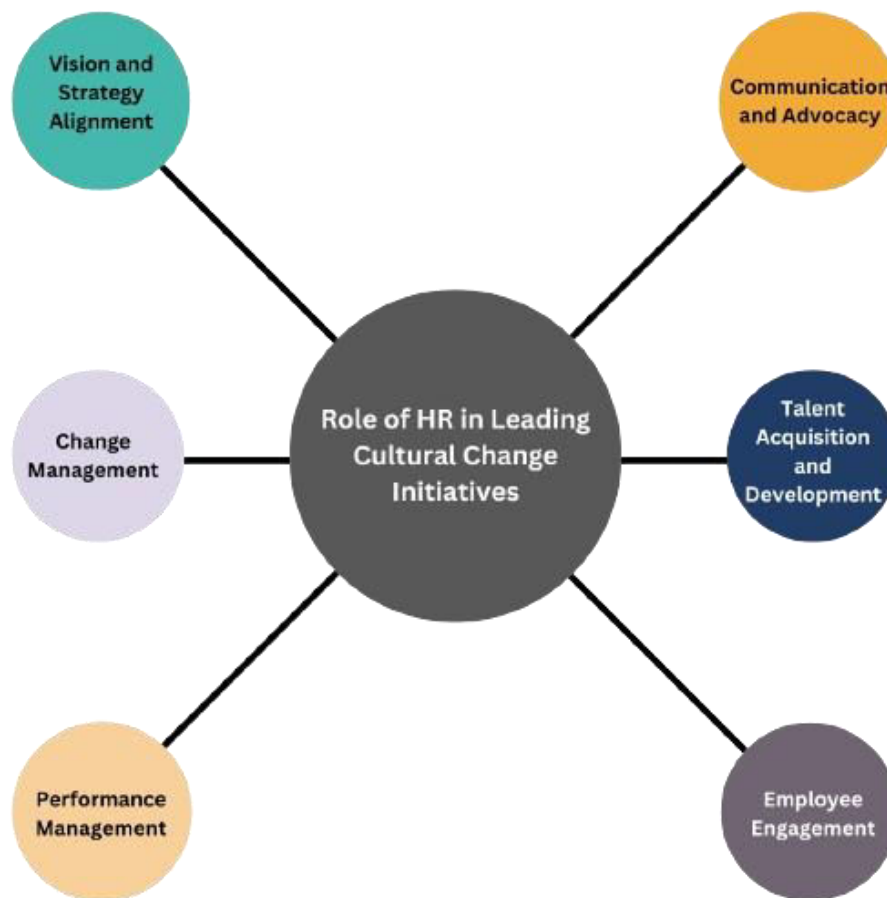
By considering these mediating and moderating factors, companies can fine-tune their HR practices to create an environment where responsible innovation thrives. This holistic approach recognizes that while HR plays a central role, it operates within a broader organizational and societal context.

BUILDING A CULTURE OF RESPONSIBLE INNOVATION

Creating a culture of responsible innovation is crucial for organizations to thrive in today's rapidly changing business landscape. This culture encourages employees to think creatively while considering the ethical implications and potential risks of their ideas. Human Resources (HR) plays a vital role in shaping this culture through strategic practices and initiatives.

The Role of HR in Leading Cultural Change Initiatives

HR departments are uniquely positioned to drive cultural change within organizations. They can implement programs and policies that promote responsible innovation across all levels of the company. For example, HR can develop training programs that teach employees about the principles of responsible innovation and how to apply them in their daily work (Smith & Johnson, 2022).

Figure: Role of HR in Leading Cultural Change Initiatives

One effective approach is to incorporate responsible innovation concepts into onboarding processes for new hires. This helps ensure that all employees understand the importance of ethical considerations in innovation from day one. Additionally, HR can work with leadership to create incentive structures that reward not just innovative thinking, but also careful consideration of potential consequences (Brown et al., 2021).

HR can also facilitate cross-functional collaboration, bringing together diverse teams to tackle complex challenges. This approach can lead to more well-rounded and responsible innovations by incorporating multiple perspectives and areas of expertise (Wilson, 2023).

Fostering Open Communication, Ethical Decision-Making, and Risk Awareness

Creating an environment where employees feel comfortable sharing ideas and concerns is essential for responsible innovation. HR can promote open communication by establishing clear channels for feedback and encouraging regular team discussions about ethical considerations in ongoing projects (Taylor, 2022).

Ethical decision-making frameworks can be integrated into project management processes. HR can work with other departments to develop guidelines that help teams evaluate the potential impacts of their innovations on various stakeholders, including customers, employees, and the broader community (Garcia & Lee, 2021).

Risk awareness is another critical aspect of responsible innovation. HR can organize workshops and training sessions that help employees identify and assess potential risks associated with new ideas or technologies. This proactive approach can prevent unintended negative consequences and lead to more sustainable innovations (Roberts, 2023).

Leveraging Diversity and Inclusion to Promote Responsible Innovation Teams

Diverse teams are more likely to consider a wide range of perspectives and potential outcomes when developing new ideas. HR plays a crucial role in promoting diversity and inclusion within the organization, which in turn supports responsible innovation (Chen et al., 2022).

By implementing inclusive hiring practices and creating mentorship programs for underrepresented groups, HR can help build teams with diverse backgrounds and experiences. These teams are better equipped to identify potential ethical issues and develop solutions that benefit a broader range of stakeholders (Anderson, 2021).

HR can also facilitate inclusive decision-making processes that ensure all team members have a voice in innovation projects. This approach can lead to more well-rounded and responsible outcomes by incorporating a variety of viewpoints and experiences (Thompson, 2023).

Building a culture of responsible innovation requires a concerted effort from HR and other organizational leaders. By implementing strategic practices that promote ethical decision-making, open communication, and diverse teams, companies can foster an environment where innovation thrives while minimizing potential negative impacts on society and the environment.

HR PRACTICES FOR RESPONSIBLE INNOVATION

Companies today face increasing pressure to innovate responsibly, considering the ethical and societal impacts of their products and services. Human Resource (HR) practices play a crucial role in fostering a culture of responsible innovation within organizations. Let's explore three key HR practices that can help achieve this goal.

Attracting and Selecting Talent with a Focus on Ethical Values

When hiring new employees, companies should look beyond technical skills and consider candidates' ethical values and commitment to responsible innovation. This approach helps build a workforce that naturally aligns with the company's responsible innovation goals (Jones et al., 2020).

For example, during interviews, HR managers can ask questions about ethical dilemmas or scenarios related to innovation. They might say, "Tell me about a time when you faced an ethical challenge in your work. How did you handle it?" This helps assess a candidate's ability to navigate complex ethical situations.

Companies can also highlight their commitment to responsible innovation in job descriptions and during the recruitment process. This attracts like-minded individuals who share these values (Smith, 2022). For instance, a tech company might emphasize its dedication to developing AI systems that protect user privacy and promote fairness.

Developing Employee Capabilities for Responsible Innovation

Once employees are on board, it's essential to provide them with the knowledge and skills needed for responsible innovation. This often involves training programs focused on ethics, risk assessment, and the societal impacts of innovation (Brown & Johnson, 2021).

These training sessions could cover topics like:

- Ethical decision-making frameworks
- Identifying potential risks and unintended consequences of new technologies
- Understanding diverse user needs and perspectives
- Environmental sustainability in product design

For example, a pharmaceutical company might offer workshops on ethical considerations in drug development, including discussions on fair pricing and access to medicines in developing countries.

Additionally, companies can encourage employees to attend conferences or workshops on responsible innovation, or even partner with universities to develop specialized courses (Lee, 2023). This ongoing learning helps employees stay up-to-date with the latest thinking on responsible innovation practices.

Performance Management Systems that Align with Responsible Innovation Goals

Traditional performance management systems often focus solely on financial metrics or innovation output. To foster responsible innovation, companies need to incorporate ethical considerations and societal impact into their evaluation criteria (Wilson et al., 2022).

This might involve:

- Setting specific goals related to responsible innovation for each employee or team
- Including ethical behavior and decision-making as part of performance reviews

- Rewarding employees who demonstrate a commitment to responsible innovation

For instance, a software company might evaluate developers not just on the features they create, but also on how well they consider user privacy and data security in their designs.

Companies can also create incentives for responsible innovation. This could include bonuses for teams that develop products with positive societal impacts or recognition programs that highlight ethical innovations (Garcia, 2021). For example, an annual "Responsible Innovator of the Year" award could celebrate employees who exemplify these principles.

By implementing these HR practices, companies can create a culture where responsible innovation is not just encouraged, but expected. This approach helps ensure that as organizations push the boundaries of what's possible, they do so in a way that benefits society as a whole.

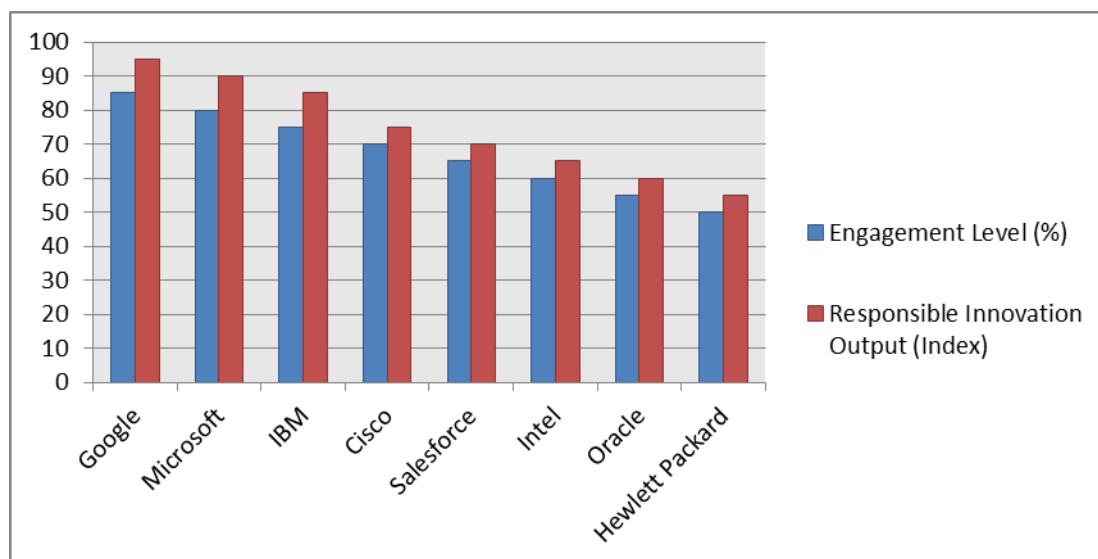
ENHANCING EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT AND OWNERSHIP

Companies today are realizing that their most valuable asset is their workforce. When employees feel engaged and have a sense of ownership in their work, they're more likely to contribute innovative ideas and take responsibility for their actions. This is especially important when it comes to fostering responsible innovation - the kind of innovation that not only drives business growth but also considers its impact on society and the environment.

1. Empowering Employees to Champion Responsible Innovation

Empowering employee's means giving them the tools, knowledge, and authority to make decisions and take action. When it comes to responsible innovation, this empowerment can be a game-changer.

Graph: Employee Engagement and Innovation Output



One way to empower employees is through education and training. By providing workshops and courses on ethics, sustainability, and social responsibility, companies can help their staff understand the importance of responsible innovation (Voegtlin & Greenwood, 2016). For example, Google's "Googler-to-Googler" program allows employees to teach each other new skills, including those related to ethical decision-making in tech development.

Table: Benefits of Responsible Innovation

Benefit	Description
Building Trust with Customers	Implementing responsible innovation practices enhances transparency and ethical behavior, leading to increased customer trust and loyalty.
Preventing PR Disasters	Proactively addressing ethical concerns and social responsibilities helps to avoid negative publicity and

	potential public relations crises.
Leading to Sustainable Products	Incorporating sustainable practices in innovation processes ensures the development of products that are environmentally friendly and socially responsible.
Enhancing Corporate Reputation	A commitment to responsible innovation boosts the company's image and reputation, attracting positive attention from stakeholders and the public.
Attracting and Retaining Talent	Organizations that prioritize ethical and responsible practices appeal more to potential employees who value corporate social responsibility, leading to better talent acquisition and retention.
Improving Compliance and Risk Management	By adhering to ethical standards and regulations, companies minimize legal risks and ensure compliance with industry standards.
Increasing Market Competitiveness	Responsible innovation can differentiate a company from its competitors, providing a unique selling point and potentially capturing a larger market share.
Fostering a Positive Work Culture	Strategic HR practices that promote responsibility and ethics contribute to a positive and supportive workplace environment.
Encouraging Long-Term Success	Sustainable and ethical practices support long-term business viability and success by aligning with global trends and societal expectations.

Another approach is to create cross-functional teams that bring together people from different departments. This diversity of perspectives can lead to better-rounded, responsible innovations. For instance, Patagonia, the outdoor clothing company, regularly forms teams that include designers, environmental experts, and supply chain managers to ensure their products are both innovative and sustainable (Chouinard & Stanley, 2012).

Giving employee's autonomy in their work can also foster a sense of ownership. When people feel they have control over their projects, they're more likely to consider the long-term implications of their innovations. 3M's famous "15% time" policy, which allows employees to spend 15% of their work time on projects of their own choosing, has led to many responsible innovations, including environmentally friendly products (Govindarajan & Srinivas, 2013).

2. Promoting Employee Voice and Participation in Innovation Processes

For responsible innovation to thrive, employees need to feel that their voices are heard and valued. This means creating channels for open communication and encouraging participation in the innovation process.

One effective method is to implement an "open door" policy where employees can freely share ideas with management. Pixar Animation Studios is known for its "Braintrust" meetings, where anyone can give notes on a film in progress, regardless of their position in the company (Catmull & Wallace, 2014). This openness has led to more diverse and inclusive storytelling in their films.

Companies can also use digital platforms to gather ideas from employees. IBM's "Innovation Jam" is a global online brainstorming session where employees from all levels can contribute ideas for new products and services. This approach has led to innovations in areas like smart healthcare and clean energy (Bjelland & Wood, 2008).

Encouraging employees to participate in decision-making processes related to innovation can also increase their engagement. For example, some companies use participatory budgeting, where employees vote on which innovation projects to fund. This not only gives staff a say in the company's direction but also helps ensure that responsible projects get support.

3. Recognition and Reward Systems that Value Responsible Innovation Outcomes

To truly foster responsible innovation, companies need to show that they value it. This means creating recognition and reward systems that go beyond just financial success.

One approach is to include responsible innovation metrics in performance evaluations. For instance, Unilever includes sustainability goals in its managers' performance assessments, encouraging them to consider environmental and social impacts in their decision-making (Ignatius, 2017).

Public recognition can also be a powerful motivator. Companies can create awards or ceremonies that celebrate responsible innovations. Salesforce, for instance, has an annual "Innovator of the Year" award that recognizes employees who have developed solutions that benefit both the company and society.

Financial incentives can play a role too, but they need to be carefully designed. Instead of just rewarding short-term profits, companies can create bonus structures that consider the long-term impact of innovations. Some firms are experimenting with "purpose bonuses" that reward employees for achieving social or environmental goals alongside financial ones.

Table: Recognition and Reward Systems for Responsible Innovation

Recognition and Reward System	Description	Promotion of Responsible Innovation Outcomes
Performance Bonuses	Financial incentives given for achieving specific targets or outcomes.	Encourage employees to meet and exceed goals, fostering a culture of continuous improvement and high performance. Promotes accountability and alignment with organizational objectives.
Public Recognition	Acknowledgement of individual or team achievements in a public forum, such as meetings or company newsletters.	Enhances visibility of responsible practices, motivating others to adopt similar behaviors. Strengthens community and builds a culture of transparency and ethical conduct.
Professional Development Opportunities	Access to training, courses, or conferences as a reward for exemplary performance.	Encourages lifelong learning and skill development. Keeps employees informed about the latest in responsible innovation practices and trends.
Stock Options/Equity	Providing employees with shares or options to buy shares in the company.	Aligns employees' interests with long-term company success, fostering a sense of ownership and responsibility for sustainable and ethical growth.
Innovation Awards	Special awards for innovative solutions or ideas that address specific challenges or goals.	Recognizes and incentivizes creativity and problem-solving. Highlights the importance of innovation in achieving responsible and impactful outcomes.
Extra Paid Time Off	Additional vacation days granted for outstanding	Promotes work-life balance, leading to greater employee well-being and productivity. Encourages a healthy work environment,

	performance.	which is crucial for sustained responsible innovation.
Mentorship Programs	Opportunities to mentor or be mentored as a reward for performance.	Fosters knowledge sharing and skill development. Builds a culture of continuous improvement and responsible leadership.
Employee of the Month/Quarter Programs	Regular recognition of outstanding employees.	Consistently highlights exemplary behavior, setting a standard for others. Encourages ongoing commitment to excellence and responsible practices.
Sustainable Innovation Grants	Financial support for projects that demonstrate sustainable and responsible innovation.	Directly supports initiatives aimed at sustainability and ethical practices. Encourages employees to propose and develop projects with a positive impact.
Team Celebrations and Events	Social events or outings as a reward for team achievements.	Builds team cohesion and morale. Reinforces the importance of collaboration and collective success in achieving responsible innovation outcomes.
Job Rotation Opportunities	Temporary assignments in different departments or roles as a reward.	Broadens employees' perspectives and skills. Promotes cross-functional understanding and collaboration, which are essential for holistic and responsible innovation.
Recognition Platforms	Online platforms where employees can recognize each other's achievements.	Facilitates a culture of appreciation and mutual respect. Encourages employees to acknowledge responsible and innovative practices among peers.

It's also important to recognize that not all innovations succeed, especially when trying new, responsible approaches. Creating a culture that views failures as learning opportunities can encourage employees to take calculated risks. Google X, the company's "moonshot factory," celebrates failed projects with a ritual called "embracing the beauty of failure," which helps teams learn from their mistakes and move forward (Teller, 2016).

Enhancing employee engagement and ownership is crucial for fostering responsible innovation. By empowering employees, promoting their voices, and recognizing their efforts towards responsible outcomes, companies can create a culture where innovation thrives while keeping societal and environmental concerns at the forefront.

CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS

This research paper has explored how strategic human resource practices can foster responsible innovation in organizations. Let's wrap up our findings and consider what they mean for the future.

The Future of HR in Fostering Responsible Innovation

As technology advances and ethical concerns grow, HR departments will play a crucial role in shaping responsible innovation. In the coming years, we can expect HR to:

1. Become more involved in ethical decision-making: HR professionals will need to work closely with other departments to ensure new innovations align with company values and societal expectations (Brown & Smith, 2022).
2. Focus on developing ethical skills: Training programs will increasingly emphasize ethical thinking and responsible innovation practices (Johnson et al., 2023).

3. Create diverse and inclusive teams: HR will need to build teams with varied backgrounds and perspectives to encourage responsible innovation (Lee & Wong, 2021).
4. Implement new technologies responsibly: As AI and other advanced technologies become more common in HR, professionals will need to ensure these tools are used ethically and don't reinforce biases (Garcia, 2024).

Practical Implications for Organizations to Implement Responsible HR Practices

Based on our findings, here are some practical steps organizations can take to promote responsible innovation through HR:

1. **Develop an ethical code of conduct:** Create clear guidelines for responsible innovation that all employees must follow (Taylor, 2022).
2. **Offer regular ethics training:** Provide ongoing education on ethical decision-making and responsible innovation practices (Chen & Patel, 2023).
3. **Implement a whistleblower system:** Establish a safe way for employees to report ethical concerns without fear of retaliation (Wilson, 2021).
4. **Create cross-functional innovation teams:** Bring together people from different departments to encourage diverse perspectives on new projects (Adams et al., 2024).
5. **Revise hiring practices:** Look for candidates who demonstrate ethical thinking and a commitment to responsible innovation (Lopez & Kim, 2022).
6. **Incorporate ethics into performance reviews:** Make responsible innovation a key factor in employee evaluations and promotions (Nguyen, 2023).
7. **Partner with external ethics experts:** Bring in outside perspectives to help guide responsible innovation efforts (Brown & Johnson, 2024).

Directions for Further Research on HR and Responsible Innovation

While this paper has shed light on the role of HR in fostering responsible innovation, there's still much to explore. Future research could focus on:

1. **Long-term impacts:** Study how HR practices focused on responsible innovation affect company performance and reputation over time (Smith, 2023).
2. **Industry-specific challenges:** Investigate how different sectors (e.g., healthcare, finance, technology) face unique challenges in promoting responsible innovation through HR (Williams et al., 2022).
3. **Cultural differences:** Examine how cultural factors influence the effectiveness of HR practices in fostering responsible innovation across different countries (Lee & Garcia, 2024).
4. **Measuring success:** Develop metrics to evaluate the effectiveness of HR initiatives in promoting responsible innovation (Johnson & Brown, 2023).
5. **Employee perspectives:** Conduct surveys and interviews to understand how workers view and respond to HR practices aimed at fostering responsible innovation (Taylor et al., 2022).
6. **Technology's role:** Explore how emerging technologies like AI can be used in HR to support responsible innovation efforts (Patel, 2024).
7. **Small vs. large organizations:** Compare the challenges and opportunities for implementing responsible innovation HR practices in companies of different sizes (Chen & Wilson, 2023).

HR departments have a vital role to play in fostering responsible innovation within organizations. By implementing strategic practices, HR can help create a culture where ethical considerations are at the forefront of innovation efforts. As technology continues to advance and societal expectations evolve, the importance of responsible innovation will only grow. Organizations that prioritize this approach through their HR practices will be better positioned to navigate future challenges and opportunities.

By focusing on ethical skill development, diverse team building, and clear guidelines for responsible innovation, HR can help ensure that new ideas and technologies benefit both the company and society as a whole. However, this is an evolving field, and there's still much to learn about the most effective ways to promote responsible innovation through HR practices. Continued research and practical experimentation will be crucial in refining these approaches and adapting them to the changing needs of organizations and society.

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JUDICIAL REVIEW AND ADMINISTRATIVE ADJUDICATION: A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF TRIBUNAL SYSTEMS IN FRANCE, THE UK, USA, AND INDIA

Harshita Bhardwaj¹ and Dr. Shameem Ahmed Khan²¹Research Scholar, Department of Law, ISBM University, Raipur (C.G.)²Assistant Professor, Department of Law, ISBM University, Raipur (C.G.)**ABSTRACT**

Judicial review and administrative adjudication serve as fundamental pillars in ensuring accountability and fairness in public administration across jurisdictions. This paper presents a comparative analysis of tribunal systems in France, the UK, the USA, and India, highlighting their structures, functions, and judicial oversight mechanisms. France operates a dual court system, with the Conseil d'État playing a pivotal role in administrative justice. The UK follows a unified tribunal system under judicial supervision, whereas the USA integrates administrative adjudication within executive agencies, relying on principles such as Chevron deference. India employs specialized tribunals like the Central Administrative Tribunal (CAT) to resolve service disputes, with judicial review exercised by constitutional courts. The study evaluates the effectiveness of these systems in balancing administrative efficiency and judicial accountability, identifying key challenges such as judicial overreach, executive influence, and procedural delays. By drawing insights from diverse legal traditions, the paper underscores the evolving role of tribunals in contemporary governance and suggests potential reforms to enhance their autonomy and efficacy.

INTRODUCTION

Judicial review and administrative adjudication play crucial roles in ensuring the legality and fairness of administrative actions in democratic governance. The balance between judicial oversight and administrative efficiency has led to the establishment of specialized tribunal systems across jurisdictions. In France, the UK, the USA, and India, administrative tribunals have evolved distinctly, reflecting each country's constitutional and legal framework. While France follows a dual court system with the Conseil d'État at its helm, the UK's tribunal system functions within a unified judiciary. The USA integrates administrative adjudication within its agency framework, while India employs tribunals such as the Central Administrative Tribunal (CAT) to resolve service disputes. This article examines the comparative structures, functions, and judicial oversight of these tribunal systems, with a particular focus on India's administrative adjudication within service law.

Concept of Judicial Review and Administrative Adjudication

Judicial review serves as the mechanism by which courts oversee the legality of administrative actions, ensuring they comply with constitutional and statutory mandates. It acts as a safeguard against executive overreach and arbitrary decision-making (Craig, 2016). Administrative adjudication, on the other hand, refers to the resolution of disputes by administrative agencies or specialized tribunals rather than conventional courts (Aman & Mayton, 2020). The expansion of the welfare state and complex regulatory mechanisms have necessitated the establishment of tribunals to provide specialized and expedited justice.

While judicial review ensures that administrative bodies operate within legal confines, administrative adjudication enables technical expertise and efficiency in resolving disputes. The interplay between these mechanisms differs across jurisdictions, shaping the extent and manner in which tribunals function within a legal system.

France: The Dual Court System and the Conseil d'État

France follows a unique dual legal system that separates ordinary courts (civil and criminal) from administrative courts. The administrative justice system is spearheaded by the **Conseil d'État**, which acts both as a supreme administrative court and an advisory body to the executive (Brown & Bell, 2018). French administrative law is rooted in the principle of **droit administratif**, which grants administrative courts exclusive jurisdiction over disputes involving the state and public administration.

The **Tribunaux administratifs** (administrative tribunals) serve as courts of first instance, with **Cours administratives d'appel** (administrative courts of appeal) acting as appellate bodies. The **Conseil d'État** functions as the final appellate authority in administrative matters. Unlike common law jurisdictions, judicial review in France is exercised exclusively by administrative courts, preventing ordinary courts from intervening in administrative disputes (Dicey, 2013).

A defining feature of the French system is the **excess of power (excès de pouvoir)** doctrine, allowing individuals to challenge administrative acts on the grounds of illegality, procedural impropriety, or abuse of

power. The administrative judiciary follows a proactive approach in controlling government action, ensuring compliance with public interest principles. However, concerns persist regarding the closeness of administrative judges to the executive, potentially impacting impartiality (Lindseth, 2022).

The United Kingdom: A Unified Tribunal System under Judicial Oversight

The UK's administrative adjudication system has undergone significant reforms, particularly with the **Tribunals, Courts and Enforcement Act 2007**, which introduced a unified structure under the **Upper Tribunal** and **First-tier Tribunal** (Leggatt, 2001). Unlike France, the UK does not operate a separate administrative court system; instead, tribunals function under judicial supervision, ensuring consistency in decision-making.

The **First-tier Tribunal** handles cases in areas such as immigration, employment, social security, and tax law. The **Upper Tribunal** serves as the appellate body, with further appeals lying to the Court of Appeal or Supreme Court on points of law. The **Administrative Court**, a division of the High Court, exercises judicial review over tribunal decisions and administrative actions (Elliott & Thomas, 2020).

Judicial review in the UK follows **common law principles**, emphasizing legality, rationality, and procedural fairness (Council of Civil Service Unions v Minister for the Civil Service, 1985). Courts do not review the merits of administrative decisions but focus on whether decision-makers acted within legal limits. The **principle of proportionality**, influenced by European Union (EU) law, has also gained prominence in UK administrative law (Craig & de Búrca, 2020).

The UK's approach ensures a strong system of checks and balances, but concerns about judicial overreach and delays in tribunal adjudication remain prevalent. Recent reforms have focused on improving efficiency and access to justice through digitalization and procedural simplifications.

The United States: Agency Adjudication and the Role of the Judiciary

The USA follows a **presidential system** where administrative adjudication is deeply integrated within executive agencies. Unlike France and the UK, the USA lacks a centralized tribunal system; instead, administrative adjudication occurs within individual agencies, overseen by **Administrative Law Judges (ALJs)** (Shapiro, 2016).

The **Administrative Procedure Act (APA) of 1946** provides the framework for administrative adjudication, distinguishing between **formal** and **informal** rule-making and adjudication. ALJs function as neutral decision-makers within agencies, handling disputes in areas such as labor law (National Labor Relations Board), tax (Internal Revenue Service), and securities regulation (Securities and Exchange Commission) (Mashaw, 2018).

Judicial review of administrative decisions occurs through **federal courts**, primarily under the **Chevron deference doctrine**, which grants agencies interpretative authority over ambiguous statutes (Chevron U.S.A. Inc. v. Natural Resources Defense Council, 1984). However, concerns about excessive deference to agencies and executive influence over ALJs have led to calls for reform (Sunstein, 2017).

The USA's system prioritizes expertise and agency discretion but faces criticism regarding bureaucratic complexity, lack of uniformity, and concerns over due process rights. The balance between judicial oversight and agency autonomy remains a contested issue in American administrative law.

India: The Role of Tribunals and the Central Administrative Tribunal

India's administrative adjudication system has evolved significantly, with tribunals playing a key role in specialized dispute resolution. The **Central Administrative Tribunal (CAT)** was established under the **Administrative Tribunals Act, 1985**, to adjudicate disputes related to public service employment, reducing the burden on regular courts (Jain, 2016).

CAT functions independently of the executive and enjoys the status of a **judicial authority**, ensuring that government employees have an accessible and efficient forum for grievance redressal. It follows principles of **natural justice** and provides flexibility in procedures, departing from rigid technicalities of civil procedure (MP Singh, 2019).

Judicial review over tribunal decisions is exercised by the **High Courts and the Supreme Court** under **Articles 226 and 227** of the Indian Constitution. The Supreme Court, in **L. Chandra Kumar v. Union of India (1997)**, affirmed that tribunal decisions remain subject to judicial review, ensuring constitutional safeguards. However, concerns regarding executive control over tribunal appointments and tenure security have raised questions about independence (Thiruvengadam, 2018).

India's tribunal system balances efficiency and judicial oversight but faces challenges such as inconsistent adjudication, procedural delays, and issues related to autonomy. Reforms have been proposed to strengthen institutional independence and streamline tribunal functioning.

Comparative Reflections and Conclusion

A comparative analysis of tribunal systems in France, the UK, the USA, and India reveals diverse approaches to administrative adjudication and judicial review. While France maintains a dual court system with exclusive administrative jurisdiction, the UK operates a unified tribunal system under judicial oversight. The USA integrates adjudication within agencies, relying on judicial review principles such as **Chevron deference**, while India employs specialized tribunals like CAT under constitutional supervision.

The effectiveness of tribunal systems depends on factors such as independence, procedural fairness, and accessibility. While judicial review ensures accountability, excessive judicial intervention may undermine tribunal autonomy. Each system reflects its legal traditions and governance structures, underscoring the dynamic interplay between judicial and administrative authorities in resolving disputes.

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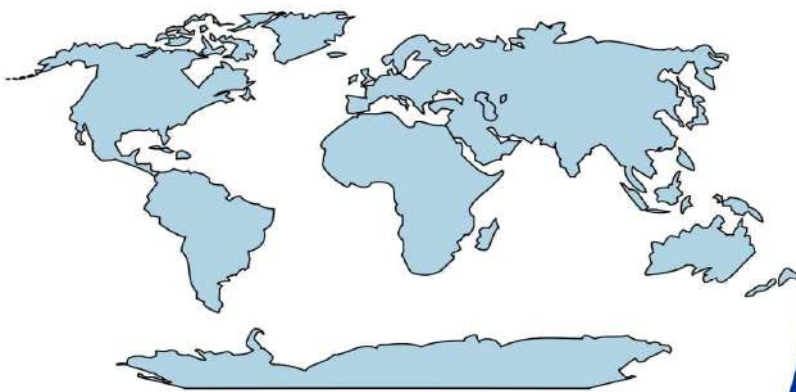
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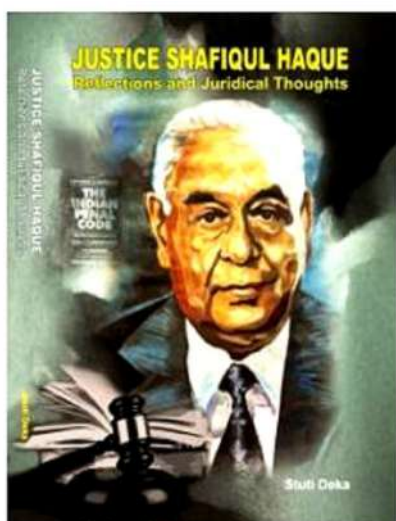


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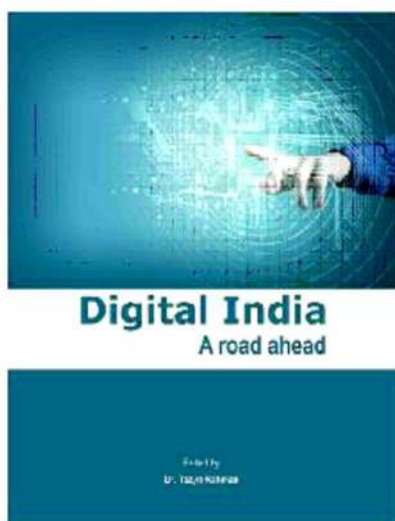
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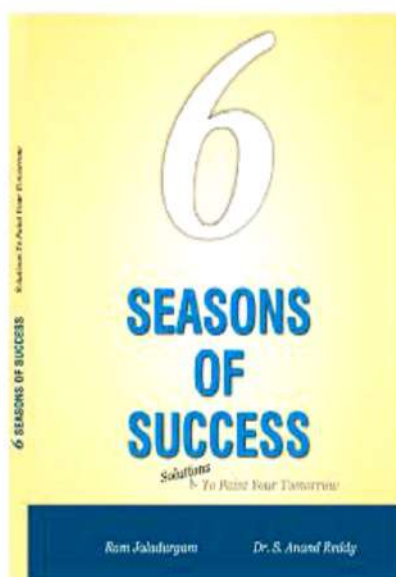
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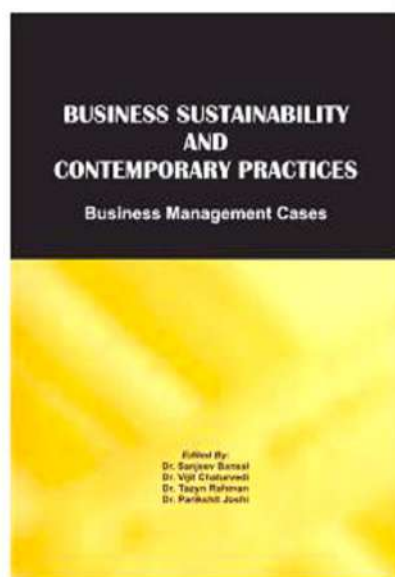
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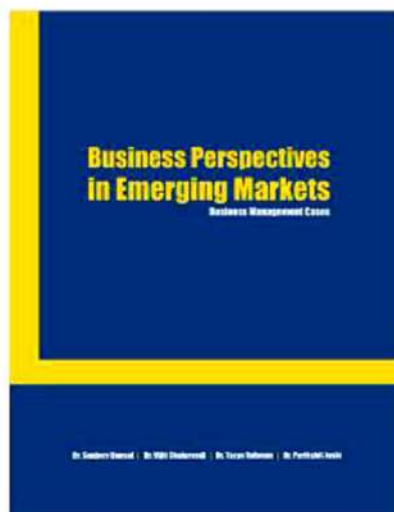
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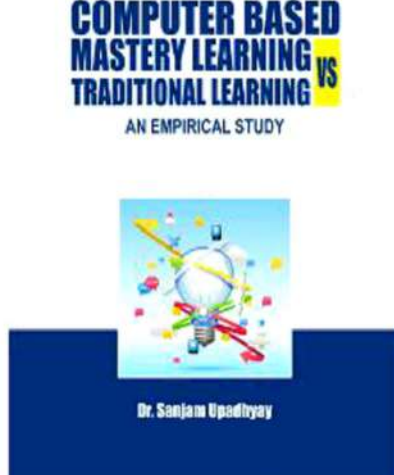
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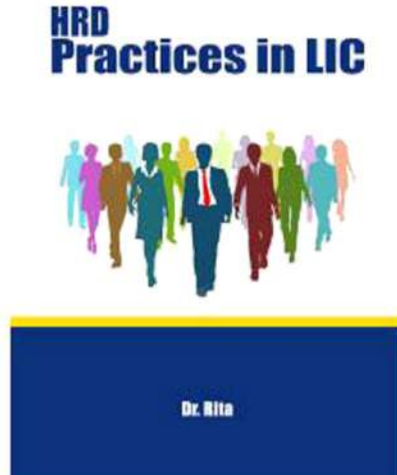
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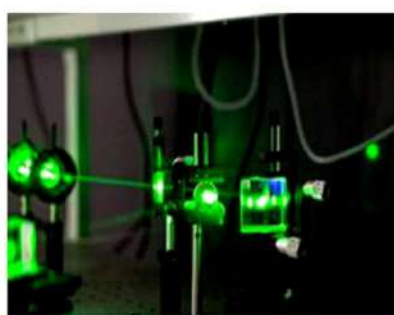


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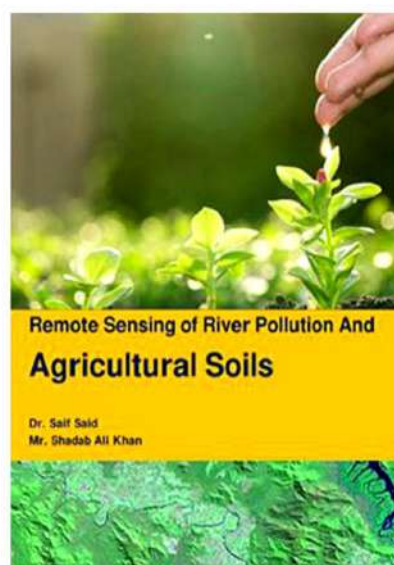
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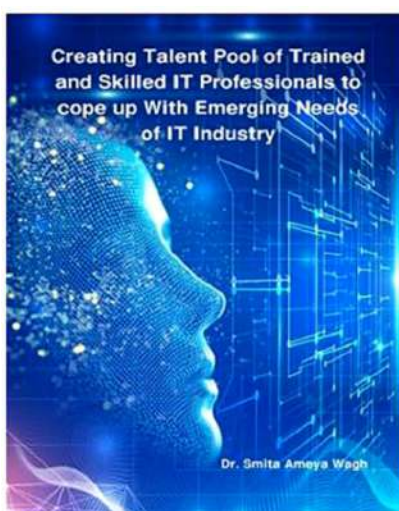
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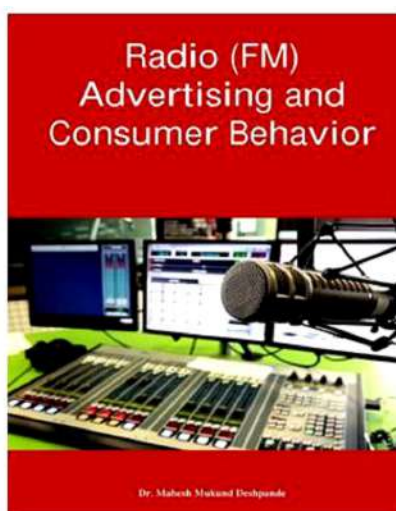
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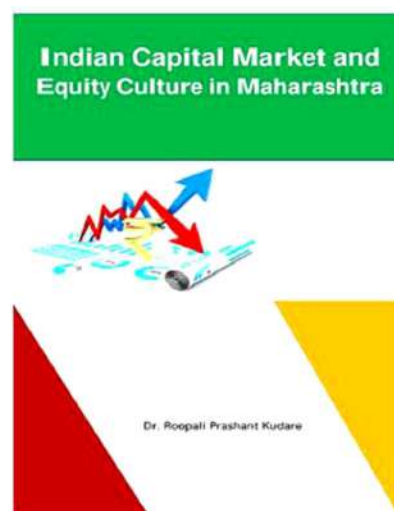
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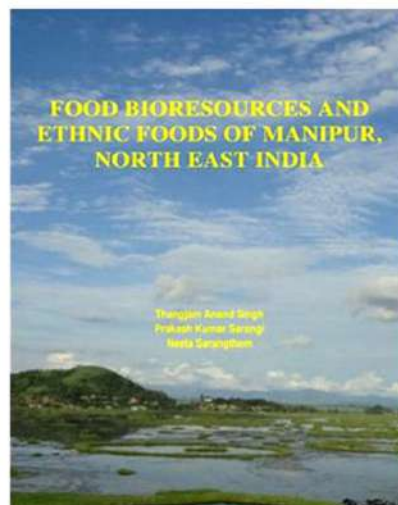
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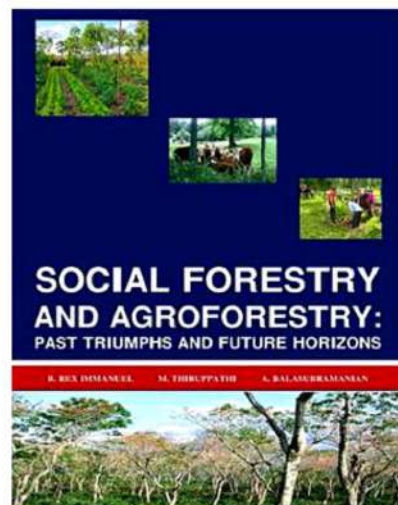
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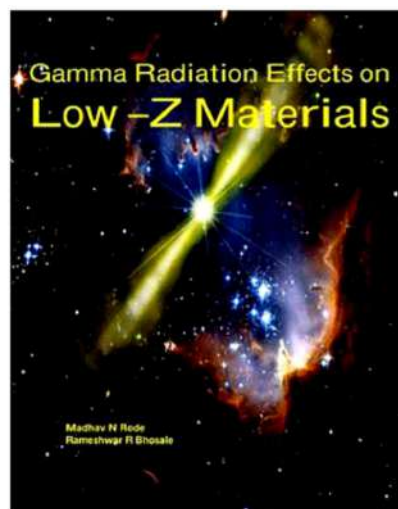
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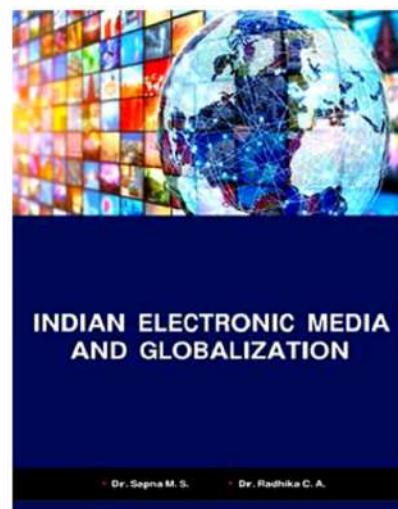
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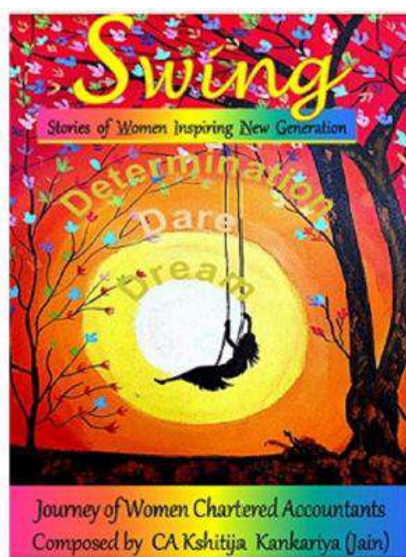
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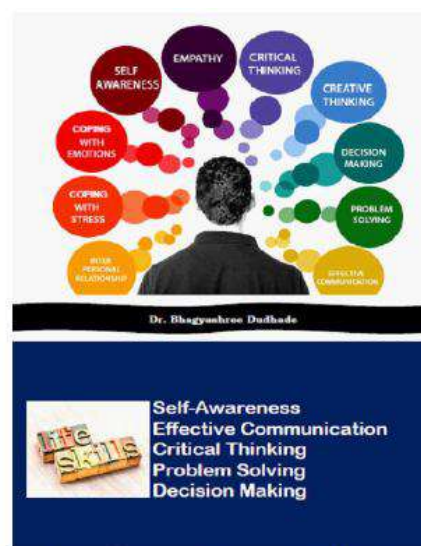
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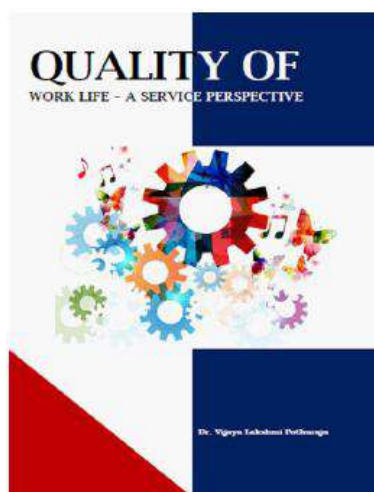


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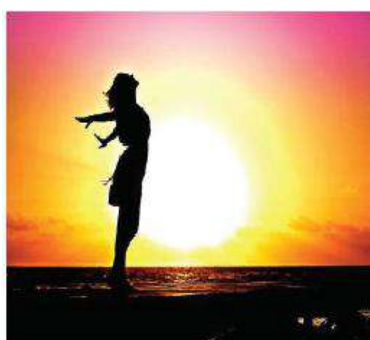
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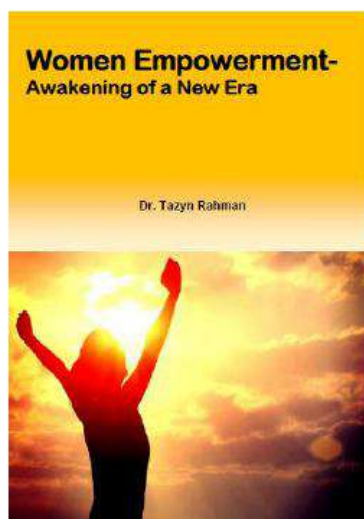


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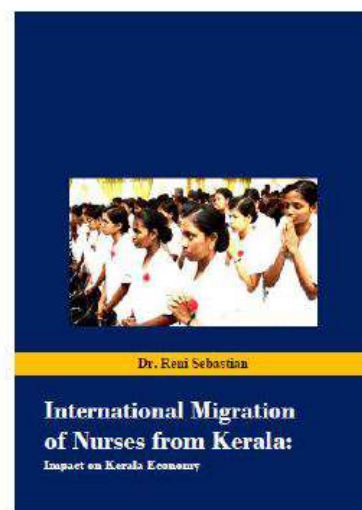


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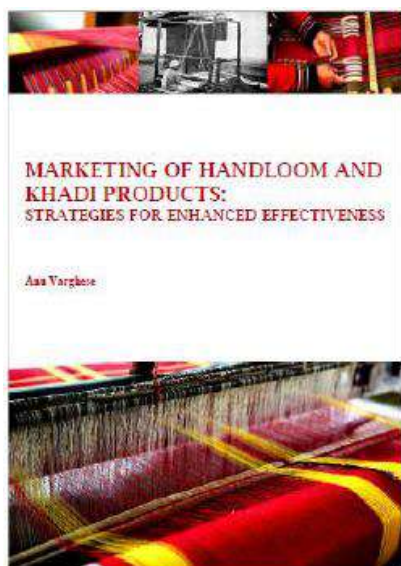
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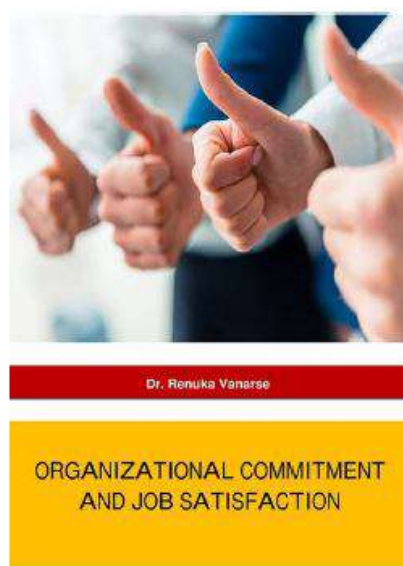
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