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#Let'sBeatCoronaTogether

Impact of COVID-19 on Education and Economy: When is the endgame?

M S Kurhade*

We are moving at the speed of science with a virus this ferocious, time is our enemy.

-Albert Bourla

The tiny Corona virus starting from Wuhan city of people's republic of China has travelled far and wide to cause havoc of a gargantuan kind, unseen and unheard in recent times, the resultant economic hardship suffered by the world at large has been unprecedented. But 3rd world countries have suffered the most. According to UNDP findings, the pandemic may push more than 1 billion to extreme poverty by 2030, due to the severe long-term impact of Corona COVID-19. Findings inform that 'high damage scenario anticipates that 80 per cent of the COVID induced economic crisis would persist for at least 10 years' time due to loss of productivity.

COVID-19 driven corona pandemic has been raging the world over and India has not been an exception. With over a million cases and still surging, there appears to be no let-up in the diseases coming under control, although for a thickly populated country like India the surge has been high. However, what is baffling is, according to authoritative medical observations, a COVID-19 infection need not be fatal. According to them COVID-19 can be managed and can be overcome in most cases if not in all cases. What needs to be realized by one and all, is the preventive aspect that need to be followed and strengthen our body immunity, so also keeping our respiratory system warm by inhaling hot vapour and drinking hot water. But then, we only act when the problem strikes us, not before that is the crux.

In India, immediately after the initial lockdown economic activities came to a virtual standstill. Unorganized labour was deeply hurt, especially those who were migrants in different states across the country attempting to reach back to the soil they belonged. Looking back, initially it appeared the problem to be humongous. Slow and steady, opening of the lockdown and the resultant increased economic activities did ease the situation. However, all the federal intervention of the last about 3 quarters have not made the full turnaround, despite intermittent infusion of funds.

Coming to the world at Large, US, UK and European countries like Italy, France, Spain, Germany etc. are having harrowing time. India, due to its proactive approach has managed to remain in reasonable control. In fact, very early in the onset of pandemic India called for a lockdown of some 3 weeks. India was the first country to have gone ahead with the Stay-Home, Stay-Safe slogan. Yet, the

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country of 130 million, heterogeneous population had reported about 3.60 Crore affected by the virus with over 4 Lakh deaths.

As is known to all of us, this pandemic has greatly disrupted the economy and caused large scale loss of job. Although it has affected vast majority of Indians the migrant laborers are particularly affected. India and its health system are now at a critical moment. The extraordinary scale of the second wave in the number of cases, deaths and economic losses is truly tragic, especially because in India, as it is all around the world, this virus disproportionately afflicts the socio-economically vulnerable. Although vaccinations are underway, inoculations will not be delivered fast enough to stop this latest wave.

As COVID-19 stretches on, we're all feeling a sense of collective grief. The pandemic has contributed to the grief burden in the country both in number and in intensity and there are very little care provisions available. The second wave is like an ocean full of grief. That raises the prospect of living in a world constantly under threat, worrying about how to outrun the virus if it evolves. This is an arms race that could take an enormous toll on us all, as we lack the mental equipment to handle such a continuous assault on our sense of wellbeing, this absence of a sense of an ending. A new pandemic, one involving mental health, might already have begun.

On March 24, 2020, with little known about the method of infection, prevention, control and cure for the disease, India announced a nationwide lockdown of 21 days that eventually lasted until May 31, 2020, before ending in stages. Cost of that lockdown was steep but necessary. But it became apparent as we learnt more about the virus and its behavior that a hyper local approach to control the spread of the infection could be equally if not more effective while having for less impact in economic activity and livelihoods than a country wide lockdown.

There are enough debates going on in the country-whether India should focus on lives or livelihood and I feel the government has to focus on both within the constraints of our economics and healthcare challenges with GDP growth rate crashing to a six year low of 4.5 per cent and non-performing assets rising to 10 per cent, India needs to be innovative in the coming months to have V-shaped recovery. The stimulus announced by the government is at best a temporary measure to lift the economy from the clutches of COVID-19 pandemic. The real

impetus which can spur the economy towards real growth depends upon a huge injection of funds into infrastructure projects both in urban and rural India in line with Keynesian theory.

Depression can be overcome by pumping more and more money into the economy which enhances purchasing power in the hands of the people (J M Keynes). So, it is imperative to ensure that through adequate investments there is a flow of funds into people's hands that is needed at large scale not only to alleviate the distress but also to boost the economy. No amount of loans to industry are going to help the economy unless demand is created by increasing purchasing power in the hands of people. Why should the entrepreneurs-big or small-restart or increase production unless there is nobody to buy their products?

The Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) report highlights that the lockdown has taken heavy toll on the economy, with up to two-thirds of activity either shutdown or working at reduced pace. The Index of Industrial Production (IIP) crashed to 56.3 in April, 2020 from 126.5 a year before, registering a record 55.5 per cent contraction due to Covid induced nationwide lockdown. The private consumption, investment and external trade got affected very badly. Abrupt closure of urban activity resulted in a fall in consumption of non-essential goods. Demand side impact on tourism, hospitality and aviation are among the worst affected sectors that are facing the maximum brunt of this crisis due to Corona induced travel restrictions. Consumption is getting affected due to job losses and decline in income levels of people particularly daily wage earners due to contraction in several sectors including retail, construction, entertainment etc.

Earlier, Indian economy was experiencing a slowdown in demand side but now both demand and supply have been disrupted. The factors through which the impact will get transmitted to output growth are external supply and demand constraints due to global recession and disruption of global supply chains, domestic supply disruption etc. The economic shock will have impact on both formal and informal sectors in India.

In the midst of the cruel second wave of COVID, rays of hope are still visible offered by technology and digital solutions. The pandemic has made two things clear. Digitalisation will power the developing world out of economic crisis and digitalization of Micro

Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME) sector is a necessary ingredient for it.

The pandemic has accelerated economic reforms in many developing countries, social distancing has accelerated the adoption of digitalisation by governments, companies, consumers, educational institutions and NGO's, the decreasing cost of technology and prediction makes it accessible and possible; and platforms are the new institutions –now easier to build and participate in. At the cusp of this new era, how can we ensure equity and a level playing field in digitalization? There are some challenges to consider, as this process is still fundamentally different in developed and developing countries.

First, there's a difference between access and usage of technology. The issue facing the developed world is 'usage', that is, consumer privacy, security, data protection, productivity. The developing world needs 'access'- digital availability, affordability and usage of infrastructure. Second there's 'hard' and 'soft' infrastructure gap- 'hard' includes devices, electricity, telecom, servers, data centres while 'soft' includes digital platforms, content, legal and policy measures across value-chains. The developing world lacks both.

India is democratizing credit flows to MSMEs while simultaneously driving digitalization within them- this is microfinance 4.0. Building blocks such as the Open Credit Enablement Network (OCEN) bring together private participants like app-based companies, credit scoring, mutual funds, insurance, telcos, which can innovate across the entire lending value chain.

Economic disruption that came about due to the lockdown caused unprecedented uncertainties to a vast section of Indians especially those living on daily and monthly wages. In a country where easily 70% are in this category, the resultant deprivation was humungous. Addressing a webinar of entrepreneurs and industry executives, N R Narayana Murthy Founder of Infosys had reportedly remarked, "Lengthy lockdown will kill more people than Covid". For sure India could see more deaths due to hunger and other reasons than from the dreaded pandemic if the situation continues indefinitely.

What about recovery of the economy? The revival package announced by the Finance Ministry may take many more months to impact the economy. Some of the old lingering challenges of bank NPAs

need to be addressed through structural reforms of the banking sector. The newly minted *Atma Nirbhar* policy of the Prime Minister may need to be fine-tuned to ensure that it does not turn out to be the age-old self-sufficiency slogan of the sixties and seventies. *Atma Nirbhar* should be seen as self-reliance. That means we will not turn our country to *autarky*, but will continue to import what we need and pay for it by exporting what we can and should. *Atma Nirbhar* should not mean denial of comparative advantage. Our policies need to address the issue of improving our competitiveness through higher productivity, world class quality, work ethics and massive infrastructure creation. Only these can make *Atma Nirbhar* a reality. But this needs imaginative policy changes. No wonder, it may be too much to expect from a bureaucracy and judiciary ossified but expanding (adding more judges). But we must expect. Lest the absence of expectation will deny us the power to bring about reform and change. Reform is the crying need to face the post Covid crisis. Reform needs to focus on rural employment in agriculture, downstream industries such as food processing and storage and rural infrastructure building. Labour law reforms to make our industries more productive, structural reform to improve ease of doing business and improving competitiveness and finally employment generation infrastructure, MSMEs are other areas of policy focus.

Micro Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) in India contributes a very large share about 35 per cent to GDP and also provide employment to 114 million people. A study by All India Manufacturers Organisation estimates that about a quarter of 75 million MSMEs in India will face closure if the lockdown goes beyond 8 weeks. Thanks to RBI as it has announced a three-month moratorium on repayment of term loans and a reduction in the reposit as relief measures. Collateral free loan of Rs.3 lakh crores for MSMEs—a move that will enable 45 lakh units to restart work and save jobs. The central government has revised the very definition of MSMEs the move will allow MSMEs to aim for expansion without losing benefits. New definition: Micro units with investment up to Rs. 1 crore, turnover up to Rs. 5 crores. Small units with investment up to Rs.10 crore, turnover up to Rs. 50 crores. Medium units with investment up to Rs. 20 crore, turnover up to Rs. 100 crore.

The COVID-19 pandemic has hit the world at a scale and speed that we have only seen so far in

doomsday movies. It imposed two kinds of shocks on all countries viz. a health shock and an economic shock. This crisis has a great fear to mankind not only due to health ground but also due to global economic recession. Almost every sector in India is facing financial crunch and if it continues further things can move from bad to worse. It has presented challenges and threats to the Indian economy causing a wide mismatch between demand and supply elements which derails India's growth journey.

Second wave has hit demand more than supply says, RBI. Impact on economy has not been as severe as in Q1 of last Fiscal. The RBI has said the resurgence of Covid has dented but not debilitated economic activity in the first half of Q1F422. The Central Bank added that the loss of momentum may not be as severe this time compared to Q1 of last fiscal.

Pointing out that the second wave has overwhelmed India and the world, the RBI said that real economic indicators have moderated in April-May 2021. "The biggest toll of the second wave is in terms of a demand shock-loss of mobility, discretionary spending and employment, besides inventory accumulation, while aggregate supply is less impacted". The Central Bank, in its monthly 'State of the Economy' report, notes that the fourth quarter results of 288 companies point to a distinct shift from previous quarters, with top line growth gaining prominence in a broad-based manner. These companies constitute half the market capitalization in the stock markets.

The double-digit growth of bank deposits compared to less than 5 per cent growth in non-food credit from commercial banks reflects weak demand sentiments. Capacity utilization in industry is still at less than 70 per cent, far below the 80 per cent threshold believed to trigger a self-reinforcing virtuous investment cycle. Growth impulses from cash transfers, which are not substantial and prolonged, would be short-lived, leaving India with even higher general government debt without any sustainable benefits.

India instead eschewed the path of reckless fiscal expansion and chose to focus on improving the productive capacity of the economy through expenditures on sectors with relatively higher economic multiplier impact and employment generation potential that will make India's economy more globally competitive.

Construction of infrastructure and real estate create above five times the jobs for the money spent relative to the number of jobs generated per unit of investment in other sectors of the economy. The largest enterprises in these sectors have the capacity to minimize the spread of infections among their workforce. To support economic growth by improving India's global competitiveness in manufacturing and services and generating livelihoods, it would be advisable to accelerate investment in infrastructure, logistics and improve the building stock in the country including the rejuvenation and regeneration of urban space.

Working from home will no more be an exception. A study in the US estimates that a third of America's work force could work online from home. In India, that proportion could be much less. But the trend will gather momentum as lockdown force even ordinary citizens to go online to procure essentials, make digital investments and payments, apply for services and registrations. The nascent fintech sector will get a fillip post COVID, which will force banks to strengthen and diversify their online functioning. Now, even the Supreme Court resorts to video conferencing to hear and deliberate on urgent cases. And as corporate are forced to innovate to survive, even manufacturing sector will change. There will be design changes in layout and equipment to enable workers practice social distancing, while increased use of robotics and artificial intelligence will mean reduced workforce. It is also likely that in the manufacturing sector, supervisory level will be drastically reduced if not eliminated as monitoring and control is increasingly taken over by networks of CCTVs and two-way cameras assisted by internet of things. This will result in huge savings in air and surface travel, commercial space, fuel use and concomitant reduction in emissions and pollutants.

A related trend that is likely to gather pace post COVID-19, is the growth of like gig economy. It will not be confined only to much sought after doctors or lawyers, but will encompass much larger and fast-growing pool of highly skilled and talented men and women (among them working mothers) who would choose to work on freelance basis on assignments that meet their interests and pursuits. Companies will increasingly seek out such domain experts, even though such talent will come at a high-cost relative to regular employment.

Online classes are now a reality and even when everything returns to normal, online will co-exist

with offline classes. Online exams with rigors of offline exams would become a reality and will co-exist with offline exams. Responsibility of learning will be shifting to students rather than waiting to be taught. Students should be exposed to the concept of the gig economy- learn to work independently rather than depending on their student groups, change the mindset of searching for a job to searching for projects on a sustained basis.

Are we prepared? That's the question each one is asking while things are getting more unpredictable. There is a battle to be fought not only on the personal and public health fronts but simultaneously on the business and economy fronts. Hence, it is extremely important for the next generation of managers to gain the competency for Pandemic Management. Certainly, Public Health Management is going to grow in significance in the coming years. With industry 5.0 in sight, it is imperative that environmental sustainability is taught to our future managers.

Wherever possible education systems will move online. This will substantially reduce costs, both for providing and acquiring education. With virtual classrooms, education can be broad based and widespread without the costly constraints of physical infrastructure. In India, in many fields, high quality online education can replace substandard education dished out by dubious colleges and schools. This will give rise to a set of accredited entities that will have to develop expertise and execution capabilities to conduct online examinations as prescribed by UGC and other educational regulators. Governments and regulators will have to realize sooner than later, that distance education, not only enables social distancing but also overcome the limitations imposed by protracted lockdowns. Investors could certainly prospect for companies in the listed space offering online educational tools with appropriate technology, content and efficient delivery and monitoring software.

Changes brought about by the new normal are not just about the modes of learning but have altered the way we studied, learnt and did our business. Adaptability is the key to survive and excel. The basics of management remain the same but the ways they are applied have changed. Return of the new normal has only reinforced the fact that the changes are here to stay. While education had switched itself to on-line mode owing to the pandemic, some institutes,

of late, have been gearing up for on-campus learning following the safety norms.

In tune with times B-schools are now realigning themselves with the radical trends brought about by return of the new normal technology and gig-economy, gig economy is characterized by the prevalence of short-term contracts or freelance work as opposed to permanent jobs. All specializations evolve from basic concepts. Hence sound basics are necessary. For example, to learn Digital Marketing, an in-depth knowledge of the basic concepts of marketing is important. Management educators need to foresee the changes and how businesses are done in the new normal and then design the programme structure and the teaching learning methodology. Some existing specializations may become redundant and some new ones may be necessary to meet the required knowledge and skill sets in the new normal.

Creativity is at stake. The current trend of evaluation is pushing students towards plagiarism and copy-pasting. Examinations have hardly been a true reflection of a person's creative, collaborative, social and critical thinking skills. It is a mark driven, goal oriented, socially accepted norm that is losing its importance, every time we are moving away from essay- type questions to short, very short and Multiple-Choice Questions (MCQs). The National Education Policy 2020 attempts to move from rote to competency-based learning, inculcating creative and critical thinking capacities in students to meet the challenges of the 21st century proactively. While the goal is ideal, the current road to this goal isn't.

Plagiarism, copy paste cheating are practices that have not been strongly addressed in India, and with the current trend of evaluation, we are pushing students more towards these unethical practices. The pandemic is a great opportunity for the evaluation system to change for better in India. We should have shifted from asking "what do you know about" to "how do you know", "design an experiment" or "conduct a survey".

Exams are getting postponed and cancelled at several levels due to the pandemic. This is the right time to engage students in research, nurture their abilities to write a research paper, and orient them towards research-based learning. Such research does not always require technological infrastructure. For learners who are in remote villages, their natural surroundings can act as a data resource for all subjects. And if we are still bothered about "who has

topped?” The best few papers could be published by the institutions. This should start right at the school level.

Hopefully, one day we will accept that everything cannot be explained in a “nutshell”, life is not all about “choices” and we cannot always be “objective” in our approach. To instill the 21st century skills in a learner requires us to challenge them more and not undermine their capabilities to score even when they are made to tackle descriptive thought-evoking questions. A peep into the future takes us to a grimmer situation. The work from home phenomenon may continue in much of the IT sector even after COVID-19 crisis is over. While it may have some positive fall-outs such as decongestion of city centres, movement of residences to city outskirts giving a boost to the economies of smaller towns this may also lead to barren office spaces in big cities, unsold real-estate properties consequential slowdown in other businesses such as restaurants, entertainment etc. City landscapes may change in our country forever. And, with that lifestyle of people also may change. Investment will shift from corporations and organizations to households who will need more space to accommodate couple to work from home in separate rooms, longer working hours as working from home does not have the constraints of having to rush home and so on. All these will mean that besides social implications there may be economic costs of stress and healthcare.

Before the pandemic, new and innovative technologies were the key for businesses to succeed. However, post-pandemic, we actually got to know what can be done virtually and what can't. Thus, for students to be successful in these times of transformation we need to refine our management rules, students need to develop expertise in new and emerging technologies and their business impact. Institutions which have expertise in both research and teaching can catalyse change through education and innovative teaching methods.

Commenting on the knowledge, skills and capabilities future leaders needed to possess, 90% of participants emphasized the inclusion of topics like career adaptation strategic thinking, business acumen, value creation and entrepreneurship in the MBA curriculum. New strategies of learning are appearing on the horizon. Many institutes have switched to online learning. While actual classroom learning can still take some time, it's time we must consider all the possibilities to make the most of the online

platform, which can be tomorrow's norm. Learning through case studies should be the main strategy. We must give more emphasis on small group activities (online), where they can discuss such cases and get references from experts, who can take the role of a mentor. Self-learning should be the main approach. Mentor-mentee programme would develop students for employment. Experiential learning should be the strategy amid the new normal for management education.

After the initial period of numbing shock, we found a way to adjust to the new reality. We worked from home, we eschewed social contact, we learnt to help ourselves, we made do without whatever was not available, we adopted unfamiliar roles because there was no option. But during this entire period, there always was a voice at the back of our heads that knew that tiresome and terrifying as this period was, it would pass. And the prospect of vaccination was a concrete sign that things would improve.

That implicit expectation has been belied today. There is a nagging doubt today that a one-time vaccination (with 2 doses) whenever that happens for most of us, may not be as definitive an answer as we thought it would be. A third wave is already being spoken and we don't know what that could look like. More worryingly, just as a new variant Omicron popped up here, any number of mutated variants can be born across the world.

Relatives, friends, colleagues, neighbors nobody has been spared from the random charge of the virus. Many families have endured a double blow. Husband and wife, sister, mother, father and son, gone within days of each other. Top writers, academics, actors, composers and many others who enriched our lives for decades have passed, some without acknowledgement. The overall loss of intellectual and cultural capital is incalculable. And it continues day after day. There is no sense of an ending.

Major cities across India are reporting record numbers of COVID cases. Every government has responded predictably, announcing immediate increase in “COVID beds” including ICU Ventilators or oxygen beds. Yes, there has been no big-ticket announcement or mass recruitment drive to find and hire trained personnel, including doctors, nurses, ward attendants, technicians and sanitation staff without whom these beds are of little use.

The virus has invaded all of them. In this Corona-

age, no individual will be able to disinfect or heal his life-world, which means that 'quarantine' could stay as a metaphor of the human predicament. This reverses nearly all the directions of human achievements and collective pride.

At the national level too, we may expect radical changes. There is much suffering, but there is also pan-Indian peace! Many feel safer because of the virus! That is not all. Nations of the world will now be forced to re-think the theatre of globalization. The yoke of dependence imposed on scores of less fortunate nations in the false garb of global interdependence could be shaken off and a push for national self-reliance made. To what extent the nations of the world are ready and determined to make headway along this track remains to be seen. But one thing is certain cross-border supply chains lie rudely disrupted, perhaps irreparably broken. Becoming self-reliant may no longer remain an option or a luxury. This will have a huge bearing on national economies, not all of them either very humane or just. All through history, the burden of the 'prosperity' of a country-including the burden of its recovery-has had to be borne almost entirely by its working class. As Engels points out, one section of a society can prosper only at the expense of another. It is always the working class that ends up exploited and brutalised. The massive suffering of the migrant workers in the wake of the COVID-19 lockdown could be a trailer to the script to follow. All the more so, given the hurried labour laws reforms that are being introduced.

And so, we see history repeat itself both as tragedy and farce, oblivious to the lessons we should have learnt from the first wave. We witness the same kneejerk reaction yet again, with lockdowns and streams of returning migrants who will almost certainly seed this strain of virus across the hinterlands of the country. We witness yet again the pathetic unpreparedness that has come to characterize India's COVID response.

The characteristic issues the Corona pandemic has precipitated are: acute individual loneliness, especially in the event of a lock-down, disruption of social life and the distrust of each other it generates, tension in intimate and inter-personal relations, existential anxiety aggravated by fear of death. All our mighty achievements prove irrelevant and powerless to avail us in our vulnerability to a lowly virus.

But life, not death, is what's basic. Our attitude to life shapes our attitude to death. The fear of death

denotes a failure of life. At its root is a frightening sense of emptiness. It is from life that death borrows this spectral emptiness. Drifting is the routine of life; we forget the value of life. In this sense Corona is a wake-up call. Fear of death as the forfeiture of life is an acknowledgment of the value of life. If this awareness can survive the crisis, we shall emerge from it wiser. The only valid strategy for coping with the fear of death is to live life well, with meaning and purpose, in all its richness.

It's not too late however. We must roll out vaccines on a war footing, spending whatever it takes on their production, mobilization, distribution and injection. Vaccines are the only way out of this dark tunnel-to all adults above the age of 18 as quickly as possible. We are not sure if vaccines conclusively prevent us from getting infections or from passing them on, but they indisputably prevent those infections from being severe enough to need hospitalization or ICU. *Keep reminding patients that a short period of discomfort is a whole lot better than a visit to the ICU.* - William Schaffner, MD

This will keep away the floods of admissions at our hospital gates, allowing overworked doctors and stretched healthcare centres the chance to recoup. Indeed, the battle between vaccines and variants is likely to be long and hard and for humanity's sake the former must win. Efforts to slow the pace of re-acceleration in infections and addressing the fallout, are taking the attention of the whole of the government. Simultaneously, timely completion of infrastructure and building projects in India will go a long way in bringing down India's cost of capital, recycle capital faster, and accelerate the pace of growth and employment generation of our economy. Continuing infrastructure and large building projects along with maintaining appropriate measures to prevent the spread of infections will help return our economy to health earlier.

What was unanticipated was the emergence of the new variant. While it isn't clear as to how much more transmissible and dangerous the new variant is, the effects of the second wave look dramatically different from the first. The speed with which the virus has ravaged the population is of a different order, as is its ability to infect even those that have taken adequate precautions, its lack of discrimination between the old and the young.

Difficult as it is, human beings do have some experience in dealing with one-off disasters. While the

sudden emergence of an unfamiliar and threatening situation causes great anxiety, we do have the mechanisms to cope and to build back our lives, as we showed last year, we may not be over the hump yet, but the worst might be behind us. Or it might not. And there is no way of knowing. That is the problem. In the meantime, the need to be cautious will continue.

Last year clamping down on all movement allowed raising resources to build up our healthcare systems, facilities. But the virus still remains. One year later, we not only know what we need to do to be prepared, we also have all the technologies and resources in place. The treatment has improved enormously and we have vaccines at hand. Widespread vaccination is the only COVID end game in humanity's arsenal. In countries with advanced vaccination programmes, covered populations are showing lower hospitalization and death, while these have increased among those still awaiting shots. But until everyone is vaccinated, inoculation is no individual passport to freedom. Experts are unanimous that until a society can declare herd immunity, all the pre-vaccination Covid appropriate behaviors like masking must continue. *Being unvaccinated and returning to a crowded workplace not only means you are driving without a seatbelt, but it removes the seatbelt of those around you--Milinda Mills*

There are challenges at multiple levels though. At the economic level, the way people function for their livelihood, in terms of social interactions, in terms of perceptions that 'oh' it's going away? All of these result in giving opportunity to the virus to have a sharper rise and a stronger rise. There are multiple parameters.

The pandemic taught us one thing. It is to value ourselves, our life, our health, our time, our precious relationships. That awareness kicked in a few months into the lockdown after we were done with panic, fear of dying and the general moaning and groaning which was inevitable when jobs vanished, spending shrank and we were forced to 'manage' the best we could with the 'new normal'. Human beings are creatures of habit-it was difficult to chuck out a lot of baggage in one go. But human beings are also highly adaptable-and we swiftly switched to new routines that fell into place after initial struggles.

Everyone is going from nervous to scared to fearful and even hysterical about the "rising"

number of COVID cases in what's being termed our "third wave". I think it is ridiculous that we have allowed this fear psychosis to invade and take over our lives and sanity for over more than one entire year. Personally, I think that the government needs to address and emphasize the importance of caution over fear. Fear is crippling, dangerous and fatal if chronic. COVID is not going anywhere In fact, its mutating and adapting to different geographic and climatic conditions. Your strength lies in your immunity and the key to a strong immunity lies in positivity, healthy eating, sunshine, oxygen, exercise and most importantly, a lack of fear.

Look around you –notice the changes for yourself. Feel the energy and positivity in the air. People are talking less, but talking sense! They are utilizing their time far better, without wasting it on things that don't really matter. Some have stepped up productivity levels, while others have figured they don't need to be crazy busy 24x7—it's okay to just chill, relax, do nothing. It's also lovely to observe the passion invested in hobbies that had taken a backseat.

I would like to speak at length the need to open up rather than lockdown, and for people to start living rather than only existing with a focus to dodging death. Thinking about death is great because it gives you the chance to reflect on what you could have done differently. A video I saw on "fearless soul" states how reflecting upon your own death puts your life into perspective and gives you the impetus to improve it.

COVID-19 will change the way world works just like the great depression; 2008 financial crash did in the past. The question on everyone's mind is would things go back to normal? Unlike during 20th century crisis, the Central Govt. has responded positively and aggressively to tackle the crisis by expending financial support and therefore things will go back to normal provided the people adhere to the preventive measures announced by the government. The fiscal and monetary stimulus unveiled will start to work sooner than expected. The Prime Minister of India, Sh. Narendra Modi unveiled a Rs.20 lakh crore package, amounting to around 10% of Indian GDP-one of the largest stimulus packages, which raise hopes of a speedy economic recovery. According to UNCTAD in its report, "The COVID-19 shock to developing countries has predicted that major economies least exposed to recession would be China and India". So according to the present

situation it seems that the course of economic recovery in India will be smoother and faster than other developed countries.

The flipside is Corona itself generated opportunities for manufacture of drugs health supplements, medical preparations, masks, PPEs, and all other paraphernalia that were needed in the management of the pandemic. It also, helped the exponential growth of e-commerce, due to lockdown. Reportedly it has opened up huge possibility of placements of youth with knowledge of digital skills. Thus, there have been emerging encouraging scenes in the employment market. We do hope slow and steady shall win the race and country will emerge better and stronger in coming months.

Most of us used the challenging lockdown for personal explorations of many different kinds. We had the time and the mind set to travel within ourselves, since we couldn't travel outside our homes. The virus has done a lot of 'good' in a strange sort of way. This is not to discount or diminish the tragedy of those who paid a huge price and succumbed to the deadly disease. Nor does it diminish the risks taken and hard work put in by selfless frontline workers. The world will never forget their dedication.

Even more crucially, let's have the discipline to mask up and avoid all social gatherings for the foreseeable future. Let's also not underestimate the vital importance of the humble but well-fitting mask, hand washing and social distancing as public health measures par excellence.

To overcome the current wave, India must sustain the momentum of its vaccination programme supplemented by proven public health mitigation measures. Data has always been a key enabler when it comes to prioritizing and accelerating health outcomes. It helps us to understand where the need is greatest, predict potential hotspots and target interventions with a focus on equity. Covid-19 has also demonstrated that early warning and speed are the most critical components of any outbreak response.

What makes this yearning for the normal more poignant is that the pandemic does not seem to have a sense of ending about it. It seems to abate only to return unpredictably, with sudden ferocity. We alternate between periods of hope and of despair and all the while the need for things to become normal becomes that much stronger. Today normal is not boring it is what we dream about.

The present crisis, like its many predecessors, too shall pass. Nothing is forever. That is the mercy, as William Blake said, of eternity to time. The thing to do is to endure. But there are ways and ways for enduring. And how one endures reflects the essence of one's being. So, the important thing is not which crisis hits us, it's how we face the given crisis. A crisis is our date with truth. In it we encounter the truth about ourselves that we would, otherwise, rather ignore. It is only at this level of encountering the truth that a viable and meaningful way of managing a crisis may be envisaged at all.

We may 'learn to live with' either in realistic engagement or in cynical resignation. To learn to live with it is to accept and adjust to required changes. As a rule, we rebel and reform in hope. We merely endure in resignation. But there is, still a spark of hope. To 'learn' is to be humble. To learn to live with the virus is, also, to move from hubris to humility.

Openness to change is the touchstone of humility. Our first and instinctive preference is to change everyone else so that we may not have to change ourselves. It is when hope sets on this possibility that we grudgingly reckon the need to 'live with' with a changed scenario. What then are the focal points of change we need to face, to the extent that we can recognize them today? It is only natural if a crisis as global and seminal as the COVID-19 pandemic is, ushers in all-round changes.

Recovering from COVID for those affected in the second wave has not been easy. Apart from the unfortunate many who have either died or suffered terribly before eventually emerging from the illness, the pandemic in its second coming has left deep and enduring psychological scars on virtually everyone else.

When we finally put 2020 behind us the world had heaved a collective sigh of relief. For it seemed that the anxiety stemming from being confronted by a threat of a kind most of us never encountered before would abate. Even if the virus resurfaced, we would be more aware of what to do and what to avoid, better prepared in terms of infrastructure, more experienced in treating those affected by the disease. And most importantly, vaccination was finally becoming a reality. As if to encourage such positive ideas, the Indian caseload dropped significantly and with vaccination around the corner, we were getting ready to embrace a post-Covid world. Indeed, many started behaving as if the pandemic was behind us.

Coping with isolation and loneliness surely, the COVID-19 epidemic precipitates issues of isolation and loneliness. If so, it's time we faced it. Today we live in a world of atomized, self-sufficient individuals. It is this way of life that has aggravated the reality of loneliness. The two familiar symptoms of this socially patterned self-alienation are boredom and depression.

What Shall We Do?

We must assume responsibility, first, for ourselves and next, for others in the ambit of our social reach and personal interaction and help to break the chain of transmission. We need to mind personal hygiene. Minimize travels and social exposures as far as possible, without undermining quality of life altogether. Safety is secured not by irrational fears, but by informed choices and responsible behavior.

Prepare mentally and spiritually for a period of self-quarantine or community lock-down, marked necessarily by loneliness and the disruption of familiar routines. Isolation does not have to entail existential emptiness. It can be a blessing in disguise as well. It could be a time for deepening and enriching our inner life. A time, say, for reinforcing our reflection and reading habits.

It could be a time to enrich family life, this is unlikely to happen automatically. One has to work at it. Culturally, a shift is happening from home to life out there. So, having to stay home-bound could induce restlessness. Restlessness denotes unused or under-used energy. There is no remedy for it other than devising a strategy for using one's time and energies in a purposive and self-enriching way.

A time of crisis is the time to be innovative! It is when we hit the blank wall that we open our inward eye and see newer horizons. A crisis is also an eruption of truth. But it also allows us to go denial. Only welcoming the truth sets us free. The seminal element of freedom is freedom to be true.

Finally, as even management gurus tell us these days, reckon the reality of death in our view of life. We are sure to die. It's a matter of time. It will be tomorrow, as Hamlet says, *if it is not today. We can't decide how long we shall live, but we can decide how well.* There is nothing tragic about our dying, not even dying young. What is tragic is our dying without ever having opened our eyes on the beauty and meaning of life. *So, who we are, matters; virus or no virus.*

Especially so, when the virus slithering around unseen, in the garden of our life.

To sail sensibly on the choppy waters of this uncharted surface, we need a loadstar. Fortunately, Lord Jesus Christ has provided it already. Our strategies, if they are to prove spiritually wholesome, need to be guided by the core purpose Lord Jesus Christ has prescribed for it: *life in all its fullness.*

Albeit slowly, reform and change are taking place. Like in a kaleidoscope we see many colours and shapes, but we cannot fix our sight on any one thing, many changes are taking place but to what effect we cannot figure out. Urgency and focus are the keys. It may not be out of place to end this with a quote from *The Economist*, which says "*India like a Monet painting, up close it is a big old mess. But from afar it still has the power to beguile us*".

There are other aspects of the ordinary that we have learned to experience more. Families have actually behaved like families. They have shared not only limited space, but time, love, care, attention. They have each other in contents that they haven't exposed to earlier. Food has given us inordinate pleasure, both the cooking and consuming, the cleaning not so much. Old games have been played and new irritations identified. In a highly constrained playing field, we have rediscovered the joys of simple everyday pleasures.

More than any of the above, we have woken up to a universal connection that has kept us going, kept us alive. The world was in this together-dealing with a life-threatening crisis- for the very first time in recorded history. It made everyone appreciate the connectedness of existence. We shared knowledge. We shared sorrow and pain. We shared hope. And now we will share triumph. And love. A hard way to learn such a difficult lesson, and at a huge price, at that.

*"Meet together, speak together,
let your minds be of one accord,
as the Gods of old, being of one mind,
accepted their share of the sacrifice....*

*Let your aims be common,
and your hearts of one accord,
and all of you be of one mind,
so, you may live well together."*

-Rig Veda.



Structured *Viva Voce*: An Assessment Tool for Distance Education

Neerja Sood* and Moumita Das**

Assessment of practical skills is essential component of any professional programme especially in nursing and medical education. Practical examination includes *viva voce* as an integral part of assessment. Assessment matrix includes *viva voce* and it is being given 15 to 20 per cent weightage of marks during practical examination. *Viva voce* is considered essential because examiner ask theory questions and questions related to practical activity; we can say examiner may ask questions which cannot be assessed through hands on skill or related to basic concepts of theory or models or basic principles related to the practical aspect. Examiner can test the cognitive domain at all levels like recall, understanding, analysing, differentiating or evaluation etc. Examiner can assess the communication skills, rationalization and convincing and counselling skills of nurses and doctors. Assessment of students in nursing and medical colleges is a challenge and many a times are controversial too because traditional *viva voce* on one side provides an opportunity to the examiner to ask questions from theory components and assess level of knowledge of students; but on the other hand it has challenges and limitations like creating threatening environment for students, students are anxious, fearful, student and teacher may argue or disagree on various concepts; questions may vary from student to student and subjectivity is very common issue. Few, studies were available regarding Efficiency of Traditional *Viva-Voce* vs Structured *Viva-Voce* in Nursing, No study was available regarding Efficiency of Traditional *Viva-Voce* vs Structured *Viva-Voce* in Nursing through ODL, Structural *viva voce* was found to be effective, improved student's performance and was more satisfying. The present study will suggest the efficiency of Structured *Viva-Voce* over Traditional *Viva-Voce* in Nursing course through ODL. The paper will provide an insight into the perception of the students on the efficacy of the structured *viva voce* and provides an innovative and unique design of a structured *viva voce*, which may be adopted by the educational institutions.

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Study by Elkokany et al (2019), emphasized that structured *viva voce* is effective method of assessment. Performance of nursing students can be improved and students are more satisfied. As per the study by Dhasmana, and Kalra in in 2016, *viva* is held after the practical skill test or practical examination, at that point of time student is tired; examiner can be subjective and have their own preference areas or questions are asked from theory components which are not related to practical activity during examination and there are other factors which influence the outcome. Practicals are mostly held before theory examination and many a times students are not well prepared for *viva voce*. Sharma et al in 2018, highlighted that traditional *viva voce* is subjective. it is unstructured, difficulty level of questions also varies and marking depends on the mood of the examiner.

Another study by Imran et al., in 2019, emphasized that *viva voce* is used to test the components which cannot be tested through written theory examination and communication skills of students can be assessed. Mostly *viva voce* is focused on recall or understanding of concepts related to theory. It is very subjective and assessment depends of the examiner to examiner. One more study Sadiqa et. al., in 2019 and Munde et al in 2020 also highlighted the same findings and highlighted that traditional *viva voce* has its limitations.

Various studies emphasised that to overcome the limitations of traditional *viva voce*, structured *viva voce* can take care of many of the above mentioned drawbacks and it has many advantages over traditional *viva voce*. Structured *viva voce* is considered to be more precise, valid and a toll which can assess the critical thinking, communication skills and reflective skills of the students. Assessment by a teacher will be less bias, both are comfortable and are at ease; environment in which *viva voce* is taken is also less threatening (Lawson, 2012; Shah et al, 2013; Salwan et al., 2020).

Another study suggested that students appear in final exam with a vision that remembering the facts will be enough to appear in *viva voce* rather than understanding. Therefore for higher level of cognitive assessment and deeper learning, it is essential to use assessment methods that encourage deeper learning and demonstrate critical thinking. rather than just recall of facts (Lawson, 2012).

The Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU), established by the Act of Parliament in 1985, has continuously striven to build an inclusive knowledge society by offering high-quality teaching through the Open and Distance Learning (ODL) mode. The objects of the University shall be to advance and disseminate learning and knowledge by a diversity of means, including the use of any communication technology, to provide opportunities for higher education to a larger segment of the population and to promote the educational well being of the community generally, to encourage the Open University and distance education systems in the educational pattern of the country and to coordinate and determine the standards in such systems (IGNOU, Act and Statutes, 2019, accessed from website on 13-07-2020).

IGNOU offers professional, technical and general need-based programmes/courses at all levels by 21 Schools of Studies. School of Health Sciences, is offering Post Basic. B.Sc. Nursing programme (3 years) through ODL mode. The degree programme was launched, at the request of Indian Nursing Council. The need was felt to providing higher education to working nurses in India. 20 percent of theory and 50 percent practical are conducted through face to face sessions in study centers in College of Nursing and attached hospital/community. Student is provided with self learning material, A.V aids, sessions through Edusat, radio and YouTube video etc. Theory examination is conducted by Student Evaluation Division at end of year and practical examination is conducted by study center. It includes practical activities followed by traditional *viva voce*.

During review it was found that structured *viva voce* is used in assessment of medical students in but in nursing very few studies available from other countries. Structured *viva voce* is mainly used as assessment in traditional classroom only. No studies were found related to structured *viva voce* used as assessment tool in online or distance education or in IGNOU. Therefore, the author planned to implement structured *viva voce* in assessment of nursing students in Delhi. The Aim of the study was to implement standard *viva voce*; assess its advantages over traditional *viva voce* and find factors which can diminish the limitations of structured *viva voce*. The objectives of this study are:

1. Design and implement structured *viva voce*.
2. Assess the preference of students towards new method of *viva voce*.
3. Find out the reasons for acceptance of standardized *viva voce*.

4. Find out the perception of students regarding structured *viva voce*.

This is exploratory research. As structured *viva voce* is not implemented in open distance university; it will help to understand the feasibility of conducting structured *viva voce* in open distance learning. In exploratory research, the process of the research varies according to the finding of new data or insight. Also referred to as interpretative research or grounded theory approach, the outcomes of this research provide answers to questions like what, how and why.

Study was conducted with 4 batches during Nursing Education and Nursing Research Practical Examination. Post Basic B. Sc. Nursing Students of IGNOU at Delhi Programme Study Centre at Rajkumari Amrit Kaur College of Nursing. (n=120) is the sample of Study. The study was conducted during 2015 to 2018.

Design of the Structured *Viva Voce* Questions

Four sets of questions with 20 questions in each set i.e., 1 set of easy questions for recall and memorizing; and 1 set of difficult questions for analysis and critical thinking with model answers and marking scheme (2 marks were given for 4 easy questions and 3 marks were given for 4 difficult questions, i.e., Total 20 marks for *viva voce*); covering BNS 111, 2 Blocks for Nursing Education and BNS 111, 2 Blocks for Nursing Research respectively. Feedback form for students and Focus Group Discussion guide for their perception of students and Programme In-charge was designed. It was validated by five experts in the field of nursing and education. Students were given the opportunity to select 2 slips from easy and 2 slips from the difficult questions. They picked up the slips one by one and answered the questions. They were given the time to read the question first then reply and in case could not reply chance was given to pick up one more slip and answer the question. In case still reply was not correct at the end of *viva voce* correct reply and feedback was given to the student.

Pilot Study

Conducted with permission of Principal, College of Nursing at Greater NOIDA during practical examination. Teachers and students' feedback was taken and analysed. They accepted the structured *viva voce* over traditional *viva voce* because it was transparent method of assessment, student friendly; teachers felt full content can be covered through this method. Few modifications were carried out after pilot study and tools were finalised. Permission was

taken from the Programme In-charge and explain the procedure to her.

Consent was taken from the students; explained details to the students and internal examiner. Students were oriented about the procedure and their doubts were cleared during discussion. External and internal examiner was provided with model answers and marking scheme for assessment.

After practical skills students came for *viva voce*. Each student was asked to pick up two slips one by one from each of the four sets. They opened the slip and were given time to read question and if required could read the question again and then answer. Another chance was given if not able to answer any particular question; one chance was given to the student to pick up one slip from respective set and try to answer the question. Answers were matched with model answers and assessment was done as per marking scheme.

Focus Group Discussion

Focus Group Discussion was conducted after *viva voce* of all the students for their perception towards traditional and structured *viva voce*. Focus Group Discussion guidelines was prepared. Consent was taken from the students and willing students participated in the FGD. In the beginning introduction was given and explained the purpose of the FGD. Researcher initiated the discussion and with the help of the observer controlled the group discussion. Important issues and points were noted down and discussed further in detail.

Findings

Demographic Profile of the Students

One hundred and twenty (120) students participated in the study. Out of the 120 students, 74 (61.7%) were female and 46 (38.3%) were male students (Figure 1). In 2015 students were little reluctant to accept new method but as they experienced the method of *viva voce* at the end they accepted it and were satisfied. Still in 2015 and 2016 there were few students who were not able to accept the method. In 2017 and 2018 all the students (100 %) preferred the structured *viva voce* method (Figure 2).

Reasons for Accepting the Structured Viva Voce by the Students

As observed in Table 1, the students accepted the structured *viva voce* as a method of assessment during practical examinations because they felt they were at ease to face the examiner without anxiety (89 % of the respondents); they can read

Figure-1: Gender of the Students

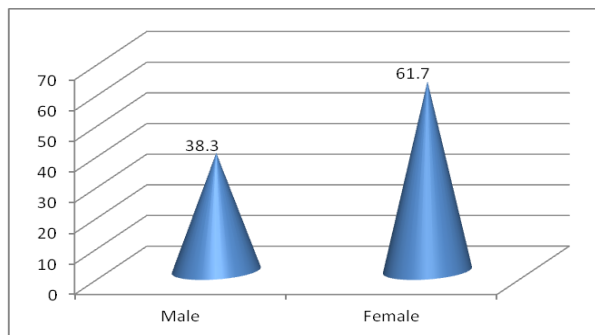
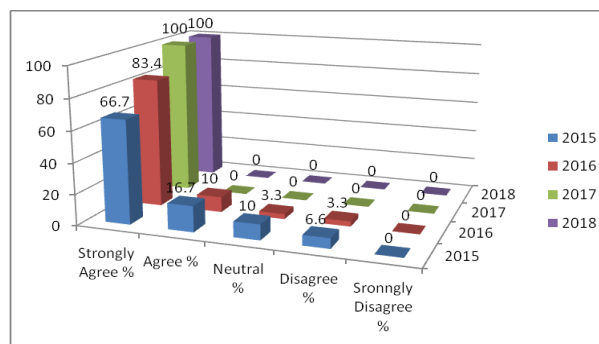


Figure-2. Students' Preference for Structured Viva Voce Method



the question two or three times (83 % of the respondents) and can conceptualize the answer (90% of the respondents). All the respondents (100%) said that they got the opportunity to choose the question slips, got an extra chance to answer, no bias of the teacher and were able to score good marks. Structured *viva voce* helped them to improve their performance as they could answer the questions and give examples from field. In case they were not able to answer a particular question they were given second chance to answer another question. Examiner had given feedback then and there in case any reply was wrong. Examiner was not bias under the influence of internal examiner.

Table 1: Reasons for Accepting Structured Viva Voce by Students

S. No.	Reasons	Students (%)
1.	Very less anxiety	89
2.	Can read the question again	83
3.	Can think and answer	90
4.	Have chance to pick up slip ourselves	100
5.	Have one extra chance to answer	100
6.	No bias of teacher in asking easy or difficult question	100
7.	Student friendly and able to score good marks	100

Students' Perception of Traditional and Structured Viva Voce

The students were asked questions about their perception about traditional *viva voce* and the structured *viva voce* administered to them by the author. The following response was obtained. The following is the perception of the students about the traditional *viva voce*:

- Questions were not clear and we could not understand.
- On seeing the examiner forgot everything.
- Not able to comprehend and answer due to thought block.
- Examiner was harsh therefore I was upset.
- Examiner scolded therefore I took more time to remember and answer.
- Afraid of asking question again.
- Not able to get correct answer if query was not replied by the examiner.
- Internal examiner favoured some of the students by asking easy questions.
- External examiner many a times was influenced by internal teacher
- Some students did not answer but still got good marks.
- Difficult questions were asked in the early morning and later easy questions were asked.

The following is the perception of the students about the structured *viva voce*:

- Questions were written therefore had the chance to read carefully, understand and answer.
- Able to read question again to answer it.
- Opportunity was given to answer another question if not able to answer a particular question.
- Able to know own weak areas to study for upcoming theory examination.
- Threat of difficult question was less as both easy and difficult question was available in slips.
- Environment was friendly and the threat of examiner was less.
- Initially was tense and afraid but gained confidence after answering two-three questions.
- No favouritism of examiners

was there by asking easy questions to some of the students.

- Feedback was given by examiner if not able to answer.
- Appreciated if given correct answer and examples from field.

Faculty Perception of Traditional and Structured Viva Voce

The faculty members perceived that the students know the answer but are not able to answer due to various reasons, as given in Figure-3.

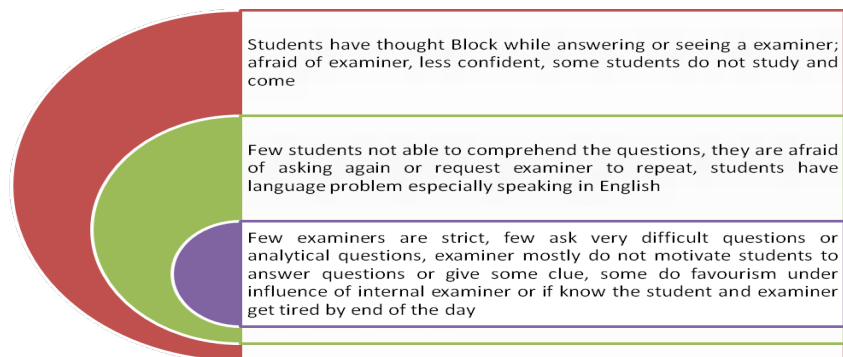
The following is the perception of the faculty about the structured *viva voce*:

- The students gave the feedback that they are very happy and satisfied after viva.
- They had the chance to read question again, understand and answer.
- Students were able to identify their weak areas and study for theory examination.
- Had chance to answer another question if not able to answer any question.
- Examiner was more relaxed and gave feedback to students.

Traditional Viva Voce-Observation of the Researcher

In Programme Study Centres during Post Basic B.Sc. practical examination the traditional *viva voce* is commonly used for assessment by internal and external examiners. Author as an examiner observed and also expressed by the students that they feel nervous and anxious, that is why had thought block and not able understand the questions or answer the questions; some of the external examiners were not friendly therefore they were frightened to clarify or ask the question again from the examiner. Author also observed as an internal examiner that external examiner was not consistent in asking questions; sometimes

Figure 3: Perception of Faculty on Traditional Viva Voce



they were asking too easy or too difficult questions and number of questions asked also varied. External examiner was influenced by internal examiner to give marks to few students or influenced by performance feedback. By the end of the end examiners were tired and exhausted.

As per study by Sood N. (2015), some of the key elements related to the conduct of the traditional *viva voce* were question bank, model answers and making scheme was not available; examiners were asking questions in different ways and number of questions asked from each students also varied; very less time was given to the student to answer the question and if they are not able to answer any question internal examiner even scolded the student in front of external examiner and sometimes even the external examiner was not friendly with the students.

Structured Viva Voce-Observation of the Researcher

Structured *Viva voce* was implemented for the first time to first batch in 2015, although students were explained the procedure but it was observed that few students who appeared first for *viva voce* were very nervous. They were motivated to read question and answer and support with examples from clinical area; it was observed by the author that students who can later were more confident. This method provided an opportunity to the students to pick up slip and read question carefully and re-read it; think and then answer; environment was friendly and relaxed. As this was the last point of connection or learning for students, examiner was giving positive feedback and explained their weak areas. Students were happy and satisfied with their performance after *viva voce*. Subsequent batches since 2016 to 2018 very aware of the procedure and they were more confident.

Some of the key elements were highlighted in study by Sood N. (2015) are complete syllabai was covered, question bank with model answers and making scheme was available with easy and difficult questions; same number of questions were asked from each student, each student was given time to read and answer the questions. The present study also highlighted similar key points. Concept of structured *viva voce* was new; pre-planning was done to review the curriculum i.e. theory and inter-related practical components. All the four blocks and units were reviewed for easy and difficult concepts for designing four sets of question banks for developing questions for assessment of knowledge at all levels. Model answers and making scheme was also developed.

Challenges

- *Reviewing whole syllabus and framing questions:* It is a time consuming task to go through the syllabus and to frame easy and difficult questions for 4 sets.
- *Making question slips for group 1 and group 2 questions:* Making separate questions for Group 1 and Group 2 for Nursing Education and Nursing Research.
- *Sensitizing students and faculty:* Motivating students and faculty to adopt structured *viva voce* is a challenging issue and is time consuming.

Impact

- *Improve the assessment:* Students performed better and scored good marks as they could reply to questions.
- *Unbiased and fair assessment:* Fair chance to all students as they picked up slips and answer the question written in slip; each one of them answered easy and difficult questions.
- *Feedback is provided to students and weak areas can be assessed:* Students could assess their own weak areas to study in detail for theory examination.
- *Students and faculty were relaxed:* Students were relaxed as they had less fear of type of question and they could read question again; faculty was also relaxed as need not to ask questions from each students but had time to give feedback.

Special Features of the Structured Viva Voce for Replication

Viva voce provides an opportunity to students to reflect on and explore in detail about question/topic; they can even supplement certain aspects which they missed during practical activity during one-to-one interaction with the examiner. It provides them the opportunity to clear their doubts and get feedback from the examiner too. Research experienced that structured *viva voce* was very effective for nursing research, nursing education and nursing administration courses. In this study students were very satisfied with structured *viva voce* and expressed those questions asked were relevant to the content, they received immediate feedback if reply was not correct or incorrect, biasness of asking easy or difficult question was not there and favouritism by internal examiner had not affected their assessment. This study will also help the programme and course coordinators to develop effective assessment method, which will not only test knowledge but higher order learning

like critical thinking, analytical thinking, decision making skills can also be tested. It will also cover full syllabus, various aspects of course or helps to cover topics which needs critical or analytic thinking. it will also help to provide reliable assessment rather than performance in assessment by chance or favouritism.

According to study by Leibold and Schwarz (2015), giving online feedback is important skill for the educator to develop as this will help in learners development and feedback is important to the learning process.

Study provided the feedback and experience of planning and implementing structured *viva voce* as a tool for assessment in future all the courses in various programmes. Perception of students helped to understand the student's point of view towards traditional and structured *viva voce*. Teacher needs to put more time for question bank, model answers and marking scheme and thinking process required. Teachers too can be motivated to learn about structured *viva voce* and prepare question bank. It also provided opportunity for learning for students during their last point of contact with the teacher and examiner. Feedback is very essential and important tool in medical and nursing education; giving feedback is an critical skill which can be acquired by the teachers by practice and reflecting on own performance.

Discussion

Assessment in nursing is done through theory final examination for all the theory courses and for all the practical courses assessment is done through practical examination and *viva voce*. *Viva voce* is an essential part of assessment during practical examination in nursing, medical and allied health programmes; *viva* provides insight into the capacity of the student to think analytically and critical thinking (Hungerford et al., 2015). In all the colleges of Nursing in regular and ODL system, internal and external examiners conduct the practical examination. *Viva voce* is an important aspect of practical examination, examiner asks questions related to the subject areas which cannot be assessed through skills or left out in theory examination. Since traditional *viva voce* has its own limitations like subjective bias, influence of internal examiner, consistency of asking questions varies from student-to-student etc, therefore studies have highlighted that in many medical and nursing colleges structured *viva voce* is being implemented to overcome the limitations of traditional *viva voce*. Study by Naseem et al (2019), also highlighted that traditional *viva voce* questions and not uniform and therefore

reliability of the *viva* gets diluted. And this can be overcome by improved method i.e. standardized *viva voce*. It is subject and involve examiner bias (Naseem et al., 2019) In current study it was shown that students preferred the structured *viva voce* than traditional *viva voce*, they were more satisfied. Subjective bias and favouritism was also taken care off. Students were more relaxed during *viva voce* and their performance was better. Pre-planning and question bank makes structured *viva voce* examination more objective, unbiased. Answer key and marking system makes it more authentic and acceptable to students. Study by Kaur N et al (2019), also highlighted that student were satisfied regarding uniformity of questions, syllabus coverage and time given to answer the questions. Another study by Naseem (2019), also highlighted that students and teachers preferred structured *viva voce*; students scored better and answered more questions. Environment was more relaxed, no bias on the part of internal and external examiner. Performance of students were according to their capabilities, knowledge not by chance The structured *viva voce* developed by the author was based on own experience as an examiner, literature review, feedback from the students; to overcome the limitations of traditional *viva voce* and structured *viva voce* was not used for assessment in any of the nursing institutions or programme study centres of university offering nursing programmes. Therefore, it was necessary to go through the syllabi of respective subject and identify the theory and practical components and inter-related components. This will help in making a blue print for practical examination which will include *viva voce*; including model answer and scoring. The examiner can give feedback to students if in few areas they are not able to perform as this is the last contact point for learning for students. Therefore, it is important to assess the cognitive domain at all levels rather than just recall and memorizing; this require valid and reliable tool and examiner needs to be objective. Nursing students after completing the programme will work in hospitals or health institutions providing care to patients and need to take critical decisions, do analysis and interpretation of reports, facts and data; they will use theory knowledge and practical skills in day-to-day functioning.

Implications for Theory, Practice and/or Policy

- Study highlighted the challenges faced in planning and implementing structure *viva voce* which can be useful in future to other teachers
- Teacher needs to invest more time for question bank, model answers and marking scheme and thinking process required

This will help to test knowledge and higher order learning like critical thinking, analytical thinking, decision making

Conclusion

Structured *viva voce* has been found to have many advantages over traditional *viva voce*. In traditional *viva voce* students are not relaxed and are tense, and there is possibility of favouritism and biasness and many other factors influenced the assessment by the examiners. Structured *viva voce* can be used to overcome these issues. In this study structured *viva voce* was uniquely designed to cater to the gap areas found in the traditional *viva voce* and administered to the students. The results of this study indicate that structured *viva voce* through its student friendly features qualitatively enhances the assessment process. It is free of any bias, and provides a conducive environment to the students in which they feel at ease to think, reflect and respond in an effective manner, thereby reflecting the true learning outcome.

On the basis of the findings of this study, it is recommended that the design of structured *viva voce* may be replicated in all level of the programmes at IGNOU and other ODL institutions.

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Disproportionate Distribution of Public Finances among Institutions of Higher Learning in India: A Critical Commentary

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The fundamentals of Education system of any country should always signify equality and uniformity and to give this concept a uniform look and unvarying feel, children in their early school days are made to wear uniform, so that each child must see his/her standing equal among other children. These fundamentals though age old but still serve as strong pillars of a sound education system and help to overcome the barriers like caste, colour, creed, culture, religion, region etc., something we have imbibed in our curriculum at all levels and have been teaching our children for decades, as how and why we should overcome these disparities. In the process to overcome these age-old disparities, some newer forms of barriers have come up especially in the education system itself, whereby schools are being distinguished as public vs private, schools for elites vs school for poor and marginalized, Central institutes vs state institutes, highly ranked vs poorly ranked institutions, highly reputed institutes vs lesser known institutes, highly funded institutes vs marginally funded institutes and more. This distinction is not only about infrastructure but also about the children who read in these educational institutions and is being seen as a class difference in education. The fact remains that disparity of any sort affects the children in its own way at all levels and so holds true of the disparity faced by higher education institutions of India in terms of disproportionate distribution of public finances they receive from government and its agencies. Needless to mention that disproportionate distribution of funds to higher education institutions across the country affects the educational institutions in general and study, teaching and research activities of students, teachers and scholars in particular in its own way.

In view of above, the undergoing discussion is about the need and importance of having a free and uniform education system across the length and breadth of the country, having no disparity in terms of funds allocated to Higher Education Institutions by the

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government and its agencies. To strengthen the higher education sector of the country, there is a need to have a strong commitment on the part of the state to strengthen the public funded institutions (Bowen & Fincher, 2018). India being the second populous country in the world has around 11% population in the age group of 18 to 23 years, the age group when children join higher education institutions for higher studies.

Brief Overview of India's Higher Education System

India is a very vast country, having population more than 1.3 billion (Dadax Limited, 2020). Given the vastness of the country and the size of the population, India has a very vast higher education sector. The vastness of India's higher education sector can be gauged from the All India Survey of Higher Education (AISHE) report 2018-19, which has reported existence of 993 Universities, 39931 colleges and 10725 standalone institutions spread across the length and breadth of India (Ministry of Human Resource Development, 2019). As per the report nearly 37.4 million students are enrolled in higher education institutions across the country, with female enrolment constituting 48.6% of the Gross enrolment, which is quite encouraging.

To run the show of this huge higher education system efficiently and successfully involves equal amount of manpower, machinery and money. India as on date spends nearly 3.8% of its total GDP on the education sector of the country (UNDP, 2020), which is one of the lowest among the developing nations in the world, hence needs to be increased to improve the education sector of the country considerably.

Objectives of the Discussion

The discussion aims to highlight the considerable difference in the public finances allocated to the state and the central higher education institutions, which otherwise should not have been there. Other Objectives are:

- To project that each child is important and has equal right on the resources and services of the

country availed on public money. Every existing difference in the resources, services and other kind of facilities availed by the student enrolled in the state and the central institutes should be done away with without wasting any time and without any second thought.

- To bring forth the fact that each child contributes equally to the nation building be they enrolled in state institutes or central institutes, so every student deserves equally facilities in the institution he/she is enrolled in.
- To discuss that education at all levels and by all means should be fully sponsored and controlled by the union government. The role of private educational institutions should be merely supplementary and not to turn it into an educational industry.

Problem Statement

Every child has an equal right on the resources and services of country and no child can be considered as special or having more privileges. Given the fact resources of the country need to get equally distributed among all and if this distribution of resources is to be linked to allocation of funds for provision of quality education, then there should be proportionate distribution of funds among educational institutions, irrespective of the location of institute and the social

standing of children studying in these institutions. The harsh reality is, there is always disproportionate distribution of funds among higher educational institutions across the country, with the result some benefit more from the tax payer's money and others less and still more, a few get hardly benefited. Need is to understand that every child has got equal right on the fair and uniform use of taxpayers' money.

It is a very well-known fact that all the central government run higher educational institutes get the lion's share from the funds allocated for the education of one and all. In the process somewhere the most deserving, needy and other smaller institutions which most of the time cry for funds get either neglected or get very meager amount for the namesake (Devi et al., 2020). The researchers are of the view that in the context of India, the rule to reward the institutions performing well with more and more grants doesn't augur well and the need somewhere is to have proportionate distribution of funds for balanced growth and development. All the Central Universities, IIT's, NIT's, IIM's, Institutes of national Importance, and all other such intuitions established by central government get a healthy grant from the central government for running these institutions. Even the central institutes as old as couple of years receive grants more than what a state run institution may not have received in the decades of its existence. This

Table-1: Maintenance and Development Grants (Revenue & Capital Grants) Released to Institutions during the Last Three Financial Years (Rupees in Crores)

S. No	Type of Institution	Revenue and Capital Grants 2016-17 (%Share) ⁶	Revenue and Capital Grants 2017-18 (%Share) ⁷	Revenue and Capital Grants 2018-19 (%Share) ⁸
01	State Universities	521.44 (13.13)	610.28 (4.90)	460.57 (4.00)
02	College of State Universities	122.51 (3.08)	155.38 (1.25)	203.04 (1.75)
03	Central Universities	1998.84 (50.32)	7315.93 (58.76)	6583.62 (57.18)
04	Colleges of Central Universities	42.68 (1.07)	2247.16 (18.05)	2135.68 (18.55)
05	Inter-University Centres	50.17 (1.26)	182.27 (1.46)	245.11 (2.13)
06	Institutions Deemed to be Universities	87.66 (2.21)	511.83 (4.17)	515.24 (4.48)
07	Miscellaneous/Non-Univ. & Instts.	90.57 (2.28)	23.49 (0.09)	10.40 (0.09)
08	Online Payments through Banks for Scholarships/Fellowships	813.89 (20.49)	1106.55 (8.89)	1100.23 (9.56)
09	Regional Centres	269.20 (6.78)	188.99 (1.52)	153.12 (1.32)
10	Administrative Charges(HO)	-	95.70 (0.77)	95.09 (0.83)
11	Administrative Charges(RO)	-	8.09 (0.06)	8.17 (0.07)
12	Anti Ragging Measures	-	5.19 (0.04)	2.32 (0.02)
13	Institute of Eminence (IOE)	-	-	0.15 (0.004)
14	National Academic Depository(NAD)	-	-	0.85 (0.01)
15	Total:	3996.96	12450.87	11513.60

Source: - UGC annual reports (2016-17, 2017-18 & 2018-19) (UGC. New Delhi, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020)

disparity in the allocation of funds among the state and the central institutes raises some serious questions over the sincerity of the system in supporting the education sector of the country uniformly.

The Table-1 depicts the facts and figures of disproportionate distribution of funds by the UGC to state and central institutes. There is no denial in the fact that state institutes also receive grants from their respective state governments, but when it comes to the overall spending made by the central higher or technical education institutions to that of state higher or technical education institutions, then one can find a considerable difference between the two. What makes more staggering difference between the two types of institutions is the amount of funds allocated under different sub-heads including libraries. Generally, centrally funded institutions are at liberty to spend crores of rupees for procurement of library resources during any given financial year, be it print or electronic, while the funds allocated to the libraries of state run institutions are so meager that even the subscription of a single database at times becomes difficult. Even the funds allocated to centrally sponsored institutions are so huge that most of times these funds lapse for the want of judicious and justified spending. The aim of quoting libraries is just simply one single instance and so holds true about other sub-systems of the larger educational institutions. What adds woes to the state sponsored institutions is the pathetic distribution of funds by the state governments to each individual state institution. Like UGC grants, funds allocated to state institutions by the respective state governments are disproportionate. Some state universities receive the lion's share, while others receive grants worth peanuts and such institutions ultimately depend on student fees for their survival and sustenance. The burden of running such colleges and universities is ultimately shifted on students and their parents by collecting heavy fees and other type of charges.

Free Education

The education sector of the country should be purely state controlled and should be free for all at all levels, be it school education, technical education, higher education or even the research programmes offered at university level or by any institution of national importance. Enrolling children in schools from poor and other weaker sections of the society is not an end in itself, ensuring sustenance of such children in educational environment is paramount. When we

talk about access to education, it should be inclusive access, which means every care should be taken to ensure that a child belonging to a downtrodden family or coming from a humble background or belonging to a marginalized group or from a backward area, by no means should quite the studies for conditions which seemingly may not favour or support his/her schooling. Every school going child deserves to be protected from every side so as to be nurtured in a completely free and natural environment.

There is a need to understand that every child is special and important and has every right to free and compulsory education, the fundamental right guaranteed under Article 21a of the Indian constitution. When we talk about right to education, it should never mean that this right is conditional, like how far the familial financial conditions of a child support to his/her education. Right to education should purely mean that every child will have an equal access to education, irrespective of his/her financial and other conditions. The Right to Education Act was enacted by the Indian parliament on August 04, 2009, describing the modalities of free and compulsory education for children between 6 to 14 years of age (Ministry of Law and Justice, 2009). The time has come when government should relook at the Right to Education act, whereby the need is to take the concept of free education beyond the 14 years of age. In the light of this fact, the undergoing discussion is about how every child has equal right to access the resources and services of the nation and foremost the right to free education beyond 14 years of age.

Privatization of Higher Education

Privatization of higher education has more or less turned the education sector of the country into an industry, which has become money minting machine for those who run private educational institutes be they schools or higher education institutions. As on date nearly 40% universities in India are private and majority of these universities were established post NKC's hollow recommendations, which stressed on the need to establish 1500 universities in India by 2015 (National Knowledge Commission, 2009). At times it seems the recommendation was purely aimed to privatize the higher education sector of the country. This gets better corroborated by the fact that till 2006 there were only 27 private universities in the country, but as on date there are 356 private universities across the country, which means more

than 92% private universities have come up in the country after the constitution of National Knowledge Commission (University Grants Commission, 2020b). The role of private players in the expansion of higher education in India is being mainly witnessed in the areas of technical and professional education. Given the expenditure involved in pursuing a technical or a professional course, mostly the children belonging to upper middle class and upper class opt for such courses, while the children belonging to lower class and other economically & socially disadvantaged sections of the society continue to remain deprived of the benefits of expansion of higher education (Rani, 2004). The participation of private sector to shoulder the responsibility of higher education in these two areas is mainly because they find it lucrative. As per estimates, 34.8% colleges across India run only single programme and of these colleges 83.1% are private colleges and 38.1% of whom run B.Ed course only (Ministry of Human Resource Development, 2019). The expansion of higher education sector of India is being linked to the economic reforms of 1990, when the process for disinvestment started in India, and this era actually saw a woofing demand for higher education which ultimately resulted in participation of private players in the higher education sector of the country (Prakash, 2007).

The harsh reality is, in India, government owned and government run higher education institutions enjoy more reputation and prestige than private institutions and rightly so far imparting quality education. But, given the neo-liberal economic reforms which made inroads in the higher education sector of the county, there is a huge image building of private institutions as better educational institutions than the public institutions (Saunders, 2010). Still more, in the first place, majority of the students who attain good grades at senior secondary level prefer to get enrolled in these reputed government run institutions. Needless to mention that apart from providing quality education these government run universities and colleges charge very nominal fee, which still is one of the impelling criterions in India, no matter even if child belongs to a well to do family. By and large, majority of the children who obtain good rank in exams belong to general category and also come from good and well to do family backgrounds. While, a good number of children belonging to humble and poor family backgrounds obtain average score, with the result such children are somewhat forced to get enrolled

in private institutes for the want of limited seats in government run institutions. So in the name of provision of education by privatization somewhere the needy and poor children become the victims of private educational institutions, which rob them of their hard earned money in the name of fee and capitation. Devi, Maisnam and Panigraphi(2020) in their study observed that despite manifold expansion in the higher education system of the country especially the coming up of private institutions has only supplemented the system but has not helped in addressing the gap of provision of quality education (Devi et al., 2020). The researchers also observed that the institutions which are known for providing quality education are beyond the financial reach of the majority of the students of the country; hence the problem to provide affordable quality education continues to remain as it is.

Expansion of Higher Education

The expansion of higher education in the present day India can be linked to the recommendations of National Knowledge Commission Report, 2006-09, which in its report recommended establishment of around 1500 universities in India by 2015. As per UGC's 2005-06 annual report there were 355 universities in India and the number as on date has reached to 993 universities, which means a growth of more than 64% during the last 15 years. Accordingly, in 2005-06, there were 6109 colleges in the country and the number as on date has reached to 39931 colleges, which means a growth of around 85% in the establishment of new colleges during the last 15 years (Ministry of Human Resource Development, 2019; University Grants Commission, 2006). This phenomenal growth and expansion of higher education sector of the country is indeed a welcome step, but there is equally need to introspect some of the recommendations of NKC.

It took NKC nearly four years to submit its final report to the nation, but by no means, the recommendation of establishing 1500 universities by 2015 appeared sensible. Firstly it's been over a decade since the submission of recommendations, but India has yet to cross the 1000 universities mark, despite having exceeded the time lapse by almost five years. What is more shocking about this recommendation is, a good number of existing universities are running short of their actual enrolment capacity. Each year, the institutional administration of these universities expects to run capacity classrooms, but to their dismay

classes run empty despite offering fee cuts and other incentives to lure the students and parents. This gets corroborated by the UGC 2018-19 reports, which has specifically mentioned that 16.3% colleges across the country has enrolment less than 100 students, and mere 4% colleges are having enrolment more than 3000 students (Ministry of Human Resource Development, 2019). So, this arbitrary recommendation of huge expansion of higher education sector of the country doesn't augur well with the reputation of the team. The commission instead should have identified the areas across the length and breadth of the country to establish new universities, where these universities were needed the most. It would have also been ideal had the commission identified the areas to establish new degree colleges, but this report seemed evasive of such ground work.

As on date nearly 2.5% colleges offer Ph.D programmes and nearly 35% colleges offer PG programmes. Offering PG programmes at college level means more and more students would be able to pursue a post graduate degree, especially those potential students who for the want of limited number of PG seats in university departments used to either opt out or used to pursue it through distance mode. These PG programmes at college level are bound to improve the enrolment of students at PG level. More than 87 universities across India offer education through dual mode, viz. both distance and regular mode (UGC. New Delhi, 2019).

UGC's 2(F) and 12(B)

Keeping in view the social structure of the country and other limitations which are somewhere acting as an impediment in the schooling of children, government of India is putting in every effort to ensure that not even a single child is left behind without getting enrolled in school between the age group of 6 to 14 years and to ensure free and compulsory schooling of all children in the above age group, government came up with the constitutional guarantee by enacting the Right to Education Act 2009. But, when it comes to the higher education, somewhere same impediments are being overlooked by the University Grants Commission (UGC), the country's highest governing body to monitor the higher education by applying two different yard sticks to measure the same problem. As per UGC Act 1956, financial assistance is provided to all the eligible colleges recognized by the UGC under 2 (f)

and declared fit to receive central assistance (UGC grant) under section 12 (B) (University Grants Commission, 2020a).

The bigger question is, how is it that children enrolled in colleges not recognized by the UGC under section 2(f) or 12 (B) are not entitled to receive public finances to avail the benefits of public money as UGC recognized 2 (f) and 12 (B) colleges receive such grants and children enrolled therein avail all such benefits. One wonders, is it the newly established college which need more nurturing, protection and care to sustain the fits of times or those colleges which have established themselves over a period of time. The fact remains the time has come when governing bodies have to recognize the need, purpose and importance of children studying in these institutions and not the dead buildings and walls of an institution. All this somewhere reflects the sheer hypocrisy of the UGC, which still fail to see and recognize what they are supposed to recognize. The need is to understand that financial assistance should not be aimed to recognized buildings but to children enrolled in these institutions and reading in these buildings. Going by the present recognition practice of the UGC, then UGC recognizes only the children studying in UGC specified buildings and are entitled to receive financial assistance and does not recognize the children studying in non UGC specified buildings, hence are deprived of reaping the benefit of their own money, which they have trusted with UGC and other government bodies.

The time has come when UGC instead of waiting for proposal to come from the colleges to get recognized, have to be proactive by providing grants in anticipation to all such unrecognized colleges so as to enable them to match the standards of education and compete with other colleges and so should children be able to avail the benefit of services and other facilities provided to educational institutions on public money irrespective of institutional recognition and ranking, which is their fundamental right.

Free Access to Consortia Subscriptions

Consortia subscriptions in the Higher Educational Institutions has become the order of the day and rightly so given the numerous benefits which educational institutions are reaping. INFLIBNET, an Inter-University Centre of UGC at Ahmadabad is one such institution which is actively involved in acting as an intermediary in making consortia subscriptions for

Higher Education Institutions of India (INFLIBNET, 2020). The popularity of eShodhSindhu (eSS) among faculty members, research scholars, students and other staff members of higher education institutions across India is known to all and rightly so given the benefits the professionals of all these different strata's have reaped from eSS in past. In short, eShodhSindhu has written its own success story and has left an indelible mark on the research and scientific community of the country by making most of the research resources available and accessible to most of the researchers across the country.

The eShodhSindhu despite being the biggest success story in making the research material available to user community suffers from a range of problems, which in turn has started taking toll on the research health of a good number of institutions across the country. The biggest tragedy with eSS subscriptions is that a limited number of institutions are being provided eSS access and no uniformity & parity is being maintained in providing access to resources to two similar kinds of institutions. Central Institutes even with fewer courses are being provided access to a good number of databases, while as the state universities are being provided access to a limited number of databases for reasons better known to allocators and the criteria they follow while allocating such resources. Still more, what is most unfortunate is that only a select lot of institutions are being provided with access to e-resources subscribed by the INFLIBNET? Here again the need is to understand

that all such resources are being subscribed by using public money, which means each individual institution or for that matter each individual student has got right to access these e-resources. Again, if the criteria to allocate databases to institutions is not based on the need and requirement of students, but the reputation of an institution then again we are working on a one sided track, whereby attempt is being made to feed the overfed and let others to starve because they are used to starvation. There is a need to change all such practices once for all and we can't use two different yardsticks to measure the similar kind of problems.

Discussion

Finances act as a fodder for an institution to survive and thrive. Institutions run by government and its agencies are directly funded by the government using public money and those institutions run by private operators or by individuals generate revenue from their own resources and services and so holds true about private educational institutions, be they schools, colleges or even these days we can see a good number of private universities have come up to shoulder the responsibility of higher education sector of the country. The question arises, of the two what is more important, the educational institution or the children who study in these educational institutions and if children are important then where we draw this line that children enrolled in government run institutions are more privileged and the children enrolled in private institutions are lesser privileged to access public resources and avail benefits of public

Table-2: Some Key Areas where General Development Assistance is Provided to State Universities

S.No	Activity	S.No	Activity
1	Construction & Renovation of Buildings	13	Student Amenities including Hostels
2	Campus Development	14	Travel Grant
3	Staff	15	Conferences/Seminars/Symposia/Workshop
4	Books & Journals	16	Publication Grant
5	Laboratory Equipment & Infrastructure	17	Appointment Visiting Professor/Visiting Fellows
6	Annual Maintenance Contract	18	Establishment of Career & Counseling Cell
7	Innovative Research Activities	19	Day Care Center
8	University Industry linkages	20	Basic Facilities for Women
9	Extension Activities	21	Faculty Development Programme
10	Cultural Activities	22	ENCORE
11	Development of ICT	23	Human Rights and Duties Education
12	Health Care	24	Appointment/Honorarium of Guest Part time Teachers
		25	Non Net fellowship to Students

finances. How is it that government is spending public money worth crores of rupees on the education of children enrolled in government institutions and not a single penny is being spent on the education of children enrolled in private institutions, when they have equal and every right to benefit from public money. And to do away with such existing disparity, the government in the first place has to extend all such grants to private institutions as well and then only the children studying in all such institutions will get benefitted, which impliedly also means that somewhere the government has to completely own the education sector of the country to make every child beneficiary of the central schemes.

Researchers in the past have also raised concerns towards the disproportionate distribution of funds by the government and its agencies to the higher educational institutions which badly affect their performance and efficiency. Chattopadhyay in his write-up argues that maintaining publicness of higher educational institutions is must and public funding should be the most preferred sources of their sustenance (Chattopadhyay, 2020). The researcher has made his argument in the light of agitations raised by students against the proposed fee hike in Jawaharlal Nehru University, which most of the countrymen disagree with, given the meager tuition fee and hostel rent charged from the JNU students. There is a need to present a holistic look towards the problem and not to look at the problem through the prism of one's individual problems. Various committees and commissions in the past have suggested that government of India should spend at least 6% of the country's GDP on the education sector of the country, but unfortunately during the successive governments, the spending on the education sector of the country remained within 3% to 4% of the GDP. Apart from ensuring food security of each individual citizen of the country, education and health are the two sectors of the country which should be completely state controlled and be provided free to all the citizens of the country, of course by working out a sustainable mechanism.

In 2018, University Grants Commission, New Delhi granted absolute autonomy to 60 higher education institutions, which apart from 58 state, central, deemed and private universities included 08 autonomous colleges (Javadekar, 2018). The autonomy granted to these institutions is being seen as a step further in the direction of privatization of higher education. Any

additional activity undertaken by these institutions in terms of expansion is to be met out by these institutions from their own resources as no additional funds will be allocated to these institutions by the state for undertaking such activities.

The nation, making impartial equity in education is bound to reap better dividends both in terms of quality and quantity. In terms of quantity, the horizon of education can be broadened to reach out to all those to whom hitherto education remained unreached and all this cannot be achieved by mere promises. Government and its agencies have to ensure and earmark sufficient and proportionate distribution of public money to educational institutions at all levels irrespective of their social standing vis-à-vis ranking on the spectrum of the country's higher education sector. The time has come when the government of India has to almost double the GDP spending on the education sector of the country from its present spending of 3 to 4%.

The existing step motherly treatment in allocating funds to the state government run institutions is not only acting as an impediment in the path of imparting quality education but is also denying children of their due share of public finances which they deserve to be spend on their education. If India has to work on the lines of making the nation as a knowledge driven society then each child must get his/her share of investment on his/her education.

The children studying in the reputed institutes and the children studying in lesser-known state government run institutes contribute equally to the nation building, as such any existing disparity in terms of allocation of resources in the form of public money should be immediately done away with and equitable spending be ensured on the education of one and all. Every citizen of the country is a tax payer, so is government bound to spend a proportionate amount of money on the education of each child. The children studying in lesser-known institutions are as good nationalists and citizens of the country as are children studying in any reputed institution of the country.

Conclusion

Modern day education has become a costly affair and thereon if the government and its agencies do not distribute funds to educational institutions in proportion is bound to raise questions over the disproportionate distribution of funds by the government and its agencies to institutions that deserve to be measured with a same yardstick, without any step motherly treatment. Children with limited or no resources of

their own aspiring to pursue higher education should be encouraged and it should be the responsibility of the Government to support every such child by all possible means from every possible side. Providing support of such sort will serve the true essence and meaning to Right to Education.

The revenue generated by the government through various means including direct and indirect taxes is a public money, which the government spends on the welfare and developmental activities of general public and education being one of them. The need is to understand that every child even the one not enrolled in a school has equal and every right to avail all such services and facilities which students avail and enjoy in institutions of national repute run by the government on public money. Each individual contributes to nation building equally from his/her respective position and no contribution can be undermined as less or be rated as more, in the same way each individual has equal right on the resources and services of his/her country, irrespective of one's social standing. Given the fact, Ministry of Education, government of India should ensure that every student across the length and breadth of the country has access to all such services and facilities, which are being availed and provided on public money including consortia subscriptions.

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Let's Break Barriers and Innovate for Future

Prabhakar Raghavan, Senior Vice President, Google delivered the Convocation Address at the 8th Convocation Ceremony of Indian Institute of Technology Patna on August 26, 2021. He said, "To this day, I remain inspired by the core promise of search - knowledge - and its ability to uplift the human condition. Just think. Two decades ago, the Web's information was the equivalent of a single library. But today, the Web houses more information than all of the libraries in the world combined. And what's more, it brings that information right to people's fingertips. Now, you can point your camera at a street sign in a different language and have it translated aloud. Or you can get walking directions in augmented reality. Or you can find COVID testing sites near you in an instant...And while all these things are possible today, there are a myriad of challenges still to be explored. In fact, we spend a great deal of time thinking about how to provide high quality answers to questions that haven't even been asked yet. So as you head into this next chapter of your life, pursue the ever-evolving, seemingly unsolvable problems. When you do that in pursuit of changing the world, you will change it for the better." Excerpts

Good morning everyone. It is a great pleasure and privilege to be speaking with you today. I want, first and foremost, to offer my heartfelt congratulations to the Indian Institute of Technology Patna graduating students of the 2020 and 2021 batches! It is an honor to join you for the eighth Convocation of IIT Patna.

I would also like to congratulate and acknowledge the proud parents, guardians, family, friends, and mentors who helped make this auspicious day possible. I want to extend my deepest gratitude to the Chairman of the Board of Governors of the IIT Patna Dr. Anand Deshpande, Distinguished members of the Board of Governors, Director of the Institute Prof. Pramod Kumar Jain, Members of the Academic Senate, and Members of the Faculty and Staff.

I certainly never imagined I'd be giving a convocation speech from Google's headquarters in California, nearly eight thousand miles away from Patna. And I'm equally certain this isn't the commencement ceremony that you all imagined for 2021. While I wish that you could all be together celebrating safely on campus, I'm honored and grateful for the opportunity to address you from afar, and I am so impressed by your resilience despite the adversities of the past year. I am also certain that the friendships that you've made among your cohort have helped sustain your spirit, and I hope that these are connections you will keep for a lifetime.

IITs are world-renowned for producing incredible technologists and engineers, and one of the most remarkable things about studying at an IIT is being surrounded by some of India's most brilliant minds.

To this day, I am still in touch with my graduating class from IIT Madras. We have a Whatsapp group

that is quite active, and this past year has brought even more meaningful connections. We saw many messages exchanged among former classmates helping one another — organizing mask deliveries, respirators and oxygen supplies to those in need. I will always be indebted to IIT for creating enduring relationships and life skills like these.

Now... as you all know, Patna is very close to the ancient capital where Siddhartha became an ascetic, eventually becoming the Gautama Buddha. While I can't promise a similarly transcendent experience over the next 20 minutes, I'll try to make it worth your time. When I first spoke with Dr. Deshpande and Professor Jain, they told me that I'm the first convocation speaker for IIT Patna to represent the tech industry. I was humbled... what an honor! It also made me smile for another reason. You see, 40 years ago, almost to this very day, I too was graduating from IIT. And at that time, I never thought I'd end up in tech...or in any industry at all!

I planned to be teaching at a university – and for many years, I essentially did. I could have easily spent my entire life as an academic and never made the jump to industry. But today, I lead a team of over twenty thousand talented colleagues responsible for many of Google's information products, including Google Search and Google Maps - services I hope you all love. That's a far cry from some of my early work, watching silicon chips bake, alone in a corner of a lab... You might be wondering how I got from that sterile lab to this Google office. I wish I could tell you that I got here by being brave, or bold, or throwing caution to the wind, by intentionally taking big risks. But it wouldn't be true.

Taking a step back to reflect, I realize now that my mindset was simply just to look for the next hard problem to solve. Every time that I solved a hard problem, I moved onto a more difficult one. Over and over again. But as I moved through life, with each of these choices, I also started to go beyond certain limits that I had imposed on myself. That brings me to what I want to talk about today: limits. We all face limits – whether they’re ones that we place on ourselves, that society places on us, or even the limitations of our own understanding. Staying within those guardrails is often the easiest path to take. But with the gift of time, I can say this: When we work to push beyond those limits... When we instead chase problems with purpose... When we refute others’ expectations of us... That’s when magic happens. This idea - the idea of reimagining limits - has shaped the course of my life.

It goes back to before I was even born, back to my family and in particular, my mother. My mom trained to be a physicist. But before she studied physics, she was a young girl with a question. One day she was helping wash dishes, and she asked: “Why does water stick to your hands instead of sliding off?”

Her grandfather, my great-grandfather, heard her curiosity and recognized her potential. At a time when it was not commonplace for women to pursue higher education, to his credit, he encouraged her to learn more about science and go on to study at university. My mom was one of just three women in her graduating class at a university in Chennai. She got her Masters in Physics, and went on to teach high school. But of course that was not without its challenges. And even though we’re now in a different time, we all recognize that societal limitations still persist for many. Quite simply, the world does not extend the same possibilities to everyone.

That’s why it would be foolish for me to talk to you today about limitations without first acknowledging that there are some that cannot be shattered alone. In my own example, my great-grandfather encouraged my mom to pursue her passion. My mom and dad supported one another, and helped pave the path for me and my sister, who’s also an engineer. And you can imagine, this will continue on. My family experience illustrates something we all know: it often takes more than one person to drive change. We all have that power and responsibility. So I ask you, graduates, as you go out into the world, please consider the unseen barriers facing others around you, and how you can do your part. You’ll be surprised at how much change each of you can bring about.

This idea of limits came into play during another pivotal moment in my life, when I was right around your age. Earlier, I mentioned that I had planned to be an academic. After graduating from IIT Madras, I moved to the States to pursue my PhD in semiconductor engineering. I thought I had it all figured out.

For many reasons – mostly those in my own mind – my future felt fairly predetermined. Having come from a family of academics and teachers, it had long been imparted to me that academia and the pursuit of knowledge was the most noble profession. So to me, my path forward was pretty clear: Get my PhD, become a professor, make novel contributions to science... hopefully! And for the rest of my life, devote myself to the higher calling of knowledge and education.

I was not unhappy with this. I was content enough with the path that I had laid out before myself. But there were plot twists along the way. When I got to Berkeley to begin my PhD, some of my excessive self restraint started to crack. The first sign of this was that I started to sit in on some humanities classes – subjects I hadn’t studied since high school. I was re-reading poetry, studying Shakespeare. (By the way, Julius Caesar and Hamlet are better than a management course, if you want to learn how not to lead.)

And, in the course of pursuing my PhD, I changed my specialization four times. I tried my hand at semiconductors, then computer-aided design, then computer architecture, finally landing on the theory of computation. Every change felt like a fairly radical shift. I tried out each field for a couple of semesters before moving on to what seemed like a bigger challenge. I eventually settled on the mathematics of computing for its beauty and depth, and got back on the path to academia. Just as planned. As graduation neared, I began to apply for faculty positions. Just as planned.

But right before graduation, I made another unexpected turn. My friends were all interviewing for industry jobs and told me I should give it a try. Talk about peer pressure. On a whim, I accepted an interview at IBM – despite having never held a ‘real job’ before. I didn’t even have a suit of my own. I borrowed one from a friend! The arms and legs were too short, the shoulders too tight. Today, no one would dare to show up for an interview in tech in a suit and tie – let alone, an ill-fitting one — but hey, it was the ‘80s. And word of advice – if you ever interview at Google, no need to borrow a suit – we might think you got lost on your way to a different interview. A t-shirt or hoodie will do just fine. During that interview, I saw a whole different potential path for my career. I realized that – while I

had always thought the noblest cause was academia – I could still pursue science in the private sector, and maybe even at a faster pace. So I took a second look at my plan... to become a professor, to pursue knowledge for knowledge's sake. And I tossed it out... just two months before I finished my PhD! I moved into industry, where I've had a long career, and I now have the privilege of working on products and businesses that reach billions of people. But, interestingly, over the past few decades, my work hasn't been confined to industry alone.

I've also worked with the research community, moonlit as an adjunct professor for over fifteen years, and written two computer science textbooks. My point is this: sometimes, we impose limitations on ourselves.

We think we can only do one thing: just academia, or just startups. But what I've seen along my journey is something that people rarely tell you, especially when you're first starting out... You don't need to do just one thing. You don't need to be just one thing. Never think that just because you're getting a degree in a certain major today, or taking on your first job in a particular field or at a particular company, that it defines you for life. You will evolve and adapt over time - so that first choice you make isn't the end-all.

Your future isn't limited by these things. And that's good. Your future might even be changed by a speech you hear on the radio! At least, mine was. That brings me to my next story.

This was in the '90s. I had two young kids at the time, and they and their friends were obsessed with Pokemon (the first time it was cool!) and Blockbuster Video. But my work colleagues were obsessed with this new thing called Mosaic, the first graphical Web browser. I was driving home one evening when I heard a speech on the radio by the developer of Mosaic, Marc Andreessen. He shared his wild hypothesis that the Internet was going to go far beyond information foraging. It was going to be so much more than a set of pages you browse through... It was going to be the engine of the economy. His bold prediction struck a note with me, so when I got back to the office the next morning, I turned to my team at the time, and I said: "Hey, we're going to work on Web Search".

Back then, Search was horribly broken... you'd be lucky to get what you were looking for after a dozen query attempts! Still, I thought it was amazing that people had access to so much information about virtually anything.

As I began to explore the Search problem more deeply, I realized something. The search for knowledge is a cognitive need that isn't subject to computational limits. You could have all the computers in the world, and still, you might not build a better search engine. This blew my mind. And so, my team and I pursued search algorithms that presumed that we had infinite computing – we cast off our limits – and ended up with search that worked better, even if it was slow.

To this day, I remain inspired by the core promise of search - knowledge - and its ability to uplift the human condition. Just think. Two decades ago, the Web's information was the equivalent of a single library. But today, the Web houses more information than all of the libraries in the world combined.

And what's more, it brings that information right to people's fingertips. Now, you can point your camera at a street sign in a different language and have it translated aloud. Or you can get walking directions in augmented reality. Or you can find COVID testing sites near you in an instant... And while all these things are possible today, there are a myriad of challenges still to be explored. In fact, we spend a great deal of time thinking about how to provide high quality answers to questions that haven't even been asked yet. So as you head into this next chapter of your life, pursue the ever-evolving, seemingly unsolvable problems. When you do that in pursuit of changing the world, you will change it for the better.

Today, we talked about limits, about the ones that others put on you, that you put on yourself, or that you might face in your quest for knowledge. So before I go, I want to share a quote from Buddha, given Patna's sacred history: "The mind that perceives the limitation is the limitation."

Aha! I could have given you a few minutes of your time back. Buddha summed it up perfectly. Except, I have to be honest. I searched for Buddha quotes on Google, and this came up as a top result for me. Alas, a different search debunked it. Thank you, Fakebuddhaquotes.com. Like I said, search is never going to be a solved problem. Still, even in a fake Buddha quote, there's a great deal of wisdom. "The mind that perceives the limitation is the limitation." So, let's break barriers, open up possibilities, and innovate for the future. If you take anything away from today, I hope you take this: Dare to defy limits, IIT Patna graduates, and you will do incredible things. Just imagine what you can do to change the world when you refuse to let limits hold you back.

Congratulations, and thank you for your time. Here's to a very bright future ahead! □

COMMUNICATION

Anomalies in Interpretation of UGC Regulation–2018 for Promotion under the Career Advancement Scheme

Manoj Kumar Rai* and Naveen K Sharma**

There has been serious confusion on various provisions of the UGC (*Minimum Qualifications for Appointment of Teachers and other Academic Staff in Universities and Colleges and other Measures for the Maintenance of Standards in Higher Education*) Regulations 2018, for counting of the past services, be regular or temporary, of an incumbent faculty seeking promotion under the Career Advance Scheme (CAS). Far from settling the already clouded issue, self-serving explanation of the university administrators emboldened by the strategic silence of the UGC has rendered these provisions subjective rather than objective and clearly defined set of rules, allowing manipulation and misinterpretation. Consequently, administrative favoritism and willful delay in timely promotion of the faculties has become new normal. The clause 10(a-g) of the Regulations contains provisions for counting the past regular [10 (a-e)] as well as Ad hoc, contractual or temporary services [10f (i-iii)] of an incumbent faculty, without discriminating on the nature of management of the institution where previous service was rendered (private/local body/ Government (sub-clause 10g). Here, we pinpoint some of the clauses pertaining to CAS promotion that are constantly causing confusion and subject to various degree of misinterpretation.

We begin with a reminder that promotion under CAS is basically to safeguard the democratic right to promotion of an in-service employee, and is available in all sectors not to education sector only. Thus, there is an inherent difference between both modes of recruitments i.e., direct recruitment is for fresh appointments, while CAS is for old entrants. The later one is a sequential process, facilitating promotion from one academic grade pay (AGP) or stage/academic level

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(i.e., AL10- 14) to the next, subject to the fulfillment of the eligibilities mentioned in the regulations. The most important criterion is of the required length of service in the particular AGP/AL, which is a mandatory, without any leap over. The old AGP (or stage) system of the 6th Pay Commission has now been replaced by the term ‘academic level’ (AL10, 11, 12, 13 A, 14 & 15) in the 7th Pay Commission.

The UGC has framed a couple of such regulations in the past (e.g., UGC regulations 2000 and 2010), further amended as and when needed. Thus, suitability of the past services to be counted for promotion under CAS shall be decided by the then existing UGC Regulations, unless otherwise notified by the UGC. The most obvious criterion to delineate past services for counting is that, any pre-qualification service experience cannot be must considered and counted for. As Regulations 2018 states “*The essential qualifications of the post held were not lower than the qualifications prescribed by the UGC for Assistant Professor, Associate Professor and Professor, as the case may be*” [10a & 10f(i)].

Counting of Past Services Rendered at Previous Higher Education Institutions (HEIs)

Sub-clause V of the clause 6.3 of the regulations 2018 states “*for the promotion under the CAS, the applicant teacher must be in the role, and in active service of the University/College on the date of consideration by the Selection Committee.*” This essentially raises two mutually inclusive questions regarding the date of consideration and length of the past services that could be counted for.

Let us assume a situation that is often encountered by the HEIs - what if a faculty joins the new HEI through direct recruitment quota at lower academic level to that held by him at previous institution, and request for immediate promotion under the CAS, based on the length of past services rendered by him previously. In a communiqué-dated

19.09.2018 to the Babasaheb Bhimrao Ambedkar University (BBAU), Lucknow *vide* letter no. F.No. 49-6/2012 (CU), the UGC clarifies- *“When a person holding higher post applies for a lower post at his or her own against direct recruitment quota, s/he has no right to claim benefits of higher post previously held by him/her for promotion etc.”*

Thereby, forfeiting the claim of such faculty for promotion-related benefits based on past services rendered in higher grade at his/her previous institution(s). Simultaneously, the UGC Regulations also empower an incumbent faculty to the benefits of promotion based on his/her past services, upon due compliance to the other criteria mentioned therein. Hence, the new institution is bound to consider such promotion request of the faculty. In my opinion, in all such cases, length of such service shall have limited meaning, and the claimant(s) shall have only one promotion that to the next available level, to that of his/her joining level. My arguments are as hereunder.

Firstly, as stated above by the UGC, a faculty joining a new University as Assistant Professor in AGP 6000/-(i.e., academic level 10), in principle has consciously accepted the AGP/AL10 offered to him, subsequent upon, no matter whatsoever the length of service rendered by him in his/her previous institutions, shall enable him for promotion to the next available level i.e., AGP 7000/-(i.e., AL 11) in the same pay band (single promotional benefit). Request for further promotion under CAS to higher AGP/AL levels (beyond AGP 7000/ or, AL 11) in the same pay band or, to the next pay band (Associate Professor or Professor; AL 13A, 14 & 15) on the ground of excess length of service, if accepted, shall be ethically and technically arduous. As, two consecutive CAS promotions shall violate the clause 6.3 V of the regulations, which states - a teacher should be on role and in active service of the institution on the date of consideration by the ‘screening cum evaluation committee’ or ‘screening cum selection committee’ as the case may be. Suppose, a faculty joins new institution through direct recruitment in AL 10 (AGP 6000) on 05th October 2020, having more than four years of past service experience, after regularization (i.e., successful completion of the probation period), s/he could be promoted to the next available level (AGP 7000 or AL 11) on 06th October 2020 (the next date to his/her joining the new institution), not before that. Further, attempt to promote him in AGP 8000

or AL 12, shall automatically shift his/her previous date of promotion prior to 05th October 2020 (i.e., 05th October 2020), the time when s/he was not in the service of the institution.

The best possible solution to the above problem is getting the promotion done through the selection committee at the time of interview. As, appointment to the upper AGP in the same pay band (i.e., AGP 7000 & 8000/-) or ALs is a prerogative of the concerned selection committee. Faculties who had already served excess length of service over that is required for a particular AL, should put their case before the selection committee at the time of interview, as being followed by the NITs, IITs and IIMs. Unless explicitly recommended by the concerned selection committee for appointment to higher AGPs/ALs, such faculty forfeits his/her claim for immediate CAS promotion beyond the next available AGP/AL.

Secondly, to ensure promotion to higher AL s/he has to serve out the required length of service at his/her new institution. As, regulations are very categorical about the importance of – cadre, pay band and required length of service in a particular AGP or, AL at the time of joining of a new institution. Here it will be pertinent to mention that faculty with excess length of past services, should get themselves promoted at his previous institutions, and request for pay protection (without AGP protection) at the newly joined institution, which is accepted and followed in every HEIs in the country.

Ethically also, the essential qualification for the post to which a teacher was selected through direct requirement, and the one for which promotion is sought varies. It is quite possible that a teacher might not have requisite qualification for the higher post intended through CAS promotion, if the same has been advertised through direct recruitment. Hence, this practice may open up a via media platform for dubious and inferior recruitment. Even in CAS, besides minimum academic qualifications, promotion is subject to a teacher’s performance in the class evaluated in form of annual self –appraisal reports (APAR), which would not be available for those coming from postdoctoral experience and other means. Further, the above-discussed promotion has to be rolled out at entry level only, and shall only be entertained upon the successful completion of probation period, which has to be included and counted in for promotion.

Counting of Services Differing in Nature Counting of Regular Service

There is much clarity on counting of regular past services rendered as Assistant Professor, Associate Professor or Professor in equivalent grade at national or international HEIs. However, the onus to provide grade equivalency proof should be on the concerned institutions, including foreign universities and colleges, international and national laboratories or other scientific/professional organizations such as the CSIR, ICAR, DRDO, UGC, ICSSR, ICHR, ICMR and DBT, etc.

Counting of Ad Hoc/Contractual/Temporary Services

Since, promotion under CAS is for faculties who are already in service (having a career), thus only relevant service experience should be counted, not unrelated experience or work experience of similar nature. The recent circular by Delhi and Pondicherry Universities for counting of postdoctoral experience from selected institutions (falling within or up to 500 global rankings), for CAS promotion is flawed. As, the choice of institution is biased (why global rankings only not NIRF), and the suggested criterion is more inclined and likely to favor science and technology disciplines. It also undermines Indian institutions, treating them unfavorably and inferior based on narrow ranking criteria, is a mistake. The approach adopted by the ranking agencies is a highly contested issue, and is under refinement. Therefore, status of institutions may change each year, making over-laid promotion criteria further complicated.

While counting the contractual/temporary services, couple of days break (up to a week) between the continuing semesters should be considered as 'technical break'. They must not be used to the prejudice of employee, appointed on permanent basis. In recent times, the landscape of Indian higher education is changing rapidly. Private institutions are rising in national rankings, and are likely to be the forces reckon in days to come. The long-held belief of private HEIs being inferior to their government counterpart is waning fast. A majority of private institutions (to save money), and government institutions (to avoid the permanency claim), tends to introduce such breaks in temporary or contractual services. Further, with New Pension Scheme (NPS) on board, such promotions have no financial implications.

The postdoctoral fellowships (PDFs) are contractual positions to advance the research in a

particular field, and cannot be equated with a broad-based activity like teaching. They most certainly do not qualify to be considered as a 'service' for counting as past service experience. Promotion under CAS is an avenue available only to in-service teachers, not new entrant.

Equal Gross Emoluments of Faculties

The sub-clause (iii) of the 10 f states that in order to his/her services counted for promotion "*The incumbent was drawing total gross emoluments not less than the monthly gross salary of a regularly appointed Assistant Professor, Associate Professor and Professor, as the case may be*"

The clause is not only unrealistic but untenable also. Education is a subject of concurrent list, with states government having a decisive control over many aspects of it. The UGC (say central government) cannot force state governments to adopt its recommendations *in toto*, especially where finances are involved. This is a reason why despite UGC's regulatory power, there are different pay scales offered by different state governments to their employees. Certain state governments are still offering salaries as per 5th pay commission to Assistant professor/Associate Professor/Professor. So, despite holding same post salaries may vary. Furthermore, due to variable allowances, the gross emolument of a same cadre employee may vary within the same district, and as per nature of employer – central government, state government and private organization. The proposed pay bands by UGC refer to basic pay structure excluding allowances, which vary from state to state, hill to plain, scheduled to non-scheduled areas. Thus, the said parity should be in basic salary not gross emoluments. Further, considering the different prevailing pay structures in the country, parity should be decided as per the then existing basic salary structure. To make justful comparisons, a teacher should be asked to produce last withdrawn salary slip, Form 16 and ITR filled for the duration as a proof.

References

1. The University Grants Commission (*Minimum Qualifications for Appointment of Teachers and other Academic Staff in Universities and Colleges and other Measures for the Maintenance of Standards in Higher Education*) Regulations 2018, available at <http://www.ugc.ac.in>
2. UGC letter no. F.No. 49-6/2012 (CU), dt 19.9.2018

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CAMPUS NEWS

ISAGA 2021

The 52nd Annual Conference of the International Simulation and Gaming Association (ISAGA) was organized by the Shri Vaishnav Vidyapeeth Vishwavidyalaya, Indore online from September 06 to 10, 2021. More than 50 delegates participated from the different countries like Japan, Sweden, The Netherlands, Australia, New Zealand, Poland, Malaysia, Thailand, Italy, France, Russia, Germany, The Queensland, and United Kingdoms. ISAGA 2021 received papers, posters and workshops in GS. It was focused on innovation to develop new processes to solve recurrent nagging problems via GS. Social challenges such as the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) identified by the UNDP was addressed in the Conference. Innovative ideas were presented in education and training, policy-making and governance, decision making, raising awareness with the use of simulation games and gamification. Contributions were also focused on a wide range of themes related to theory, research and practice in the field of gaming and simulation.

The inaugural session started with opening remarks of the conference were delivered by Dr. Upinder Dhar, where he welcomed all the guests to the conference. He started his speech with a brief about gaming and simulation. Then he explained the various types of innovations like Product Innovation, Process Innovation, Radical or Disruptive innovation, and Incremental innovation to solve complex problems. The welcome address was delivered by Shri Purushottamdas Pasari, Chancellor of SVVV, where he briefed about Shri Vaishnav Group of Trusts, which is recognized for its services and activities for the social upliftment of people of all classes and every walk of life. Currently, 25 educational and social organizations with more than 22,000 students are functioning under the aegis of Shri Vaishnav Trusts.

Dr. Sebastiaan Meijer, Immediate Past Chairperson - ISAGA EB and Professor, Vice Dean, KTH Royal Institute of Technology, Stockholm, Sweden congratulated all the organizers and put light on simulation and gaming scenarios. Dr. Heide Lukoch, Chairperson - ISAGA EB and Head of Applied Immersive Gaming Initiative, University of Canterbury, Christchurch, New Zealand appreciated

the hard work and commitment of Dr. Upinder Dhar and the organizing committee in making this conference successful in this pandemic situation. She also said that games can be helpful in solving complex problems.

The booklet on webinar series “*Pratiti ... become aware*” and the ISAGA Conference souvenir “*Parishisht ...the essence*” were virtually released by the chief guest, Dr. Sivasailam Thiagarajan.

Dr. Jigyasu Dubey, Coordinator, ISAGA 2021, read the citation of Dr. Sivasailam Thiagarajan and Shri Purushottamdas Pasari and Dr. Upinder Dhar jointly presented the citation to Dr. Sivasailam Thiagarajan.

In Keynote address, the chief guest of the conference, Dr. Sivasailam Thiagarajan, shared the Secrets of Effective and Engaging Games and Simulations for the facilitators. He shared powerful guidelines to conduct training on teambuilding that will produce engaging interaction and effective results. Many of these guidelines will challenge the conventional wisdom in game design and delivery. Vote of thanks for the Inaugural Session was delivered by Dr. Vinod Dumblekar, Coordinator, ISAGA-2021.

After the inaugural session a special session was organized in Remembrance of Late Dr. Songsri Soranastaporn, Thai Simulation and Gaming Association. The speakers in this brief session remembered Late Dr. Songsri Soranastaporn for her contributions and prayed for peace of departed soul. Dr. Upinder Dhar, Dr. Elysebaath Leigh, Dr. Natthapong Chanyoo, Dr. Natsarun Leesirisearn, Ms Panida Nootawee, Dr. Panicha Nitisakunwut, Dr. Pongchai Dumrongrojwatthana, Dr. Vinod Dumblekar were Participated in the session.

Dr. Santosh Dhar, Dean, Faculty of Doctoral Studies & Research-SVVV, Indore-India, was the session Chair in the technical session -1. In this Session 08 research papers were presented by participants. The first workshop was conducted by Dr. Ryoju Hamada, Tomomi Kaneko, and Masahiro Hiji from the JAPAN on Effectiveness of Intensive Gaming Contest. The Second workshop was conducted by Simon Tiemersma, Doris Boschma, Maria Freese on topic Gameplay of the serious Cards for Biosafety

game. The Day one of the conference ended with the ISAGA Assembly Meeting-I.

The Second day of ISAGA 2021 started with the Keynote speech by Dr. Sebastiaan Meijer (Professor, Vice Dean, KTH Royal Institute of Technology, Stockholm, Sweden) on Gaming as a Frame for a New Era of Systems Science. In this talk, he connected audience with some of the classic gaming theories to more recent insights in policymaking and systems theory. An emergent proposition is that gaming as a simulation and participation paradigm could become the integrative framework to convert fragmented evidence into real world impact. This was followed by Plenary Session-1. The Plenary Session was chaired by Dr. Heide Lukosch (Associate Professor, Head of the Applied Immersive Gaming Initiative, University of Canterbury, Christchurch, New Zealand). First Speaker in the session was Dr. Toshiko Kikkawa (Professor, Keio University, Tokyo, Japan) and She talked on Simulation & Gaming: Past, Present and Future.

Dr. Ramesh Sharma (Ambedkar University, New Delhi, India) was the second speaker and He deliberated on Gamified Framework for Educational Simulations in STEM Courses. The last speaker of the session was Mr. Jegatheeswaran Manoharan (Catalyst, Consultant, and Business Simulation Designer, Selango, Malaysia) and he spoke on Framework for Testing Simulations for Better Empathy in Design. After the Plenary Session technical session 2 take placed which was chaired by Dr. Rajeev Shukla, Director SVSM-SVVV, Indore. In this session 08 research papers were presented.

Two workshops were also conducted in parallel. One workshop was conducted by Dr. Pieter van der Hijden, Management Consultant, Sofos Consultancy, Amsterdam, The Netherlands on topic "How to Align Your Organization with the UN Sustainable Development Goals". The second workshop was conducted by Dr. Birgit Zuern, DHBW Stuttgart University of Cooperative Education, Germany; Dr. Maria Freese, TU Delft, The Netherlands, Dr. Elysabeth Leigh, University of Technology Sydney, Australia, Dr. Elena Likhacheva, Faculty of Biology, Lomonosov Moscow State University, Russian Federation on "Intercultural Comparison of Facilitating Simulation Games". The day two ended with virtual tour of India.

The third Day started with the Keynote speech of Mr. Vishwas Parchure, Director, Experiential

Leadership Institute Pune, Maharashtra, India on topic "Designing experiences for the transfer of learning". The Plenary session was chaired by Dr. Vinod Dumblekar, Founder and CEO, MANTIS, New Delhi, India. First speaker of the session was Dr. J. Tuomas Harviainen, Associate Professor of Information Practices, Tampere University, Finland and he spoke on Five Decades of ISAGA and Sustainability: From Education to Innovation.

Dr. Karen Blackmore, Associate Professor, Information Technology, University of Newcastle, Australia was the second speaker and her topic was More Than We Think: The Power of Simulation and Technology to Deliver Learning. The third speaker in the session was Dr. Elena Likhacheva, Researcher - the Biological Department, M.V. Lomonosov Moscow State University, Russia and her deliberation was on Simulation & Gaming: Understanding Ourselves. The technical session 3 was chaired by Dr. K. N. Guruprasad, Director, Shri Vaishnav Institute of Science, SVVV, Indore and total six research papers were presented.

On the third day two workshops also conducted in parallel. The first Workshop was conducted on "Mission Everest: A Virtual Simulation for High Performance Teams" by the team of Dr. Ami Kotak and Dr. Himani Chandorkar, Etude360, India. The second workshop was conducted by Dr. Pieter van der Hijden, Management Consultant, Sofos Consultancy, Amsterdam, The Netherlands on topic "How to Involve Your Organization in Tendering Procedures for SDG Projects". The Day 3 ends with cultural event presented by the University students.

The Day 4 started with the Keynote on Blockchain in the Gaming Industry and deliberation given by the Shri Anuj Garg, Innovation Leader, IAM, Global Technology Services, IBM – India. According to him Blockchain could establish norms and fairness around in-game currency and asset trading and tie them to the real world in sensible ways. The Plenary Session was Chaired by Dr. Paola Rizzi, Professor of Techniques of Urban and Regional Planning at University of Sassari, Italy. The first speaker Marieke de Wijse-Van Heeswijk, Radboud University Nijmegen, Management Sciences, Section Intervention Methodology, The Netherlands talks about Effects of Learning Interventions in Simulation Games.

Dr. Christine Goonrey, Writer and community volunteer, Australia described the Scenarios that

Create Memorable Engagement in her talk. The third Speaker was Mr. Bharath M Palavalli, Co-Founder at Fields of View and Ashoka Fellow, India and he spoke on Is Culture Important to Design Simulation Games?. The technical session 4 was chaired by Dr. George Thomas, Director, Shri Vaishanv Institute of Management, Indore, India and total 07 research papers were presented in the session.

Two workshops also conducted in parallel. One workshop was conducted by George Francis Simons, GSI, France on Diversicaste-RACE-SHUN: Addressing Toxic Masculinity. The team of Elizabeth Tipton, Elysabeth Leigh, Birgit Zürn, Marieke de Wijse, Elena Likhacheva, and Richard conducted the workshop on Evaluation and Measurement in Simulation Games. The day ends with ISAGA Assembly Meeting -II.

The Last day started with two parallel workshops. The one workshop was on The Online Game – Free, Friendly and Fun conducted by Vinod Dumblekar, Founder and CEO, MANTIS, New Delhi, India. The Other workshop was conducted by the team of Jagoda Gandziarowska-Ziolecka, Joanna Średnicka, Filip Tomaszewski, Nathan Berry from IPGS Pracownia Gier Szkoleniowych, Poland on The Collectors-A Game Based Workshop on Virtual Teams Collaboration.

This was followed by the Roundtable on the Gaming, Simulation and Innovations: Challenges and Opportunities. The Moderator of the session was Dr. Upinder Dhar and speakers are Dr. Elysabeth Leigh, University of Technology Sydney, Australia; Dr. Willy Kriz, Professor, University of Applied Sciences Vorarlberg, Department of Management and Social Sciences Hochschulstr, Dornbirn, Austria; Dr. Bhimaraya Metri, Director, IIM Nagpur, India; and Bharath M Palavalli, Co-Founder at Fields of View and Ashoka Fellow, Bangalore. After the opening remarks by the moderator, discussion was held on:

- Global interconnections are expanding, while cultures persist as the causal factor creating boundaries. Simulations help us learn about, and how to manage, intersections and boundaries among social, political and knowledge domains.
- The accelerated demand for virtual engagement models forces us to rethink data collection and validation processes, and the hard lines drawn between physical, digital and mixed-medium games.
- New technical innovations with big data, AI, virtual reality, social media & fake news, real-

time scenarios, immersive video-gaming etc. make games even more “real” and the user/player even more vulnerable to be manipulated.

Valedictory session started by presenting the report of conference by Dr. Jigyasu Dubey, Coordinator ISAGA 2021. Dr. Upinder Dhar, Vice Chancellor SVVV, Indore, India and Conference Chairperson concluded the conference. In his concluding remark he shared memories of ISAGA 2019 and discussed about series of webinars in which 28 webinars held involving everybody from ISAGA community. He also announces to establish a Centre of Excellence in Simulation and Gaming at SVVV, Indore and assured that activities in simulation and gaming will be continued from what ISAGA 2021 have made.

Dr. Heide Lukosch, Chairperson – ISAGA EB & Associate Professor, Head of AIGI, University of Canterbury, Christchurch, New Zealand addressed the gathering, she expressed her gratitude to the conference organizers and about Indian culture and hospitality they felt virtually. She threw light on discussions held in conference on innovations & challenges in simulation and gaming particularly on digital space. She told how to engage spectators in online games as it is easy face to face. She also discussed about designing and safety of games.

Dr. Vinod Dumblekar, Founder & CEO-MANTIS, New Delhi, India proposed words of thanks.

At the end as per the tradition of ISAGA and as a Symbol of Memory, Tree Plantation was also done on the last day September 10, 2021.

Webinar on Research Methodology

Quality Research has always been a part and parcel of academic growth in the lives of every academician. In this direction, with an objective to motivate the young research scholars and faculties to be acquainted with the very significant area of Research Methods and Methodology, Amity School of Languages under the aegis of Amity University Rajasthan organized a very relevant Webinar on 24th November, 2021 dealing with the topic ‘Research Methodology’.

The speaker of the session was Dr. Dilip Barad, Professor of English, Bhavnagar University, Gujarat. Dr. Barad is an expert in implementation of ICT in teaching and learning and he is an active researcher and e-content developer. The webinar was attended by the faculty members, research scholars and students

from Amity University Rajasthan and outside Amity. The event had an overwhelming participation of 135 attendees.

The speaker emphasised on the significance of exhaustive study of the related topic and systematic research for an authentic research work. Salient points covered by the resource person were:

- Research Attitude & Aptitude
- Research Methods & Methodology
- Review of Related Literature
- Deciding on a research topic
- Turning a Topic into an Argument
- Research and publication ethics

International Workshop on Bridging Industry and Academia in Language Studies

One-Week Virtual International Workshop on ‘Bridging Industry and Academia in Language Studies’ was organized by the Amity School of Languages under the aegis of Amity University, Jaipur, Rajasthan, recently. The event was conceptualized with the vision to make students of languages industry ready and aware of diverse avenues of career building in the field of languages. The experts from industry and from various organizations were invited that hire students of languages. The workshop was attended by faculty members, students and research scholars. The speakers spoke on various themes related to the event.

Professor Jonathan Lockhart, Distinguished Poet, Critic and Historian from Canada discussed on ‘Creative Writing versus Content Writing’. Prof. Lockhart referred to the classist like Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, Sydney, Shakespeare, etc. and emphasized on the Socratic concept of Know Thyself to be the pivot idea of significant writing.

Dr. Ajit Pathak, President, Public Relation Society of India, Cartoonist, Corporate Image Strategist, Former General Manager, Communication, Administration and Welfare CSR, in his special address talked about the ‘Values of Journalistic Writing’. Dr. Pathak via historical account of Prithviraj Chouhan described the extreme importance of language and expressed that a language is an exact reflection of an individual’s character, personality, values, and growth.

In the post lunch session of Day, Prof. G K Aseri, Provost, Dean Academics and Director, IQAC

informed about IQAC and its role in placement. He exemplified that how good knowledge of foreign language is an important rubric for earning best industry jobs and the same is also the Unique Selling Proposition (USP) for many higher education organizations.

The role of University Placement cell was discussed by Mr. Vinod Tejvani who expressed the various indispensable important factors regarding for placements. Mr. Tejvani casted light on the role of Internships, Language Command Skill Evaluation and Talent Source Identification. He concluded that every student must focus on a Career rather than a Job.

Corporate Careers and French was the core theme discussed by Ms. Maryline Laidin and Mr. Jatinder Singh Attaché for Cooperation in French Language, French Institute in India. The talk showcased the significance of learning new languages in the contemporary era as being bilingual is a very common eligibility.

The Second Session was presided over by Ms. Saudamini Deo, Manager Campus France, Jaipur, and Mr. Rachit Dhawan, Manager, Campus France, Delhi, Haryana and Uttar Pradesh. The session dealt with many aspects of France including education, work, and job. The best practices adopted by French Govt. include mutual recognition of academic degrees in India and France, subsidized tuition fees, scholarships, internships, and jobs for Indian students in France.

Professor Sushant Mishra, Chairperson, Centre for French and Francophone Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi speaking on ‘French Studies and French Govt Policies’ emphasized on the need of foreign languages by citing the examples of market orientation where MNCs look for the employees well verse in many languages.

The next session was handled by Professor Sanjay Arora, Central University of Rajasthan, Kishangarh spoke on ‘English Graduates and Advertising Sector: New Avenues in New Normal’ and discussed in minute details the eligibility criteria, financial gains scope in advertising sector.

Mr. Csaba Toth, Founder IQC Global, Entrepreneur, United Kingdom who put forth his ideas on ‘Cultural Competency in 21st Century with reference to Growth Mindset’. Mr. Toth expressed several key concepts on culture and mindsets of different people.

Ms. Dolon Gupta, Co-founder BCFAI and Former Global Head, Language Initiatives, TCS, in her session on 'Business Story Telling' highlighted the art and significance of storytelling in advertisements and industries.

In her Session, Dr. Rubby Chawla, Director Allen House, Kanpur spoke on 'Written and Verbal Communication in English in the Digital Era' described the core concepts of communication, behaviour skills and personality development. Summarizing the session in various acronyms like SOFTENER, PICTURE, AND GOAL, she encapsulated the role of soft skills and languages.

Ms. Mridula Ganguly Khanna, Former Jt. General Manager, RITES Ltd., in her discussion on 'Emerging Opportunities in Foreign Languages in View of New Normal' discussed the independence and interdependence of academia, industry and government which not only ameliorates each other but also provides new job avenues.

Prof V Ganeshan, Former Vice Chancellor, Central Institute of English and Foreign Languages, Hyderabad and Emeritus Professor of German, Atlanta,

in his extensive talk on 'Multilingual Challenges in MNCs in the Globalized World Importance and Role of Foreign Language Skills' informed about various career opportunities for scholars well versed in languages.

Ms. Puneet Kaur, Project Director, Goethe Institute/Max Mueller Bhavan, New Delhi presented various aspects of Translation studies and careers in the translation field and specifically emphasized on the career prospects, both India and abroad for German language scholars.

Prof. Hemendra Chandalia, Janardan Rai Nagar Rajasthan Vidyapeeth (Deemed to be a University), Udaipur, Rajasthan, in his delivery on 'English Studies and Avenues in Indian Scenario' highlighted the existing and upcoming careers for English graduands and scholars with English proficiency.

Dr Yuktेशwar Kumar, FHEA and Course Director, MAIT/Chinese Stream, University of Bath, UK discussed the traditional and non-traditional career prospects in translation studies.

AIU NEWS

AIU to Accord Equivalence to School Boards

AIU was established in 1925 with the mandate to accord equivalence to degrees offered by foreign universities. AIU is the only body in India which is recognized to grant Equivalence of Degrees awarded by the Foreign Universities. Acknowledging its role and work the Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD), Government of India (GOI) vide their letter No. F.15-17/94-TS IV dated 13th March 1995 issued a Notification that "those foreign qualifications which are recognized/equated by the AIU, are treated as recognized for the purpose of

employment to post and services under the Central Government".

Further, on 15th November 2021, AIU has been mandated by the Department of School Education, Ministry of Education, Government of India to accord equivalence to the Indian Boards for the Secondary/Senior Secondary Examination vide Gazette Notification No. CG-DL-W-20112021-231254 dated 15th November, 2021 and Letter No. F.11-3-/2016-Sch.3 dated 15th November, 2021 from Ministry of Education, Government of India.

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THESES OF THE MONTH

HUMANITIES

A List of doctoral theses accepted by Indian Universities (Notifications received in AIU during the month of October-November, 2021)

Geography

1. Birajdar, Ashlesha Baburao. **Jyotirlingas in Maharashtra: A study in religious tourism.** (Dr. O V Shahapurkar), Department of Geography, Swami Ramanand Teerth Marathwada University, Nanded.

2. Mero, Kulhiu. **Paleoenvironmental significance of sediments in the Tyrsad and Weilo Area of East Khasi Hills, Meghalaya.** (Prof.H J Syiemlieh and Prof. D Walia), Department of Geography, North Eastern Hill University, Shillong.

3. Vishal Singh. **Educational backwardness in India: A geographical analysis.** (Dr. Nina Singh), Department of Geography, Maharshi Dayanand University, Rohtak.

History

1. Damre, Shailaja Shankarrao. **Swami Ramanand Tirth Marathwada Vidhyapeeth Nanded parikshetrateel Madhyayugeen Math: Ek chikitsak abhyas.** (Dr. Shivraj Chandrakant Bokade), Department of History, Swami Ramanand Teerth Marathwada University, Nanded.

2. Karle, Dyanand Sangram. **Maharashtrateel Bodhd dharmatrit mahilamadhey Jhalele parivartan ek chikitsak abhyas: Vishesh sandarbh Nanded Jilha-1956-2006.** (Dr. Jadhav S G), Department of History, Swami Ramanand Teerth Marathwada University, Nanded.

3. Mohan, Vivek. **Challenging British racial discourse: A critical analysis of Hindi literature (1875-1990).** (Prof.S B Upadhyay), Department of History, Indira Gandhi National Open University, New Delhi.

4. Ranjalkar, Veenita Viondrao. **Parbhani Jilhyateel samajik sanskritik va shaikshanik Chavalli: Ek aitihasik abhyas.** (Dr. S G Jadhav), Department of History, Swami Ramanand Teerth Marathwada University, Nanded.

5. Shelke, Pravin Sudam. **Maharashtrachya prabodhan Chalavlatit mahila samajsudharkanchey yogdan: Ek aitihasikadhava.** (Dr. RR Mutkula), Department of History, Swami Ramanand Teerth Marathwada University, Nanded.

6. Vinayan, M C. **Dalit renaissance in Kochi: An affirmative action of Subaltern social mobilization.** (Dr. E

N Lakshmanan), Department of History, Sree Sankaracharya University of Sanskrit, Kalady, District Ernakulam.

Languages & Literature

English

1. Andrews, Ansa. **Xenophobia in Hollywood films: A recurring Motif of insecurity in the American Psyche.** (Dr. Nisha Venugopal), Department of English, Sree Sankaracharya University of Sanskrit, Kalady, District Ernakulam.

2. Bhosale, Gajanan Vishwanathrao. **Canadian Rustic life in the short stories of Alice Munro.** (Dr. B S Bhosale), Department of English, Swami Ramanand Teerth Marathwada University, Nanded.

3. Dixit, Koushambi. **Exploring Allegory in Vikram Seth's Beastly Tales from here and there.** (Prof. Nandini Sahu), Department of English, Indira Gandhi National Open University, New Delhi.

4. Inderjeet Singh. **Literary trajectories of the nation from Raja Rao to Arvind Adiga: A study of selected Indian novels.** (Dr. Randeep Rana), Department of English, Maharshi Dayanand University, Rohtak.

5. Junne, Rajiv Pandurangrao. **The postcolonial comparative study of select novels of Zadie Smith, Monica Ali and Andrea Levy: A gender perspective.** (Dr. Geeta M Patil and Dr. Mallikarjun B Karajgi), Department of English, Swami Ramanand Teerth Marathwada University, Nanded.

6. Londhe, Shivaji Narayan. **Communication style: A critical study of Shobha De's fiction.** (Dr. Atmaram Gangane), Department of English, Swami Ramanand Teerth Marathwada University, Nanded.

7. Najeeb, Yehia Ezzi Washaly. **Towards a culture of peace: A comparative study of some selected novels.** (Dr. Dilip Chavan), Department of English, Swami Ramanand Teerth Marathwada University, Nanded.

8. Telgote, Mahendra Randhir. **An exploration of African American experience: A study of the select poetry of Gwendolyn Brooks, Maya Angelou, Lucille Clifton and Nikki Giovanni.** (Dr. Ramesh Dhage), Department of English, Swami Ramanand Teerth Marathwada University, Nanded.

9. Veena Rani. **Novel as activism: A study of Kavery Nambisan's fictional works.** (Dr. Sudhir Kumar), Department of English, Maharshi Dayanand University, Rohtak.

Hindi

1. Babu A. **Chayanith Banjara lok geethom mein samajik jan-jeewan.** (Dr. A C V Rama Kumar), Department of Hindi, Acharya Nagarjuna University, Nagarjuna Nagar.

2. Gamit, Shilashkumar Gomabhai. **Raji Seth ke kahaniyan: Ek samikshanatamak adhyayan.** (Dr. M G Gandhi), Department of Hindi, Saurashtra University, Rajkot.

3. HariPriya, R. **Udareekaran ke dour ke upanyasoan mein kisan samvedna.** (Dr. P Ravi), Department of Hindi, Sree Sankaracharya University of Sanskrit, Kalady, District Ernakulam.

4. Jadhavar, Dhanraj Sandipan. **Usha Priyamvada ke katha sahitye mein charitre-srishti ka anusheelan.** (Dr. Manohar Gangadharrao Chapale), Department of Hindi, Swami Ramanand Teerth Marathwada University, Nanded.

5. Kannan, K U. **Dalit kavita mein itihās aur rajneeti.** (Dr. P Ravi), Department of Hindi, Sree Sankaracharya University of Sanskrit, Kalady, District Ernakulam.

6. Lalit Kumar. **Kashinath Singh ke katha sahitya mein yugbodh.** (Dr. Krishna Joon), Department of Hindi, Maharshi Dayanand University, Rohtak.

7. Mahajan, Rajendrakaur Shermeet Singh. **Shri Guru Granth Sahib Ji mein abhivyakat manvata.** (Dr. R M Jadhav), Department of Hindi, Swami Ramanand Teerth Marathwada University, Nanded.

8. Mamta. **Hindi dalit katha sahitye mein samajik, rajnitik aur arthik chetna.** (Prof. Shatrughna Kumar), Department of Hindi, Indira Gandhi National Open University, New Delhi.

9. Mishra, Megha. **Bundelkhand ke Hindi upanyasoan mein istri chintan ke avdharna.** (Dr. Sandhya Tikekar), Department of Hindi, Maharaja Chhatrasal Bundelkhand Vishwavidyalaya, Chhatarpur.

10. Nair, Lakshmi S. **Manav jeevan ke vividh avasthayem: Sanskritik sankat ka sandarbh: 1990 ke baad ke kahaniyaon mein.** (Dr. Shanti Nair), Department of Hindi, Sree Sankaracharya University of Sanskrit, Kalady, District Ernakulam.

11. Shrivastava, Atul Kumar. **Bundeli kavaye mein lokchetna.** (Dr. Sandhya Tikekar), Department of Hindi, Maharaja Chhatrasal Bundelkhand Vishwavidyalaya, Chhatarpur.

12. Totwad, Chhaya Sheshrao. **Hyderabad Mukti Sangram mein Hindi ka yogdan.** (Dr. Suryakant Shinde), Department of Hindi, Swami Ramanand Teerth Marathwada University, Nanded.

Marathi

1. Bhope, Pralhad Dattarao. **Rashtrasant Tukadoji Maharaj yanchya Marathi padh vadmaya chya abhyas.** (Dr. Anand Injegaonkar), Department of Marathi, Swami Ramanand Teerth Marathwada University, Nanded.

2. Hiremath, Priyanka Rajshekar. **Shri Sant Manmath Swami yanchya wadmaya teel samajik ani tatvgyanatamak vichar: Ek chikitsak abhyas.** (Dr. P Vitthal), Department of Marathi, Swami Ramanand Teerth Marathwada University, Nanded.

3. Mittal, Swati. **Invisible audience: A study of paradigms of performance in contemporary theatre.** (Dr. G Bharadwaza), School of Performing and Visual Arts, Indira Gandhi National Open University, New Delhi.

4. Rathod, Sindhu Namdevrao. **Pradeep Mahesekar yanchya aitihasik kadamchya: Ek chikitsak abhyas.** (Dr. Pandharinath N Dhondge), Department of Marathi, Swami Ramanand Teerth Marathwada University, Nanded.

5. Shendre, Amrapal Suresh. **Marathi Angrezi Kaal Paksh Vriti (T.A.M) vishleshan: Machini anuvad ke sandarbh mein tulnatamak adhyayan.** (Dr. Harish Kumar Sethi and Dr. Ramchandra P Bhavsar), School of Translation Studies and Training, Indira Gandhi National Open University, New Delhi.

Sanskrit

1. Bhatt, Jigar Maheshbhai. **A comparative study of Kavyalankarakarika, Abhirajayashobhushana and abhinavakavyalankarasutra.** (Dr. P M Mehta), Department of Sanskrit, Saurashtra University, Rajkot.

2. Krishnan, Neethu. **A critical study of the Medinikosa.** (Dr. E Sreedharan), Department of Sanskrit Sahitya, Sree Sankaracharya University of Sanskrit, Kalady, District Ernakulam.

3. Letha, S. **The concept of sakti in puranas.** (Dr. V Prameelakumary), Department of Sanskrit, Sree Sankaracharya University of Sanskrit, Kalady, District Ernakulam.

4. Preeja, P J. **Nyayagrantheshu pradarsitanam anumana prayoganam sankalanam Patanam Ca.** (Dr. V Vasudevan), Department of Sanskrit Nyaya, Sree Sankaracharya University of Sanskrit, Kalady, District Ernakulam.

5. Sandhya. **Ramkrishanparamhansdivyacharitam Mahakavya: Ek samikshatamak adhyayan.**

(Dr. Asha), Department of Sanskrit, Maharshi Dayanand University, Rohtak.

6. Santhini, V M. **Social dimensions of upanishadic thought.** (Dr V Prameelakumary), Department of Sanskrit Vedanta, Sree Sankaracharya University of Sanskrit, Kalady, District Ernakulam.

7. Saritha, A V. **Ganapathiyavisesasabdanam kavyadisu prayogah.** (Dr. M Manimohanan), Department of Sanskrit, Sree Sankaracharya University of Sanskrit, Kalady, District Ernakulam.

8. Seema. **Adhyatmaramayana ka bhasa vaijnanika adhyayana.** (Dr. D P Kularia), Department of Sanskrit, Maharshi Dayanand University, Rohtak.

9. Sunitha, K N. **Glittering of sciences in Nyaya-Vaisesika.** (Dr. V Vasudevan), Department of Sanskrit Nyaya, Sree Sankaracharya University of Sanskrit, Kalady, District Ernakulam.

Telugu

1. Uttaravilli, Satya Prabha. **Katuru Raveendra Trivikram Navalalu- pariseelana.** (Dr. Gumma Samba Siva Rao), Department of Telugu and Oriental Languages, Acharya Nagarjuna University, Nagarjuna Nagar.

Urdu

2. Shaikh, Iram Fatema Latquddin Sab. **Maharashtra mein Urdu tanqeed ka Irateqa: 1980 ke baad.** (Dr. Mohd Maqbool Ahmed), Department of Urdu, Swami Ramanand Teerth Marathwada University, Nanded.

Performing Arts

Music

1. Alisha Rani. **Hindustani sangitik vidhaoan mein**

dakshin paddhati ke ragoan ka pryog: Ek vishleshnatamak adhyayan. (Dr. Hukam Chand), Department of Music, Maharshi Dayanand University, Rohtak.

2. Mahima. **Haryana lok sangeet mein Pandit Mangeram Sharma ka yogdan.** (Dr. Bharti Sharma), Department of Music, Maharshi Dayanand University, Rohtak.

Theatre and Television

1. Dixit, Amitabh. **Text and context of Kanpuri Noutanki: A performance study of the art form.** (Dr. Govindaraju), School of Performing and Visual Arts, Indira Gandhi National Open University, New Delhi.

Visual Art

1. Anil Kumar. **Cow in art and literature and its paintings in contemporary (Practical based).** (Dr. B S Gulia), Department of Visual Art, Maharshi Dayanand University, Rohtak.

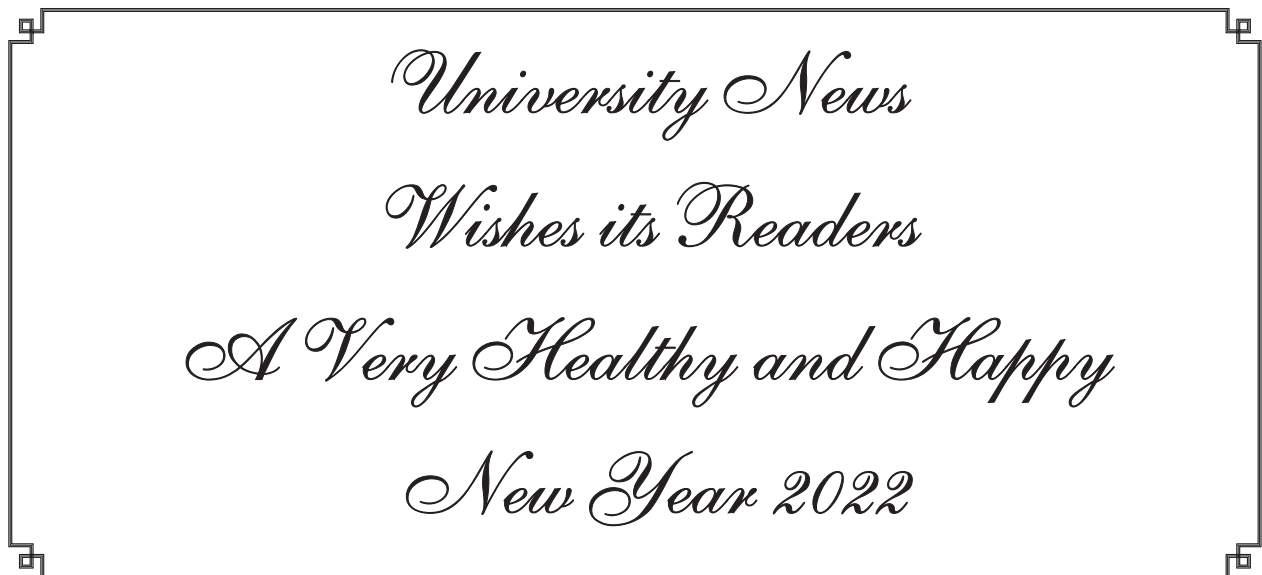
2. Saini, Suman. **Hisar Mandal mein Vilupt Praya Kalayen-Bhiti Chitra, Aabhushan evam vastroan ka kalatmak adhyayan.** (Dr. Sushma Singh), Department of Visual Art, Maharshi Dayanand University, Rohtak.

Philosophy

1. Bhole, Anita Premraj. **Mahatma Gandhijichya vishwastav sankalpnecha naitik anvyarth.** (Dr. Patil V S and Dr. Upade G M), Department of Philosophy, Swami Ramanand Teerth Marathwada University, Nanded.

2. Khaling, Eagam. **Kant's philosophy of physics.** (Dr. Anirban Mukherjee), Department of Philosophy, University of North Bengal, Darjeeling.

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20.12.2021

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3	Assistant Professor	Political Science	01	01-OPEN
4	Assistant Professor	Economics	01	01-OPEN
5	Assistant Professor	English Literature	01	01-OPEN
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7	Librarian	-	01	01-OPEN

The above posts are open to all, however, candidates from any category can apply for the post.

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Candidates having knowledge of Marathi will be preferred.

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